

Annual Conference

FUTURE VOICES

*"Celebrating diverse perspectives
for a brighter future"*

Keynote Speaker

Seyi Obakin OBE, Chair of Youth Futures Foundation

Workshops include:

- **Workshop 1:**
From margins to movements
- **Workshop 2:**
The different paths to a prosperous future
- **Workshop 3:** Empowering entrepreneurship
- **Workshop 4:** Is there really no room at the Inn?
- **Workshop 5:** Spotting the red flags



Overview

At Traveller Movement's 2023 conference, **'Future Voices'** will celebrate the diversity of Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller youth and community. While the UK is experiencing multiple interconnecting crises, we must keep moving forward and commit to creating better outcomes for the next generation. By creating intergenerational dialogue and focusing on opportunity and access, we can build a brighter future.

We are not under any illusions about the barriers these communities face. From education to employment to politics, there is a lack of access, inclusion and opportunity. The cost-of-living crisis, voter ID changes and lack of access to adequate healthcare disproportionately affects ethnic minorities. Economic struggles are simultaneously affecting, and are affected by, an unfolding mental health crisis. Community reports of deaths by suicide – particularly amongst children and young people– are increasing at an alarming rate.

Coupling these poor outcomes with frequent incidents of hate crime and discrimination, there is no doubt that Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities are at a systematic disadvantage from the general population. While there is wide-ranging variety between Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities, all are united by the fact that they are poorly served by policymakers and public services. Despite parliaments acknowledgement of this failure, little change can be seen on the ground. There has never been a more important time for young people to take a stand and engage with the political landscape.

We know about the lower rates of educational attainment and higher levels of unemployment within these communities, but we rarely highlight the pockets of good news. For example, the number Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller students who started a degree course at a university or college doubled in 2022. We rarely celebrate our successes and at this conference we wish to shine a light on good practice and good role models.



To address the profound challenges ahead, the 2023 Traveller Movement conference will bring together key policymakers, passionate advocates, motivational business leaders and inspiring young people to consider the relationship between education, opportunity, and access within GRT communities specifically.

From panel to workshop, the guiding thorough line of **'Future Voices'** is identifying how we support and empower the next generation.

During economically and politically trying times, it is easy to feel like there is no way out, but we want to draw attention to the light at the end of the tunnel. This year our conference brings together an inspirational cohort of diverse, intergenerational voices. Through a network of support, Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller youth can be empowered to seize new opportunities and make politics work for them.

Keynote Speaker: Seyi Obakin OBE, Chair of Youth Futures Foundation

Panel 1: What is the Road Map?

Panellists: Charlie Doherty (The Traveller Movement); Dr. Jon Tan (Leeds Beckett University); Phil Regan (The Traveller Movement) Rosemary Lloyd (Ministry of Justice)

Are we doing enough to offer good employability skills and inclusive strategies to open up pathways to fair and equitable education training and employment opportunities? This panel brings together a wealth of knowledge and experience to share successful policies and hear directly from practitioners and community voices.

Panel 2: Reembracing our sense of belonging (a seat around the campfire)

Panellists: Prof. Colin Clark (University of the West of Scotland & TM Advisory Board Member); Declan O Driscoll (The Traveller Movement); Laura Angela Collins (The Traveller Movement); Olivia Hammond (Romani Gypsy FE Teacher); Sally Carr (National Youth Agency & TM Advisory Board Member)

Finding pride in ourselves as Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities can often present a significant challenge, given the negative stereotypes portrayed in the media and by our own politicians. As diverse communities we must build on our strengths and reembrace our sense of belonging. Can our communities rise to the challenge, embrace difference and all have a seat around the campfire? This panel of intergenerational experts will share their experiences and discuss this question.

