









Draft Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee Action Plan – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

No	Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress Update	Status	Next Steps
<b>Outcome: Better incomes in and out of work.</b>						
1	Help Gypsy/Travellers maximise their incomes and increase uptake of financial support they are eligible for	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is a member of the Financial Inclusion Partnership and progresses benefit claims on behalf of the Travelling community, establishing entitlements to maximise incomes.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer seeks additional financial assistance from Welfare Officers in the Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Team by providing contact details for discussing need for assistance.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer assists with the completion of any benefits forms as and when requested.</p> <p>One referral to Progress in Dialogue for assistance with financial assistance.</p>		Continue to engage with the Travelling community to identify needs and progress claims as required to maximise income.
2	Support parents to overcome barriers to work, and in-work poverty	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	April 2025 (when funding for training courses will cease.)	The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer continues to source and provide iPads and Laptops where possible for children and adults, to facilitate digital inclusion, to assist with benefit claims and other online activities. She also continues to investigate and arrange appropriate training courses in, for example, HGV licences. She also provides practical assistance with job applications		<p>Continue to engage with the Travelling community to identify requirements and funding streams to provide IT equipment where possible.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer continues to assist to with CVs and</p>


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				<p>and CVs, investigates apprenticeship opportunities and 'Getting Ready for Work' courses. (List of courses attached at Appendix 3)</p> <p>From 2020 to date, approximately 60 iPads and Laptops were provided along with Sim cards and dongles. Unfortunately, this initiative is no longer in place. At present Sim cards can be made available but this is the final round of their provision.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller attends the Employability Partnership Planning meetings to keep in abreast of training opportunities and funding available.</p>		investigating job opportunities.
3	Improve standard of living by reducing daily living costs for Gypsy/Travellers	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer assists with additional payments for utilities, replacement white goods, foodbank deliveries, clothes, food and toys for children from AberNecessities and accesses appropriate support for Gypsy/Travellers.</p> <p>24 donations from Abernecessities in 2023 13 deliveries containing clothing, food, toiletries etc. 11 deliveries of Christmas Eve boxes.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer assists with the completion of any benefits forms as and when requested to ensure they are optimising their income.</p>		<p>Continue to engage with the Travelling community to identify needs for additional payments and arrange, order and deliver donations and access support as required.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will offer Foodbank assistance as and when required.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will continue to assist</p>

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				<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer refers Travellers to SCARF and Home Energy Scotland for any assistance with utility payments and advice on saving energy in homes.</p>		<p>Travellers to access additional assistance with utility bills through various funding sources.</p>
4.	<p>Develop and agree a new Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026</p>	<p>Housing Strategy and Building Standards Manager</p> <p>Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer</p>	<p>2026</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p><a href="#">Aberdeenshire's Gypsy/Traveller Site Provision Strategy 2021-2026</a> is in place.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Sub-Committee, at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023, approved 10 stances to be made available for occupancy throughout the year at Greenbanks.</p> <p>It has been agreed that identifying land for a site in central Aberdeenshire is a priority. Officers monitor the asset disposal register for possible new sites in addition to those identified in the Local Development Plan and will work with the Planning Service to maximise opportunities.</p> <p>Support continues to be provided to Gypsy/Travellers wishing to build their own sites.</p> <p>To date the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has provided three Families with planning applications and practicalities required.</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Review and update Site Provision Strategy in consultation with Gypsy/Travellers.</p> <p>Continue to try to identify suitable land for an additional Gypsy/Traveller site in Central Aberdeenshire in addition to land identified in the LDP.</p> <p>Continue to support Gypsy/Travellers requesting assistance with planning applications.</p>

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				<p>Eight private sites have been approved, with one pending approval.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is working with Environmental Health which is investigating the need for Licences on Private sites.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and Strategic Housing Officer are involved in the evaluation of COSLAs Negotiated Stopping Pilot.</p>		<p>Continue to work with and assist Environmental Health as required.</p> <p>Continue to attend meetings until the pilot has been evaluated and finalised.</p>
5.	Consider upgrades for Aikey Brae as part of new national fund.	Housing Strategy and Building Standards Manager	2025/20206	<p>Aberdeenshire Council was unsuccessful in its original, bid in 2022 to the Scottish Government £20m Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Fund 2022-2025, to upgrade facilities at Aikey Brae Travellers' Site. An email was received from Scottish Government on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to the effect that a meeting took place with COSLA to discuss the future of the funding but a decision on the remaining funding has not yet been made. We are awaiting an update.</p> <p>Match funding would have to be identified to allow a bid to be submitted in 2025/2026.</p> <p>There are currently seven pitches occupied on Aikey Brae and the occupants have indicated that they wish to remain on site on</p>		Investigate options for future provision of individual pods on each pitch (toilet and shower), with communal laundry facilities and a disabled toilet. Feedback suggests that upgraded facilities would make the site more attractive for Gypsy/Travellers. This would only be possible with Scottish Government funding.

