

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Community Connections



STAGE I: WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED AND BY WHOM?

What is being assessed - including a brief description of aims and objectives?

Gypsy Roma and Traveller Policy – Unauthorised Encampments -2021 review

Plymouth City Council is responsible for dealing with unauthorised Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) encampments on land owned by the Council.

The travelling community can experience difficulties finding an authorised place to stop, and may set up an encampment on someone's land without consent, including green space, highway verges and lay-bys. This is a breach of civil law and, in certain circumstances, may be a breach of criminal law.

Plymouth City Council's approach is based on the need to uphold the law and prevent unlawful occupation of land, whilst meeting the needs of communities.

The aim of this policy is to address the need for an effective approach to the management of unauthorised Gypsy Roma and Traveller encampments on Plymouth City Council land, whilst ensuring that the rights of Plymouth's local settled community and the Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities are balanced. This includes provision of negotiated stopping spaces and the implementation of measures to prevent access for some sites across Plymouth that are used frequently.

In addition to this it aims to clarify the internal working arrangements around unauthorised encampments across Plymouth City Council departments and services so that any future unauthorised encampments can be managed successfully, swiftly and without detriment to any community.

	<p>This policy is also reliant on a collaborative approach with our partners, namely Devon & Cornwall Police, Health and Social Care and Charitable organisations as well as Ward Members and their constituents, on how we will manage an unauthorised encampment on Plymouth City Council land.</p> <p>The overarching aim of the policy is to achieve, where possible, a locally agreed end to unauthorised encampments and to avoid the formal eviction process. However this policy sets out the formal process for eviction, and when this will be used.</p>
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Date of assessment	17 th December 2020

STAGE 2: EVIDENCE AND IMPACT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (eg data and feedback)	Any adverse impact See guidance on how to make judgement	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible
Age	<p>Community Data:</p> <p>Pupils in Plymouth Schools (2021)</p> <p>Gypsy/Roma – 5</p> <p>Occupational traveller – 6</p> <p>Traveller (other) - 14</p> <p>GRT's often experience difficulty in accessing and staying in education making levels of literacy in the community low. GRT children have the poorest educational attainment of any ethnic group in this country. This is likely to be a causal factor in poor health and employment</p>	<p>None – providing the policy may assist all residents to engage with healthcare services which is especially important for older people, those requiring hospital treatment and pregnant women. Undertaking welfare checks with all UEs ensures that the appropriate provision is accessed where possible and when requested. Community Connections Officers often refer members of the community to supporting agencies.</p> <p>The safety of children on site will be improved as by locating away from the roadside they will be less vulnerable to road traffic</p>	<p>None – Safety of children will be considered on a negotiated stopping place as part of the code of conduct guidance and some places will be non-negotiable.</p> <p>In addition a Community Impact Assessment will consider the safety of all occupants on any site.</p>	N/A

	<p>outcomes. Ofsted have identified them as an ‘at risk group in education’.</p> <p>Older GRT’s are vulnerable due to a lack of continuity of health care services related to their transient accommodation. They are often forced to choose between living within their extended family network or ‘retiring’ from an active travelling lifestyle and moving into ‘bricks and mortar’, which may leave them isolated. They are the least likely racial group to be in receipt of home based social care or residential care.</p> <p>Life expectancy is significantly lower for GRT’s than the mainstream population. Infant mortality rates are three times higher.</p>	<p>accidents, and will not have to move from site to site as frequently.</p>		
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Community Data: (taken from Plymouth Report 2017)</p> <p>According to the 2011 Census, 10.0 per cent of Plymouth residents reported having a long-term health problem or disability that limits their day-to-day activities a lot and has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months. The England value was 8.3 per cent.</p>	<p>None –Access to sites will be considered as part of the community impact assessment. Needs of those within the encampment will be considered as part of welfare checking.</p> <p>Officers can refer and support GRT community at UEs to local GP and health services</p>	<p>Ensure disabled access is considered when assessing site suitability and welfare checks.</p>	<p>Policy Implementation.</p>

