



Building Bridges between Gypsies and Travellers and Private Landlords



Gypsies and Travellers Wales

- **Gypsies and Travellers Wales (formerly Cardiff Gypsy & Traveller Project) was founded in 1981, and is a charitable company with a small staff managed by voluntary trustees. We have work mainly in and around Cardiff, but also more widely across Wales**
- **Our Aims**
- **Gypsies and Travellers Wales aims to support Gypsies and Travellers to improve access to suitable accommodation, public services and employment skills.**
- **We are committed to supporting Gypsies and Travellers to voice their needs and concerns, and to encouraging policies and practices which meet these needs.**



How we do it

Advice and support – We offer Gypsies and Travellers free, confidential advice on many issues ranging from welfare benefits, employment, housing, education and healthcare to human rights, planning and family issues.

Liaison and Campaigning – We work in partnership with local authorities and public service bodies to improve the delivery of services to Gypsies and Travellers. To achieve this we focus on the development, management and maintenance of sites and offering Cultural Awareness Training to professionals currently or planning to work with the community.



Who we are:

Our Executive Committee ensure that Gypsies and Travellers Wales is well managed and operating within agreed policies, the law and its budget. They supervise the Coordinator and ensure that the day-to-day activities continue to 'support and enable Gypsies and Travellers to achieve a high and sustainable quality of life.'

We currently have six members who bring with them a range of skills & knowledge with many years experience in the third sector. Staff member, Linda Jensen, is appointed as Secretary to the Trustees.



We currently have five staff members based at Trowbridge Community Centre.

Jasmine Jones – Coordinator

Linda Jensen – Administrator

Louisa Devonish – Liaison Officer

Sara Reid-Danks – Tenancy Support Officer

Gareth Thomas – Employment and Skills Officer



Tenancy Support:



- I have worked with the community for 3 years.
- People needing support on sites – Rover Way/ Shirenewton/Bricks and Mortar
- Supporting people who are homeless - single people, single parents, couples and families
- In the past 3 years I have supported 144 people to either maintain their accommodation, avoid eviction and secure temporary and permanent accommodation.

Barriers

- **Lack of trust of the Gypsy and Traveller Community**
- **Discrimination- all Gypsies and Travellers are 'Thieves, 'Won't pay their rent', have 'No morals' etc.**
- **Not enough suitable accommodation- not enough plots**
- **Myths- Gypsies and Travellers 'Don't pay rent or Council Tax'**
- **Benefits**
- **Support need**



Why are Gypsies and Travellers in need of private rented accommodation?

- **There is a rise in Gypsies and Travellers needing private renting accommodation as there are not enough plots or council/HA properties available.**
- **More people are becoming homeless due to their families expanding.**
- **Lots of people have lived on the sites all their lives but now have their own families and the family plot becomes overcrowded forcing people to leave.**



Dispelling the myths



- **I have had the privilege of working with the community for 3 years.**
- **In those 3 years I have forged strong links with the community and I am seen as a figure of trust.**
- **Gypsies and Travellers living on Rover Way and Shirenewton, do pay rent and council tax!**
- **The cost to live on these sites is higher than living in a house as the energy suppliers cannot be chosen and prices are high. They also have to purchase gas bottles which cost £60 and usually last a week**
- **The sites are not well maintained, especially Rover Way yet they still pay rent and follow council policies.**

**Not all Gypsies and Travellers live up to the stereotype.
When I first started my role I had people putting the fear in to me!**

‘The community cant be trusted’

‘Your car will be scratched, smashed up, they will follow you home’

‘They are animals’

‘They have no consideration for others’



This has not been my experience
I have been welcomed in to the community
The community are very respectful
The community can be wary of outsiders as they have had to put
barriers up due to society having such a low opinion of them.
Gypsies and Travellers are human beings
They want what everyone else wants
A home
A safe place for their family
Food on the table
Acceptance
The same opportunities as everyone else



Building Bridges

I want to reach out to you in the room.

I want to build links with you all

I want to understand more about private renting and if there are some nice landlords out there?

I support my clients to maintain their tenancies, I don't just leave once I have secured them accommodation, I stay in touch and make sure if there are any problems that they are quickly rectified.

Me and my clients want the tenancy to be a success

Something in Common - FEAR

Fear of Private Landlords

- Will repairs be completed?
- Will I be asked to leave quickly, without explanation?
- Will the property be fit for living?



Reasons to offer tenancies:

Many clients have been homeless for a long time and once housing is secured, they do not want to fail.

Gypsies and Travellers need homes just like everyone else.

Many of my clients are on benefits, these benefits can be paid straight to you.

I would be the person over seeing this so there is an assurance there for you.

The majority of Gypsies and Travellers are very house proud and focus on making their home like a palace.

Your properties would be looked after, they would pay rent on time.

I am the link and I look forward to hearing from you





Safety net:

Please contact me if you do have any properties you need to let now or in the future.

I can guarantee my clients will receive support to ensure all tenancies are maintained.

Benefits will be set up and checked and swiftly put right if any discrepancies.

I would not put someone forward if I didn't believe they would successfully be able to manage and maintain a tenancy.



I would like to thank you for your time

**If you would like to speak to me further please contact me on
02920214411 sara.reiddanks@gtwales.org.uk**

And I will be available afterwards if you would like to talk to me face to face.

Any Questions ?