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				a long-term basis as they feel safe and supported.		
6.	Carry out site improvements at Aikey Brae and Greenbanks.	Housing Strategy and Building Standards Manager	Complete	<p>Improvements at Aikey Brae and Greenbanks from the award from the Scottish Government '£2m additional funding for public sector Gypsy/Traveller sites over and above the Minimum Standards.' are complete.</p> <p>Improvement works at Aikey Brae include the provision of a height restricted, security barrier, additional safety lighting, an additional water stance, storage facilities, rotary driers, educational playground markings, playground equipment, planters, bench seating, picnic benches, trees, wildflowers and access to free Wi-Fi, enabling digital inclusion.</p> <p>Free Wi-Fi is in place at Greenbanks, facilitating digital inclusion for the residents. Roller blinds were fitted in the chalets to afford privacy and help with heat loss. There are also two large planters, bench seating, picnic benches and artificial grass on the piece of land owned by Scottish Water, to improve the ambience.</p> <p>Greenbanks site visit for Sub Committee members took place on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 9.45 am.</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>Engage with Gypsy/Travellers on an ongoing basis to identify additional improvements.</p> <p>Continue to investigate funding sources to provide improvements in discussion with residents on both sites. A Greenbanks Residents' Group is awaiting the constitution to be drafted to allow it to become a Registered Tenant Organisation.</p> <p>Hoping to do something similar on Aikey brae in due course with occupants wishing to remain long term.</p>
<b>Outcome: Improve access to public services.</b>						




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	Gypsy/Travellers to access services.			Regulator on 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 engaging with the Gypsy/Traveller community to look at accommodation needs for Travellers. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer attended to represent the views of Travellers in Aberdeenshire.		
9.	Health	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer/ NHS Grampian		<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is working with NHS colleagues on Health Issues in the Community (HIIC).</p> <p>Previous initiatives were halted due to the pandemic and new initiatives are under discussion with Health colleagues on how to address health issues.</p> <p>One meeting has already taken place on Aikey Brae on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 with Health colleagues which was very successful. It was an open discussion regarding health needs. It is hoped that in the near future that a similar meeting will be held with residents on Greenbanks.</p> <p>Community Information Points are to be set up at Aikey Brae and Greenbanks sites to keep communities informed and up to date about health support and initiatives.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is part of the Scottish Government Group considering how to address Gypsy/ Traveller Domestic Abuse. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer has</p>		Continue to work with Health colleagues to improve and achieve best health outcomes for the Traveller community.


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				<p>completed Grampian Women's Aid modules on this topic.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer engages with Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project (MECOPP) to keep in touch with initiatives and support opportunities.</p>		
10.	Education	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer/Education		<p><b><u>Current picture across Aberdeenshire (2023)</u></b></p> <p>Gypsy/Traveller education data from SEEMiS has been recorded since September 2021. The number of children and young people identified as Gypsy/Traveller has increased by around 30%. It is not apparent whether this increase is due to Travellers moving into Aberdeenshire or if it is an increase in identification. Nationally, it is still unusual for young Gypsy/Travellers to make the transition from primary to secondary and figures reflect that. It is acknowledged that actual numbers of Gypsy/Travellers in schools is likely to be higher as there are still several families who do not wish to disclose their Gypsy/Traveller ethnic status.</p> <p><b><u>Early years transitions</u></b></p> <p>Early Years transitions have been very successful. Starter sacks from the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) have been distributed to Gypsy/Traveller families with children under five to bridge</p>		<p>The post of Gypsy/Traveller teacher is currently vacant as the previous post holder is on secondment for two years. The post is in the process of being advertised.</p> <p>Endeavour to continue promoting accessing Early years provision. To date it has been challenging to get uptake from the</p>



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				<p>the gap between home and an early years setting.</p> <p><b><u>Racial Discrimination</u></b>  Copies of the graphic novel 'Shifting' have been distributed to several schools across Aberdeenshire. The novel is available online through the STEP website and there are lesson plans to accompany the resource. The novel is based on a true story and is unfinished. Pupils are encouraged to create their own endings in the form of a comic strip. Pupils from Kintore Primary entered their finished comic strips into the Anne Frank Awards, organised by GREC. The entries were acknowledged by STEP and have been showcased at several community engagement events. Kinellar School have been identified as a pilot school for the Gypsy/Traveller Pledge in Scotland. They have built strong relationships with families, regularly celebrate the culture, and involve parents in improvement planning. They have no reported incidents of racial discrimination against young Gypsy/Travellers (nationally, 92% of young Gypsy/Travellers have reported experience of racial discrimination in schools) and had a return rate of 86% within one term of reopening after the first Covid lockdown (national rate is believed to be less than 40%).</p>		<p>Travelling community for this. Transport to nursery is one barrier to take up.</p>