Workshops

Workshop 1: From Margins to Movements: Building Political Power for Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Youth

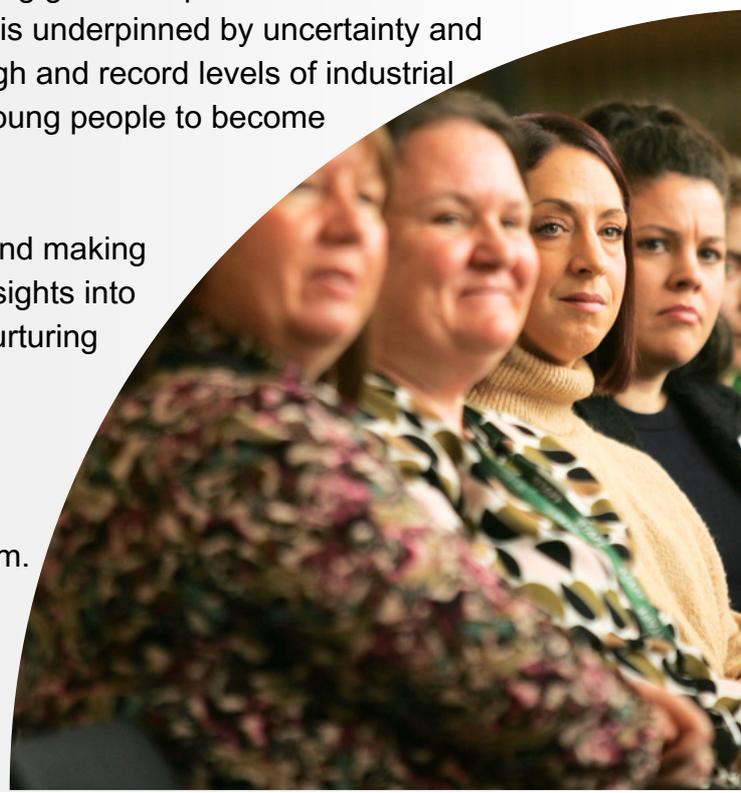
Austin Harney (Civil Servant and PCS Union Representative in the Justice Sector); Elisha Holt (I have a voice); Jimmy Doherty (The Traveller Movement); Virgil Bitu (Roma Human Rights Activist Green Party)

Romani (Gypsy), Roma, Traveller young people are seeking greater representation across the parliamentary political system. In a political climate which is underpinned by uncertainty and change, with the cost of living crisis, inflation at all time high and record levels of industrial action, there has been no more of an important time for young people to become engaged in politics.

Explore the vital themes of accessibility, representation, and making politics work for our communities. Gain some valuable insights into empowering strategies, promoting political literacy, and nurturing active participation.

Listen and discuss increasing political engagement and representation for the Romani (Gypsy), Roma, Traveller Communities with voices from across the political spectrum.

Together, let's use this workshop as an opportunity to build a future where political inclusion knows no bounds.



Workshop 2: The Different Paths to a Prosperous Future

Dan Rosenberg (Public Law Solicitor in Education and Community Care for Simpson Millar); *Olivia Hammond (Romani Gypsy FE Teacher)*; *Shannon Roncarni (Youth Advisory Group)*

Educational experiences vary greatly between all children but none more clearly than those of Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller children young people. In an education sector which continually attempts to use existing and new models that standardise large parts of the system, is it really a surprise Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller children and young people find education difficult to access and succeed? It is vital for the success of our young people that the education system works to support Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller young people, and move away from a model that makes young people, families and school staff work hard to serve our education system. Now is the time for our young people to decide what works best for them to allow them to succeed.

Workshop 3 : Empowering entrepreneurship

Katrina Sale (Head of Partnerships at the Entrepreneurs Network & Chair's the APPG for Entrepreneurship); *Shane Manogue (CEO of Lovit Technologies Ltd)*; *Shannon McDonagh (University of Surrey)*; *Wolfgang Douglas (CEO and Founder of RomaniChals Rals Modular Homes)*;

Join us for an inclusive and dynamic workshop tailored specifically for Romani (Gypsy), Traveller, and Roma individuals interested in pursuing self-employment. Gain valuable insights into the process and challenges of setting up a business, from registering with Companies House to understanding the importance of public liability insurance and VAT registration. Engage with inspiring business leaders who will share their stories and provide guidance. Connect with like-minded individuals, expand your network, and foster meaningful connections. Embrace the opportunities that await and unleash your entrepreneurial spirit in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Workshop 4: Is there really no room at the Inn?

