

# **Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service**

## **Service Report 2011/12**

## **1. Introduction and overview of DCC Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service (GTLS)**

### **1.1 Vision Statement**

To create a sustainable environment throughout Devon in which the rights and responsibilities of both Gypsy and Travellers (G/T's), and the settled community are respected.

### **1.2 Ownership**

For the purpose of employing staff and the overall management of the GTLS, the Policy, Partnership and External Affairs team within Services for Communities takes the lead in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder responsible for the Service.

The staffing within the service consists of:

One full time Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer (GTLO)

One full time Assistant Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officer (AGTLO)

Overall management is provided by the lead for the service within the Policy, Partnership and External Affairs Team.

### **1.3 Why does the GTLS exist and what is its core purpose?**

The GTLS exists:

- To improve the relationship between settled and G/T communities across Devon, by working to develop a better understanding between the differing cultures in order to help break down the barriers that exist.
- To manage the two authorised sites owned or leased by Devon County Council
- To manage the Unauthorised Encampments (UEs) across land owned by Devon County Council (DCC) including highways land.
- To work with other agencies across the County implementing the Unauthorised Encampment (UE) joint protocol between DCC, district councils and other agencies such as Health, Education and the Police.
- To reduce friction through consistent and fair application of a code of conduct, upon which toleration of UEs depends.
- To respond to consultations on planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- To ensure that there is consistent delivery of services to the G/T community.

In addition, the service is the main point of contact for both the G/T community and the settled community for all G/T issues and specific case work - co-ordinating G/T related issues within and outside of DCC in an effective, efficient and economic manner.

## **1.4 The GTLS Aims and Objectives**

### **Aims**

To manage and co-ordinate work relating to G/T's throughout Devon including:

- ❖ Permanent Sites
- ❖ Development and Implementation of G/T policies
- ❖ Unauthorised Encampments (UEs) – DCC land (including the highways)
- ❖ Support to District Councils on development of new sites
- ❖ Support for private site development (through the planning process)
- ❖ Maintaining social inclusion through the involvement of G/T's in developing solutions to problems relating to the community
- ❖ Multi-agency and partnership working in relation to G/T issues

### **Objectives**

- ❖ Minimise conflict between the settled/business and G/T communities by means of information and education
- ❖ Protect the rights of those in the G/T and settled communities to enhance quality of life
- ❖ Support the provision of legitimate, acceptable places for G/T's to stay
- ❖ Reduce anti-social behaviour associated with encampments (both authorised and unauthorised)
- ❖ Support access to education, health and social care services
- ❖ Support access to housing support services for the G/T community when requested
- ❖ Facilitate the G/T community accessing charitable welfare grants as and when needed
- ❖ Ensure consistent application of best practice, legislation and guidance
- ❖ Ensure DCC is represented through participation/involvement at national, regional and local levels in G/T matters
- ❖ Be an advocate for G/T's as and when needed
- ❖ Ensure the participation of G/T and the settled communities in decision making using existing and appropriate new mechanisms of consultation
- ❖ Seek out and maximise sources of external funding to achieve service goals
- ❖ Be a source of information and expertise on G/T issues for all communities across Devon
- ❖ Be a source of information and expertise on G/T issues for external and internal colleagues with G/T responsibilities
- ❖ Be a point of contact for the media in conjunction with DCC's Communications Team
- ❖ Maximise the effectiveness of all agencies with G/T responsibilities through implementation and continuing development of policies and best practice
- ❖ Seek out new innovative ways with partners and agencies to deliver quality services to address recommendations identified through previous reports locally and nationally
- ❖ Provide a consistent approach to the negotiation, toleration and possible eviction of UEs across DCC land with reference to the UE protocol adopted by agencies across the County

## **1.5 Permanent Sites – Sowton and Broadclyst**

DCC has overall management of the two G/T local authority sites: Sowton and Broadclyst.

Sowton consists of 11 pitches, offering permanent residential accommodation. Sowton has been in existence for over 30 years. There continues to be maintenance and improvement works as budgets allow.

Management of the Sowton site is provided through the GTLS. The main duties include liaison with residents; reading letters, support with utility bill issues, guidance and support with accessing agencies, support in times of conflict, reporting of repairs and implementation of repairs. Enforcement of the tenancy agreement is also a function of the GTLS as and when needed.

Broadclyst consists of 5 permanent residential pitches; this site is slightly different in that the land is owned by The National trust. Broadclyst has been in existence for over 30 years and was originally a larger site. We are pleased to report that DCC and The National Trust have agreed to sign a new lease for the site. This recent decision is welcomed after a long period of uncertainty about the future of the Broadclyst site and the families that live there.

Management of the Broadclyst site is provided through the GTLS and has officer attendance at least once a week. As with Sowton, duties include liaison with residents; emptying of coin meters and support to residents as required. Enforcement of the tenancy agreement is also a function of the GTLS as and when needed.