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				<p><b><u>Cultural awareness and resources</u></b>            To support staff with cultural awareness and relevant resources, there are now two ALDO courses – Gypsy/Traveller Cultural Awareness and Ensuring the needs of young Gypsy/Travellers are met in schools, as well as a Gypsy/Traveller resource tile on the Aberdeenshire ASN website. The courses have been very well received and feedback indicates value in hearing lived experiences from members of the community. Four events were held in schools and at Banff Vinery for GRTHM. All were very successful with all schools giving a 4/5 or 5/5 rating. Six schools have indicated interest in holding a session next year. Several schools have requested cultural awareness sessions for staff.</p> <p><b><u>Update policy</u></b>            It has been recognised that the CME (child missing education) and Attendance Policies do not adequately support schools for Gypsy/Traveller children and young people. Both policies are under review and will include specific guidance for Gypsy/Traveller pupils.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is regularly contacted by schools for information on welfare of children not currently attending School.</p>		<p>Include schools in Gypsy Roma Traveller History month activities in June 2024.</p> <p>Review policies for CME (child missing education)</p>

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				The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is currently providing literacy support to five children.		As need identified.
<b>Outcome: Tackle racism and discrimination</b>						
11.	Combat prejudice against the Gypsy/Traveller community, including, by providing information about culture, history and needs, whenever opportunity arises	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer/Strategic Housing Officer	Ongoing  Annually  Annually in June.	<p>A presentation has been drafted to raise awareness of the Gypsy/Traveller Cultural and over a period Awareness Raising sessions, have been provided in-house, to partners and the Third Sector, as well as organisations such as Job Centre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau, Skills Development Scotland and Social Security Scotland. Participation etc.</p> <p>An online ALDO training course has been developed for staff, raising awareness of the Gypsy/Traveller community. There is also a course specifically tailored for Education staff.</p> <p>Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month takes place in June. In addition to information on Aberdeenshire Council's Website and social media platforms, several in-person events took place in 2023. These took place at the Vinery in Banff where a storyteller was joined by Primary 3 pupils from Banff Primary. Activities took place at Maud School where there was also a storyteller.</p>		<p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer is happy to continue to provide Awareness Raising sessions as requested.</p> <p>Review the ALDO course on an annual basis and amend, update as required.</p> <p>Commence work for Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month in June 2024 in consultation with the Gypsy/Traveller community and Education colleagues.</p>

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				Local libraries took it in turn to host Gypsy/Traveller Awareness exhibitions. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer attended some libraries in person in 2023 to raise awareness of the Gypsy/Traveller community.		
<b>Outcome: Improve Gypsy/Traveller Representation</b>						
12.	Consult regularly with Gypsy/Traveller communities on accommodation and services to ensure these are fit for purpose	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Annually	<p>Annual surveys take place at Greenbanks Travellers' Site as per Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) requirements.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer carries out ad hoc surveys with the occupants of Aikey Brae Travellers Site. Additional targeted surveys are carried out as required.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer attends groups and events looking at how best to improve services and access to services for Gypsy/Travellers, such as Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project (MECOPP). The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer recently attended a meeting to look at accommodation needs for Travellers.</p>		<p>Carry out annual survey at Greenbanks with residents for submission to the Information Team in April.</p> <p>Continue ad hoc surveys with occupants on Aikey Brae and informal surveys with occupant on Unauthorised encampments.</p> <p>Continue to provide feedback on behalf of Travellers to organisations as necessary, as they do not always feel confident to do this on their own or do not have access to the IT required.</p>
13.	Involve Gypsy/Travellers in the design and delivery of	Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	The upgrade at Greenbanks was completed in 2020 to achieve Scottish Government		Engage with Gypsy/Travellers on the

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	any new accommodation proposals.			<p>minimum standards. Residents on Greenbanks were consulted on the upgrade of the facilities and feedback has been positive.</p> <p>Residents on Aikey Brae and Greenbanks were consulted on improvements from the Scottish Government '£2m additional funding for public sector.</p>		design and delivery of any new accommodation as opportunities present.
14.	Ensure regular input from Gypsy/Traveller communities into decision-making groups.	Strategic Housing Officer/ Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<p>The Strategic Housing Officer and the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer attend the Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee meetings and are members of COSLAs 'Negotiated Stopping as an approach' group.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer maintains a list of contact details of Gypsy/Travellers whom she can contact for input to decision making.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Sub Committee has recommended the introduction of a Scrutiny Panel to discuss issues and oversee progress of initiatives relating to</p>		<p>The Strategic Housing Officer and the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer will continue to attend meetings and groups and engage with Gypsy/Travellers to gauge their views.</p> <p>Regularly review and update contact details to take account of interest in relevant topics of interest to allow them to be involved in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Maintain details of those expressing an interest in a particular topic(s) and will</p>

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				<p>Gypsy/Travellers. This is being progressed by the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer and the Strategic Housing Officer. It will be topic driven and Gypsy/Travellers contacted and consulted as appropriate.</p> <p>Residents on Greenbanks had an initial meeting with the Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer, the Strategic Housing Officer and the Site Assistant on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 and one subsequent meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Thereafter the Tenant Participation Team has met with residents of Greenbanks and residents of the private site at Boyndie and are progressing to a Registered Tenant Organisation.</p>		<p>be contacted as necessary for their input.</p> <p>Attend meetings arranged by Tenant Participation staff.</p> <p>A meeting is to be arranged sometime after April 2024 when seasonal residents return.</p>