	<p>The 2011 Census also reported fewer Plymouth residents thought their health was 'good' or 'very good', compared to England.</p> <p>Overall prevalence of learning disabilities in Plymouth was 0.51 per cent in 2014/15 a value higher than England (0.44 per cent). Data from the same source indicates that in 2014 Plymouth had rates of children with autism known to schools of 17.8 per 1,000 pupils compared to 10.8 per 1,000 in England; rates of children with learning disabilities known to schools of 25.3 per 1,000 pupils compared 33.7 per 1,000 in England; and rates of adults (18 to 64 years) with learning disabilities receiving long-term support from Plymouth City Council of 5.3 per 1,000 population compared with 3.7 per 1,000 in England.</p> <p>It is estimated that approximately 1 in 88 people in England will have a type of autism diagnosis. An estimated 1,700 people in Plymouth aged 18-64 are likely to have an autistic spectrum disorder.</p> <p>1,845 adults registered with a GP have some form of learning disability (as recorded on</p>			
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	<p>practice disease registers), 2017/18.</p> <p>Over 13,000 people in our City are currently dependent on ESA.</p> <p>Local Data:</p> <p>There is a lack of local specific data in relation to GRTs across most of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>National Information:</p> <p>It is difficult to access the needs of GRT's with disabilities due in part to a lack of access to regular medical care or benefits.</p> <p>According to De Montfort University research 2019</p> <p>The health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers are stark. Looking at Census (2011) data analysis, the percentage of Travellers reporting poor health is twice as high as the wider population⁹. There have been many studies on health and education outcomes and in early 2019 the Women and Equalities Select Committee published their inquiry report¹⁰. It is clear that without a place to stay, from which to access medicine, schooling, work – then health</p>		
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	<p>and wellbeing outcomes are diminished.</p> <p>Both mobile and settled GRT's report difficulties in registering with a doctor. Doctors can be reluctant to register GRT's families with no address. Lack of access to diagnosis and treatment and support is likely to impact on life expectancy.</p> <p>GRT's often suffer from depression and other mental health problems, caused by the stress of eviction, or as a result of moving from caravan to settled housing, with the associated isolation.</p>			
<p>Faith/religion or belief</p>	<p>Community Data:</p> <p>Christian < 177,000</p> <p>Islam 4,500</p> <p>Hindu 300-400</p> <p>Buddhist 470</p> <p>Jewish <181</p> <p>No faith/not given – 30% of our local population</p> <p>City Survey 2018 People from other religious backgrounds are less likely to be satisfied with Plymouth as a place to live (66%) than Christians (77%) or people with no religion (74%). People from other religions were less likely to agree they belonged to their local area</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None – This policy should maintain equality and access to services across all types</p>	<p>N/A</p>

	<p>(41%) than Christians (65%) or those of no religion (50%). Christians slightly more likely to be involved with community groups / activities (22%) than those of no religion (16%) and other religions (16%). Summer 2008 edition of the Traveller Times contained an article quoting Morris and Clements (September 2002) suggesting that of 200,000-300,000 Gypsies and Travellers nationally, some 50,000 are Born Again Christians. Irish Traveller families are predominantly of Roman catholic faith.</p>			
<p>Gender - including marriage, pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>Community Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, 50.7% women (reflects national figure) • 25-29's: 54.8% men (50.8% nationally) • Married: 77,154 (39%) • Remarried: 16,572 (8.5%) • Separated but still legally married 5,382 (2.8%) <p>Plymouth has a relatively high prevalence of domestic abuse and the number of reported incidents increased by 21% in the year to September 2018. Domestic abuse accounts for</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None – This policy should maintain equality and access to services across all types.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

