

6 Key Questions for your Election Candidates

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The Traveller Movement 

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) people are distinct ethnic groups, recognised in law, yet they rarely receive the same recognition as other ethnic minority communities. This is despite experiencing multiple disadvantages and regularly facing discrimination.

Compared to the general population, GRT people have worse health outcomes including much lower life expectancy. At school, they are more likely to face bullying or exclusion, and less likely to attain qualifications. They encounter discrimination throughout their lives and, more often than not, their experiences of authority are negative ones.

And at election time, these communities are often used as a political football and have their voices ignored!

That is why Operation Traveller Vote and the Traveller Movement are calling on all prospective parliamentary candidates for the 2019 General Election to outline how they will support Gypsies, Roma and Travellers if elected.

Accommodation

Since August 2015, planning policy has required Gypsies and Travellers to be permanently travelling for work in order to retain their 'Gypsy' status and have a settled, authorised place to live. This results in more unauthorised encampments, a waste of public money and is particularly unfair to those who can no longer travel – the elderly, disabled and women with young children.

Will you support moving back to the old, fairer planning definition to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of Gypsies and Travellers?

Discrimination and equality

Hate crimes towards the GRT communities often go unreported. In research by the Traveller Movement, 96% of GRT people said they have been discriminated against because of their ethnicity. Part of the problem is that there is not enough public pressure to address discrimination and inequality experienced by GRT people.

Will you and your party campaign for the fair and equal treatment of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, and challenge the discrimination and Antigypsyism they face, including in politics?



#OperationTravellerVote



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Education

Gypsy and Traveller children are failed by an education system which does not include their rich history, culture and values. This has created an environment rife with ignorance and bullying. Nearly 9 out of every 10 children and young people from a GRT background have suffered racial abuse.

Will you and your party support the development of a national framework, with measurable outcomes, to improve the access and educational attainment of Gypsy Roma Traveller children in schools, further & higher education?

Health

Compared with the general population, Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to suffer bad health. This includes life expectancy 10 to 12 years lower than the national average and infant mortality three times higher than the national average.

How will you and your party ensure that Gypsies and Travellers are included in the NHS's monitoring systems so health inequalities can finally be tackled?

Criminal Justice

Ethnic minority children are disproportionately represented in youth custody, and sadly this is true of Gypsy Roma and Traveller children too. Youth justice institutions are not doing enough to ensure children are receiving the support they need to lead positive and constructive lives upon release.

What will you and your party do to 1) change the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers entering the criminal justice system, and 2) ensure all children in custody are able to access good training, education and skills for jobs they'd like to do when released?

Economic Inclusion

According to the 2011 Census GRT experience high levels of economic exclusion. GRT of all ages have the highest rates of economic inactivity - men 39% and women 60%. 14% of GRT young people (16-24) are unemployed, the highest for any ethnic group. At almost a third, Gypsy and Irish Travellers were also most likely to be inactive (and not a student) at 31%. Only 30% of GRT young people are students, the lowest proportion for any ethnic group.

Will you and your party commit to providing targeted provision to address the economic inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities?

