

In 2003 Irish Traveller Johnny Delaney then 15 years old



Was kicked to death in a racist attack in Ellesmere Port



300,000 people in the UK are Romany Gypsies & Irish Travellers





The Battle ground - know your friends, know your enemies

- The Public
- Gypsies & Travellers
- a very few friends
- The Horses
- The Facts
- Circular 1/2006
- Housing Act 2004
- Government Office
- DCLG
- Equality
- Right

YOU

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- Gypsies & Travellers
 - The minority (ASB)
- NIMBYs
- Land Owners
- The misguided & misinformed
- Your settled communities
- Your officers
- Your Cabinet Colleagues
- Fellow members
- Some of your friends
- The Planning system

How did we get into this mess?

- Growing intolerance of nomadism after the War
- Employment changes
- 1968 Caravan Act
- 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act
- 2004 Housing Act
- Planning Circular 1/2006
- Regional Spatial Strategy



The Conundrum

- The deep-rooted prejudices against Gypsies and Travellers from within the settled population, often linked to historic incidents, of inappropriate encampments, unauthorised developments and crime and disorder involving that group.
- The demand from the public that you “do something” about the problem.
- The demand from the self same public that any solutions do not impact on them or their communities
- The identification of potential sites that stand any chance of gaining planning approval.



Barriers to Progress

- The perception of many elected members that, to actively seek solutions for the Gypsy and Traveller community that impact directly on those in the settled community that elect them, is career limiting.
- The high visibility and emotive slant generated through the role of the press in reporting on Gypsy and Traveller issues.
- The lack of knowledge and understanding within the settled population and Politicians of all parties of the issues and discrimination facing the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

What are your options?



So, you have a choice

DO NOTHING

- Cycle of Deprivation and hatred continues
- The high cost of dealing with inappropriate encampments continues.
- Planning permission granted on appeal in unsuitable locations
- Racial tensions continue.

MAKE PROVISION

- Requires and understanding of the problem and the issues
- Requires at least the introduction of a network of small sites
- Requires some community buy in
- Requires toleration and understanding

So what can you do ?

- Talk to your fellow members
- Talk to your communities
 - Parish Councils / WI / Rotary etc
- Explain the History & Culture
- Put the problem into context - explain the saga over the past 30 years
- Explain the facts - Education / Health / Employment
- Explain what has to be done
- Explain the outcome from the "do nothing" approach
- Use your Gypsy community
- Develop your Council's strategy - non site specific
- Engage with surrounding Councils
- Engage with your press

What do you need ?

- A cunning plan
- A lead officer at Assistant Director level
- Members agreeing to talk about the issue
- Council agreement on their Housing, Planning & Equalities strategies linked to 1/2006
- Police support
- Community Buy in
- Some successes!!
- Your County Council / other Unitary departments



Things to think about

1. Who has the **lead**? - Officer / Member
2. Make the **transition** from enforcement to solutions
3. List the current G&T **issues** (unauthorised developments - inappropriate encampments - crime - litter - damage - anti-social behaviour)
4. Think through your **policies** and link them to solutions to the problems.
5. **Research** your subjects - talk to them - research their history - look at the difficulties facing them - talk to any families who are now in bricks and mortar.
6. Find out which traditional **stopping places** have been stopped up over the past 10 years - can you use them at least for TSP or Transit ?



7. Consider holding a **workshop** session to involve members and local G&T reps to determine their priorities (Education / Health / Accommodation)
8. Look at the **needs** of each group - Romany English / Irish Commercial Travellers / New age travellers.
9. Decide what range of **sites** are required. Accommodation / Private / Transit / TSP - use the data from your Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation needs Assessment.
10. Try and find a core of **members** on your side.
11. Present **policies & strategies** at Full Council - sales trick - how to address the demands of the Council tax payers to minimise the cost - Ask them if doing nothing is a solution for the Traveller community or the settled community Do NOT go site specific. Bring along a G&T rep to answer questions.



12. If a County Authority, engage with District Council members and officers to take forward **planning applications** on a joint approach
13. Use a **third party** (RSL) for your own applications to resolve the first resolution and appeal issue. (Unable to appeal your own decision regardless of the reasons)
14. Engage with **Parish Councils** before going site specific
15. Hold **information events** involving Strategic Planning, Enforcement Planners, Housing Officers, Members & G&T officers about the principles. Involve the press. Explain the planning process.
16. Be **open** about what you are going to do.
17. Engage with affected PCs through officer / member presentations excluding the Ward member or any member involved in the Planning decisions. Do not lobby but do **explain** the strategy and policies of the Council.



18. Offer a further meeting if required. Aim to **inform** local opinion. Engage and listen to those who attend but who do not speak in public.
19. Use your **PCSOs**
20. If PP approved set up a joint **working group** of key players including a PC rep and tenant to deal with reserve matters (ie) landscaping.
21. Give the **PCs** a stake on a whole community basis.
22. Think through **Site Management** and the involvement of the community.
23. Think cross border **sub-regional** and find some more friends