	<p>approximately 35 per cent of all violent crime in the city</p> <p>Responses to the Plymouth City Survey 2018 showed that the proportion of males who felt safe after dark (64 per cent) was significantly higher than females (58 per cent). The proportion of females agreeing they are involved in community activities/groups in their local area was significantly higher than males (22 per cent compared with 16 per cent). There was no difference between genders when asked whether their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (males 39 per cent and females 40 per cent).</p> <p>Equality and Human Rights Commission (Gypsy and Traveller: Simple solutions for living together – Report 2010):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GRTs birth rate is high and prenatal mortality; still births and infant mortality are significantly higher than the national average. • It is estimated that, on average, GRT women live 12 years less than women in the general population and GRT 		
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	<p>men ten years less than men in the general population (Crawley, 2003).</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller mothers are 20 times more likely than the rest of the population to have experienced the death of a child.</p>			
Gender reassignment	<p>Community Data:</p> <p>10,000 trans-sexual nationally (6,000 undergone reassignment)</p> <p>Referrals to Newton Abbott Clinic 62 in 2008</p> <p>23 trans members of Plymouth Pride Forum (2014)</p>	<p>None – Welfare checks would take into account whether a GRT undertaking or considering gender reassignment may have planned health support interrupted by moving around or evictions from unauthorised encampments.</p>	<p>None – This policy should maintain equality and access to services across all types.</p>	N/A
Race	<p>Community Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GRTs at the Bay View site, the Ride (Plymstock) 13 families (21 adults, 22 children) are all from the GRT community Show People at Efford Fort: 26 adults, 4 young children GRT's in the wider community, 153 recorded their ethnicity as White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller in the 2011 Census. 	<p>None –</p> <p>Community Connections Officers will undertake Welfare Checks and a Community Impact Assessment to consider whether a site would be appropriate for Negotiated Stopping up to a maximum of 28 days. This is an opportunity to consider the best needs of the GRT community and foster more positive race relations.</p>	<p>None Consider suitability of site for Negotiated Stopping</p>	N/A

	<p>Pupils in Plymouth Schools (2012):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 Romany pupils • 6 White Irish Traveller • Evidence suggests that GRT might be unlawfully discriminated against when applying for jobs and so conceal their ethnicity when applying for work. Many GRTs are self-employed, but they receive little financial help or advice on starting up a mobile business. • There is little available evidence about benefits take up amongst GRT communities and locally it is known that this is not a service they tend to access. <p>Equality and Human Rights Commission (Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers – 2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread racism against GRTs prevalent. • Lack of GRT temporary stopping place is a significant issue 			
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	<p>affecting this 'racial or ethnic' group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of accommodation for GRT residential use effectively leads to widespread exclusion from public services. 			
Sexual orientation - including civil partnership	<p>Community Data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National estimates are that between 5-7% of the population are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual. There is no published data about the sexual orientation make-up of the GRT communities either nationally or locally. 	None – sexual orientation concerns are not relevant to this specific proposal	None	N/A

STAGE 3: ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING? IF SO, PLEASE RECORD ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Local priorities	Implications	Timescale and who is responsible
Pay equality for women, and staff with disabilities	<p>GRT's are one of the most deprived groups in Britain.</p> <p>Providing this policy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assist with the seasonal economic travelling patterns of GRT's. enable access to routine healthcare (e.g. post and ante natal care to address the high rates of perinatal and infant mortality and significantly shorter lifespans). This will have a positive impact on service delivery as it should lead to less use of emergency services. enable access to educational provision 	

	<p>GRTs will also be able to access other routine services that improve quality of life outcomes (e.g. refuse collection and police support regarding racist incidents).</p> <p>Provision of this policy may provide opportunity for members of the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community to seek work in the local area.</p>	
<p>Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.</p>	<p>Provision of this policy may result in a reduction of tensions between the settled community and the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community, by managing with Unauthorised Encampments in the in an effective manner.</p>	
<p>Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.</p>	<p>Effective management of Unauthorised encampments is essential in building positive community relations.</p>	
<p>Human rights Please refer to guidance</p>	<p>GRTs have enjoyed the same rights of protection as everyone else under the terms of the Human Rights Act 1998 including adequate accommodation. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation • Advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and others • Foster good relations between these groups. <p>Improved site provision will evidence that we are committed to improving the quality of life for all in our city.</p>	

STAGE 4: PUBLICATION

Matt Garrett

Service Director

Date 06/01/2021