



# Traveller Movement Annual Conference 2022

## The Intersection of Poverty, Inequality and Mental Health

Thursday 17th November  
2022

### Workshops include:

- Making ends meet
- We need to talk about suicide
- No right way to be a Traveller
- See us, Hear us, Don't forget us

**Keynote Speaker:**  
**Mary Kelly Foy MP )**



The UK is experiencing multiple, interconnecting crises. The Covid-19 pandemic – and its associated policy responses – continues to produce disproportionate outcomes for minority communities in myriad ways that will be outlined in the forthcoming independent public inquiry.

In addition to the health inequalities both created and entrenched by the pandemic, people from a wide variety of backgrounds are experiencing the most significant cost-of-living crisis in decades. Inflation is rising, and Jack Monroe's work with the Office of National Statistics has shown that the inflation rate for some essential food staples is as high as 50%. Energy prices in the UK are spiralling, with the energy watchdog warning bills could go as high as £3,300 this winter.

The impact of this cost-of-living crisis is having a devastating impact on people in the UK, who have endured a lost decade of wage stagnation and reduced access to benefits and other public services due to the political choice of austerity. But the inescapable reality is some groups will be more affected than others. Moving into this crisis, some people from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller backgrounds have lower rates of educational attainment and higher levels of unemployment than the non-GRT population.

Economic struggles are simultaneously affecting, and are affected by, an unfolding mental health emergency. Waiting times for Children and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) now routinely exceed a year, and thousands of children and young people have attempted suicide whilst still waiting for treatment. The continued failure of the NHS and the Coroner's office to fully include ethnicities in their data frameworks means there is no reliable data for people from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller backgrounds. However, community reports of deaths by suicide – particularly amongst children and young people – are increasing at an alarming rate.

To address these profound challenges, the 2022 Traveller Movement conference will bring together Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community members, campaigners, policymakers, and other stakeholders to consider the relationship between poverty, inequality, and mental health within GRT communities specifically.

In many communities there is a stigma attached to discussions around material deprivation and mental health. This year our conference will push back against this stigma and instead promote the narrative that poverty and mental illness are not individual failings for which people should be shamed; but the result of structural and institutional failings which lead to the discrimination and disempowerment of entire communities and ethnic groups.



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND PANELS

**Keynote Speaker: Mary Kelly Foy MP (Chair of GRT APPG)**

## **Panel 1: Ending the Stigma**

**Panellists:** *Martin Gallagher (PhD Candidate & Mental Health Activist); RoseMarie Maughan (Irish Traveller activist & Irish Traveller Movement); Department of Health and Social Care*

Exploring how the mental health and wellbeing of Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers are affected by economic and civil inequalities, discrimination, cultural expectations, and structural barriers in accessing employment and services.

## **Panel 2: The cost-of-living crisis**

**Panellists:** *Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; Dr David Smith (Reader in social policy, Anglia Ruskin University); Department for Work and Pensions; Olivia Hammond (GRT Project Facilitator & GRT activist)*

Navigating the impact of spiralling energy prices on poverty and pre-existing economic inequalities for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities; and considering the policy interventions and support required for economic inclusion and social justice.



# WORKSHOPS

## **1. MAKING ENDS MEET**

**Speakers:** *Prof Colin Clark (University of West Scotland); Irish in Britain; Baie Varey (Romany Gypsy/Food Group Admin); Chilli Reid (Advice UK); Christian Zik Nsonwu (Irish in Britain); Tony Panayiotou (Trussel Trust);*

The cost-of-living crisis is profoundly affecting the lives of millions of people all over the country. Although Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people are known for their resilience and are experts in surviving with very little, the impact of spiralling inflation and energy prices is also affecting these communities. This session will explore how people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds are navigating the unfolding crises, with a particular focus on how deep community links are used to further develop systems of mutual support, solidarity, and resilience in the face of Government inaction.

The workshop will bring policymakers, changemakers, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people together to explore how to secure lasting and positive change from the grassroots up and from the government down.



## **2. WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT SUICIDE**

**Speakers:** *Aileen Kitchin (Specialist in Public Health Medicine & TM Trustee); Lourdes Colclough (Rethink Mental Illness); John McCarthy (Social Care Worker & TM Trustee); Mubeen Bhutta (Samaritans)*

The suicide of a loved one is an incredibly traumatic experience. This workshop will give Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people a safe space to talk about what support they need from the NHS, the third sector and within the community when they are affected by suicide. Research confirms that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities face significant health inequalities which exacerbates the risks known to increase an individual's vulnerability to suicide as well as weaken protective factors. In order to help reduce suicide rates, it is imperative that we consult and work alongside communities and individuals.

This workshop will discuss how we need to shape future interventions and what solutions are necessary to have a real impact on reducing suicide rates within Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

## **3. NO RIGHT WAY TO BE A TRAVELLER**

**Speakers:** *Fr Dan Mason (National Catholic Chaplain for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers); Lois Brooks-Jones (Romani Activist); Dan Cash (London Gypsies and Travellers Community and Campaigns Officer); Laura Angela Collins (Author and Community Activist)*

No two Gypsies, Roma or Travellers are the same, but there can be a lot of pressure to live life a certain way - to marry young, only to work within family business, or to stay in an unhappy relationship. Those Gypsy, Roma and Traveller individuals who decide to live their lives outside the accepted norms, are often shamed for it.