Charlie Doherty (The Traveller Movement); *Chloe Pugh (Equality & Human Rights Commission)*; *Martin Howe (Martin Howe. Senior Partner and Public Law Solicitor for Howe & Co.)* *Marc Willers (Garden Court Chambers)*

In a world where we are ever increasingly focused on the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion and human rights, how can it be possible that the leisure and hospitality industry still regularly discriminates against Traveller people by refusing to offer services based on race? With cases still being regularly referred and reported, why are we seeing situations reminiscent of the 1950's 'No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish' in relation to predominantly Irish Traveller communities, continue without wider sector understanding or challenge of these out-of-date, archaic and wholly unjust actions?

Workshop 5: Spotting the Red Flags: Healthy Relationships and Wellbeing

Kate Lexén (Tender); *Crystal Grace Smith (Traveller Movement Youth Advisory Group)*; *Laura Angela Collins (The Traveller Movement)*; *Michaela Queensborough (Against Violence & Abuse)*; *Tina McInerney (The Traveller Movement)*

Women and girls need to know their rights and understand the warning signs of abuse. It is important for all young people to know the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship. This workshop will focus on relationship health and safety. What are the red flags in a relationship? What support is available for girls and their parents? How can we keep our daughters safe, happy and healthy? This workshop explores these questions and considers what needs to happen to support and empower the next generation.



Agenda

09:30 – 10:00: Registration and Networking

10:00 – 10:10: Welcome from the Chair

Pauline Anderson-Melvin OBE (TM Trustee and Education & Inclusion Consultant) and
Jimmy Doherty (Traveller Movement Intern)

10:10 – 10:30: Keynote Address: Seyi Obakin OBE, Chair of Youth Futures Foundation

10:30 - 10:35: Covid Inquiry: Our stories

Speech from Martin Howe & Marc Willers on TM progress in the Covid inquiry & how we
can ensure GRT voices are properly heard

10:35 – 11:45: Panel 1: What is the roadmap?

Dr. Jon Tan (Leeds Beckett University)
Charlie Doherty (The Traveller Movement)
Rosemary Lloyd (Ministry of Justice)
Phil Regan (The Traveller Movement)

11:45 – 11:55: Refreshment break

11:55 – 13:05: Panel 2: Reembracing our sense of belonging (a seat around the campfire)

Sally Carr (National Youth Agency & TM Advisory Group Member)
Declan O'Driscoll (The Traveller Movement)
Olivia Hammond (Romani Gypsy FE Teacher)
Laura Angela Collins (The Traveller Movement)
Professor Colin Clarke (University of West Scotland & TM Advisory Group Member)

13:05 – 14:05: Lunch

14:05 – 15:35: Workshops

Workshop 1: From Margins to Movements: Building Political Power for Gypsy, Roma,
and Traveller Youth
Workshop 2: The Different Paths to a Prosperous Future
Workshop 3: Empowering entrepreneurship
Workshop 4: Is there really no room at the Inn?
Workshop 5: Spotting the Red Flags: Healthy Relationships and Wellbeing

15:35 – 16:05: Plenary Session

16:05 - 16:15: Closing Keynote

Crystal Grace Smith (Traveller Movement Youth Advisory Group)

16:15: Conference ends

Have your voice heard in the COVID inquiry

The Traveller Movement has
been named a
Core Participant in the
Covid-19 Inquiry – Module 4
(Vaccines and Therapeutics).

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities were abandoned during the pandemic, the inquiry will be a place where we can have our voices heard and ensure that the same mistakes cannot happen again.

In order to ensure the nuance of people's experiences are heard the inquiry is putting together a film "Every Story Matters" which will be made up of interviews with individuals telling the story of their pandemic.

During the conference we will be interviewing people who wish to share their story. This is an opportunity for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to have their voices and experiences put on record. By participating in this film policy makers will have no excuse to abandon us again in the future.

Please fill in the consent form in your conference pack if you would like to have your story heard.

Co-Chairs



Pauline Anderson-Melvin OBE

Pauline is an Irish Traveller who grew up in Yorkshire. She has spent a lifetime in education as a teacher, head teacher and until recently as Director of Education for a city council and received an OBE for services to children and young people in education in the Queen's New Year Honours 2020. Pauline is currently working as an independent consultant and continues in her longstanding role as Chair of The Traveller Movement.