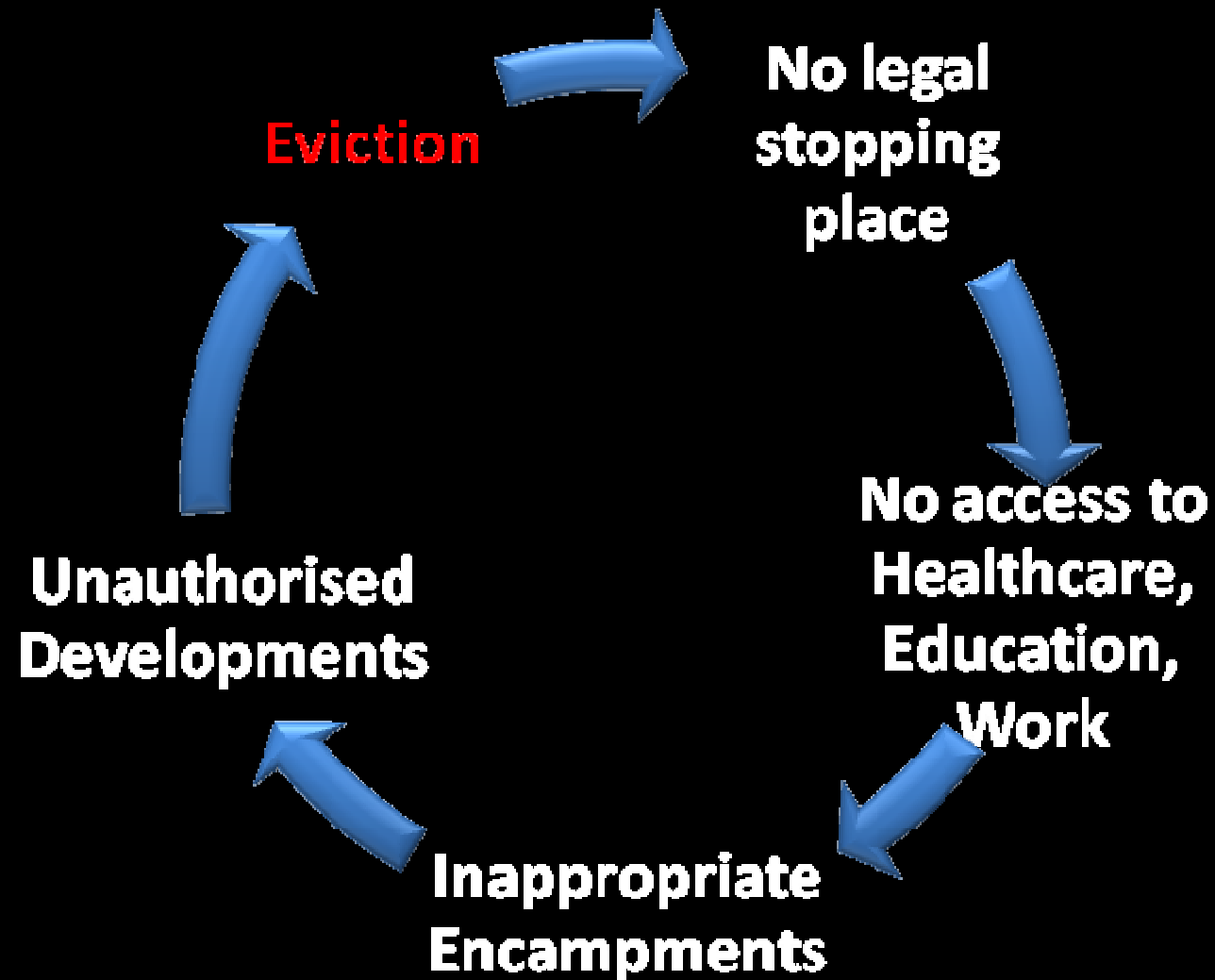
What are your considerations?

- Upholding the rights of all local residents, including Gypsies and Travellers, to live peacefully and safely, with mutual respect for the rights of others.
- Respecting the race, culture, history and lifestyle of the Gypsy Community including their aversion to "bricks and mortar".
- Applying planning policy fairly and firmly in relation to Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- Engaging with Gypsies and Travellers and the local community in order to make available appropriate and authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites

Considerations

- Identifying suitable additional sites, where necessary, and accommodating the service needs of travelling people, wherever possible.
- Giving full consideration to proposed private sites when Gypsies and Travellers approach the council in advance about their proposals.
- Safeguarding and defending the local environment and local facilities & services from issues flowing from unlawful and unplanned Gypsy and Traveller encampments and developments.
- Promoting greater community cohesion between the settled and Travelling communities.

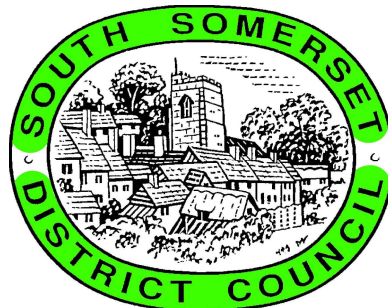
The £18M Cycle of Gypsy Deprivation



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2007-2008
*Neighbourhood and
Community Champions:
The Role of Elected Members*

2006-2007
*Improving Rural Services
Empowering Communities*

2005-2006
Getting Closer to Communities



Where do you go from here?

- Form a **task group** of members and officers to take forward site identification and progress site provision (use Scrutiny?) 
- Identify local G&T groups to bring in representatives in a consultancy role. (You need to do it WITH the G&T community not TO them)
- What are your RSS targets (Does it matter)?
- Where is it in your Corporate Plan?
- Have you got an up to date **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Strategy?** 
- Decide whether you are going to own and manage sites or provide and lease/sell?
- How are you going to assist in encouraging private provision?
- Develop a Communications strategy, engage with your local media
- Start your **land search** 
- Have an Education programme for other members and the Public / Parish Councils before going site specific. (Use the tools that already exist, use your Gypsy reps)
- Are you going to do it alone or on a sub regional collective basis?
- Think about whether you want a Countywide Traveller Unit (Northampton)
- Organise a sub regional event to broaden understanding and bring in other provider reps (Health, Education, Social Services)
- Identify G&T events in your local area (Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month in June) to spread the word
- Identify success stories and use them