Shame and pressure can push Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people to hide that they are LGBT, experiencing domestic abuse, attending college, experiencing mental health difficulties or struggling to make ends meet. Hiding your identity and experience can negatively impact your mental health. Quick flash, crime, arranged marriage and suicide can be a result of shaming and scandalising.

This workshop will celebrate the strength and courage of the individuals who, despite taking a different path, are still very much part of their ethnic communities. We will explore, in a safe space, pathways to healthy and happy lives and communities.

## **4. SEE US, HEAR US, DON'T FORGET US!**

**Speakers:** *Shane Curran/Hannah Culkin (Open Doors Education and Training); Charlie Doherty (TM Intern); Misha Haycock (Policy & Campaigns Manager, Youth Access)*

The Traveller Movement's Roads to Success research in 2021 identified how Youth Services across the United Kingdom are not delivered uniformly or consistently. Organisations in the public, private, and voluntary sectors, who are involved in the commissioning or delivery of youth work services, are missing opportunities for partnership and collaborative working, leading to a disjointed provision of services for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people. There is a mental health crisis within these communities and among young people, and there appears to be limited awareness, engagement and understanding about this in the youth sector.

Drawing on the expertise and experience of those service users and those delivering youth services, this workshop will explore how the public, private, and voluntary youth sectors can promote more joined-up ways of working that helps to support the mental health of young Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, while promoting pathways into better training and employment opportunities.

# AGENDA

## PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**09:30 – 10:00:** Registration and Networking

**10:00 – 10:10:** Welcome from the Chair

Pauline Melvin OBE (TM Trustee and Director of Learning & Skills, Derby City Council)

**10:10 – 10:30:** Keynote Address

Mary Kelly Foy MP (Chair of GRT APPG)

**10:30 – 11:40:** Panel 1: Ending the Stigma

Martin Gallagher (PhD Candidate and Mental Health Activist);  
RoseMarie Maughan (Irish Traveller Activist & Irish Traveller Movement)  
Department of Health and Social Care

**11:40 – 11:50:** Refreshment break

**11:50 – 13:00:** Panel 2: The Cost-of-living crisis

Dr. David Smith (Reader in Social Policy, Anglia Ruskin University)  
Department of Work and Pensions  
Olivia Hammond (GRT Project Facilitator and GRT Activist)  
Dr Sara Reis (Women's Budget Group)

**13:00 – 14:00:** Lunch

**14:00 – 15:25:** Workshops

Workshop 1: Making Ends Meet  
Workshop 2: We Need to Talk about Suicide  
Workshop 3: No Right Way to be a Traveller: Celebrating the Individual  
Workshop 4: See us, Hear us, Don't Forget us!

**15:30 – 16:00:** Plenary Session

**16:00:** Conference ends

### CHANGES TO THE PROGRAMME:

TM reserves the right to alter the programme, venue and the timing of the sessions without notice due to unforeseen circumstances.



To book online, visit our 'What's on' page on [TM website](#)  
[The Traveller Movement](#)

If your organisation would like to book and pay by invoice, please ensure you have a [purchase order number](#) and email your request to [officeadmin@travellermovement.org.uk](mailto:officeadmin@travellermovement.org.uk)

Booking requests by email must include delegates' name and contact details, workshop choice and purchase order number for it to be confirmed.

For any enquiries, please contact the Office Manager at [officeadmin@travellermovement.org.uk](mailto:officeadmin@travellermovement.org.uk) or phone 020 7607 2002

**Conference Venue: Lambeth Town Hall, 1 Brixton Hill, London, SW2 1RW**

## PRICES

**BAND A: £179.00**

Statutory/Commercial organisations and Voluntary/Community/Charitable organisations with a turnover of over £500,000

**BAND B: £119.00**

Voluntary/Community/Charitable organisations with a turnover up to £500,000 including Traveller Education Services

**BAND C: £85.00**

Voluntary/Community/Charitable organisations and groups with turnover up to £500,000 and less than 10 employees

**STUDENT RATE: £25.00**

**Limited number of free places available for Unwaged Travellers. Please contact the office.**

## DATA PROTECTION

TM will use the information you provide on your booking form, and additional information you may provide in the future, for administrating our conference. We will not disclose this information to any other person or organisation, except in connection with the above purpose.

## BOOKING CONDITIONS SUBSTITUTIONS AND CANCELLATIONS:

All cancellations must be in writing. Cancellations made more than 2 weeks before the event will receive a full refund minus a charge of 10% per ticket price per delegate. If cancellations are made after this time payment must be made in full. Substitutions can be made at any time without charge.

The conference will provide an ideal platform for information sharing, and a vital space for discussion amongst Gypsy, Traveller, Roma community members; Elected members; Local Authority employees, planners etc; Prisons and Probation staff; Youth Workers; Police; Civil Servants; Teachers; Funders; Health and Community Workers; Voluntary Sector Professionals; Legal Professionals; Statutory service providers; Social Services; Media Professionals