Jimmy Doherty

Jimmy Doherty is young Irish Traveller from London and an intern at the Traveller Movement. He is currently studying media at his college and is a member of the Youth Advisory Group (YAG).

Speakers



Keynote Speaker - Seyi Obakin

Chair of Youth Futures Foundation. Seyi has been the chief executive of Centre point since 2009. He has a passionate concern for disadvantaged young people. He is a chartered accountant and has worked in corporate banking and a wide range of social housing provision. He has also been involved in research and inquiries into family life and the support families need, lifelong literacy and youth enterprise.



Jon Tan

Jon Tan is a senior lecturer in Education for the Centre for Race, Education & Decoloniality (CRED) at the Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University. In 2022, he was lead author for CRED's report on the Traveller Movement's work through Open Doors Education & Training to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities post pandemic.



Charlie Doherty

Charlie is a young Irish Traveller man from London. He left school at 11 to work in the family business, but then returned to education at the age of 19, starting an access course in business studies, at Stanmore College. Alongside his studies he became an Administrative Intern for the Traveller Movement. He has now become the Traveller Movements Youth Engagement and Development Officer. Next year he will attend university to study either Theology or Politics.



Phil Regan

Phil has been dedicated to working with Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities since 1998, collaborating with universities, public bodies, charities, and the private sector. He initially joined the Traveller Movement in 2002 and currently serves as the Youth Participation Officer, leading partnership efforts for the Reaching Out Programme. Hailing from a mixed ethnic background, Phil is fuelled by an unwavering passion for human rights and justice.

Speakers



Rosemary Lloyd

Rosemary Lloyd worked as a Senior Solicitor at the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) for twenty years. Her role involved running discrimination cases for individuals to test, clarify and extend the law on discrimination and human rights. She now works as a full time Tribunal Judge in the Social Entitlement, Employment and Immigration & Asylum Tribunals.



Sally Carr MBE

Sally Carr MBE, is a member of The Traveller Movement Advisory Group. Sally was awarded an MBE in 2012 for services to marginalised children and young people. Sally has worked across many sectors and is a Trustee and Director of a number of community, youth, and sports organisations in the U.K. Using the pronouns, She/They, Sally is a proud LGBTQ+ Romany Gypsy.



Declan O'Driscoll

Declan is the Senior Policy & Advocacy Officer at the Traveller Movement overseeing education policy and the Education Advise & Advocacy Support Unit (EAASU), as well as the Equality & Social Justice Unit (ESJU). Declan works steering multiple community and support groups; such as, the Pride Road Collective, a group of LGBTQ+ Gypsy, Roma and Traveller individuals who develop resources for support. Declan is also Vice-Chair of Trustees for an Academy Trust in Hampshire.



Olivia Hammond

Olivia Hammond is the Creative Marketing Coordinator at Lancaster & Morecambe College, an advocate for GRT people accessing education, a founding member of Pride Road Collective: Supporting LGBTQ+ GRT People and a Romany Gypsy, currently living in Preston, Lancashire.



Colin Clark

Colin Clark is an Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) and Professor of Sociology and Social Policy in the School of Education and Social Sciences at the University of the West of Scotland. He is an Advisory Board member of the Traveller Movement.



Laura Angela Collins

Laura Angela Collins is a mother to three children and the author of 'The Tinker Menace; The Diary of an Irish Traveller'. She chairs 'Justice 4 All Women & Children', a support group for survivors of institutional abuse. She was awarded a Traveller Pride Award in 2019 and has worked independently alongside the Traveller Movement on a variety of campaigns. Now, she is the Women's Equality Intern at the Traveller Movement, where she continues to amplify the voices of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities.



Closing Keynote Speaker - Crystal Grace Smith

Crystal possesses a diploma in law & legal professions and is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree in criminology & criminal law. She is certified in mental health first aid and operates a helpline for Traveller women encountering domestic abuse, assisting with matters like education, housing, legal advice, and mental health. She is profoundly passionate about aiding women in my community to achieve their objectives, providing them with the tools needed to exit harmful situations, and establishing an action plan to ensure safety and an improved quality of life.