Residents on both sites pay rent and are responsible for paying council tax and utility costs.

There is a long waiting list for the Sowton site. No new residents will be permitted on the Broadclyst site, as per the agreement with the National Trust.

## **1.6 Unauthorised Encampments (UEs)**

There are a substantial number of G/T Unauthorised Encampments (UEs) across Devon. The UEs each vary in size, location and how long the G/Ts plan to remain there. The main UEs in Devon are the longer term unauthorised but tolerated encampments (as per the guidelines set out in the joint protocol for UEs across Devon). They are home to G/T's that are not highly mobile but still travel for economic purposes around Devon and beyond.

We also see seasonal UEs, which consist of highly mobile G/T's that migrate through Devon every year towards Cornwall and visa versa. The busy part of the year for Travelling is from April through to October with the majority from June to August.

The main groupings of G/T's in Devon are Romany Gypsy and New Traveller, with more highly mobile Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies through the seasonal travelling months.

## **2. GTLS 2010/11**

### **2.1 Overview of Achievements**

Over the last 12 months the service has built on the achievements recorded in 2010/11.

- The Mobile Homes Act (amended) is legislation that has been implemented this year to cover authorised G/T sites. During this year the GTLS has been working to educate residents around this piece of legislation and as a result have undertaken a piece of work to simplify the site licence in conjunction with the residents.
- The signing of the Broadclyst lease has been delayed this past year but is set to be finalised in the next financial year. When this is finalised the service is hoping to carry out a number of improvement works, which will see electricity meters and water meters installed individually for each of the five pitches.
- The cost of repairs to both authorised sites has seen a reduction in 2011/12 compared to previous years. This is partly due to having to remove a visitor from the Sowton site in partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police. The approval of an ASBO against this individual has meant that damage on site has reduced along with resident's tension and fear.
- Continued investment in multi-agency working across the county has improved the approach taken towards G/Ts. The G/T community now experience a more holistic service, which has contributed towards improving outcomes for G/Ts. The biggest example of this is the positive health outcomes for the community that are cited in this report.
- The responsibility to provide site accommodation for G/Ts is placed with the District Councils as housing authorities. There is a good news story, which will be cited in this report; it describes the efforts of one district council in securing funding for the delivery of a new site. We are seeing more partnership working across the Districts in Devon and the GTLS, and, drawing on the service's expertise in this area we will continue to support District Councils in their duty to assess, provide and allocate suitable sites in suitable locations for G/Ts.

The high level of UEs we see each year across Devon once again demonstrates the shortage of sites. The longer-term UEs in areas such as Haldon Hill, and the South Hams area continue to be home to many G/Ts looking for suitable formal sites. Working with Districts to increase the number of authorised pitches/sites in Devon is listed as a target for 2012/13. Planning legislation across the country will hopefully contribute to achieving more sites, the recent change in this legislation is hoped to be a positive step towards this goal.

- The Hate Crime project, which attracted £20,000 funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2009/10, has seen further successes this past year. Education about G/Ts continues to be the key driver for reducing race hate crime towards G/Ts. Further information is included in section 2.4.

## **2.2 Site-Specific Updates in 2011/12**

### **2.2.1 Sowton**

- The residents meetings during 2011/12 have been more frequent this year. Issues such as implementation of the Mobile Homes Act have been a positive forum for consultation We continue to offer one-to-one meetings for those residents who do not wish to participate in the residents meeting.
- The successful removal of a visitor at Sowton through the criminal justice system in partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police has seen a huge reduction in residents fear and tension. It has also improved the relationship between the GTLS and the residents. The site is now a much calmer place to live as a result. We have also seen an overall reduction in repairs and damage.
- Consultation with district councils and residents has meant the successful transition with recycling changes. The elections were also explained and for those who wished to vote, impartial support was given to facilitate residents to vote.
- Better communication with contractors and partners this past year has seen some potential barriers broken down and as a result personnel in an official capacity now enter site and carry out works without the need for a liaison officer to be present.

### **2.2.2 Broadclyst**

- This past year has seen unforeseen delays in securing a new lease with the National Trust. The County Council is planning to secure a new 5-year lease in the next financial year. This will allow the families a safe and secure place to live and allow future planned essential maintenance works to be carried out in 2012/13.

Installation of individual water meters and updated key operated electricity meters will be the first improvements work Broadclyst has seen in many years, the dated system being replaced will allow residents to access social tariffs.

- Broadclyst is a much smaller site than Sowton and does not need the same level of repair and maintenance.

## **2.3 Unauthorised Encampments (UEs)**

The GTLS continues to be successful in reducing the costs associated with dealing with UEs. This is a result of better communication with the community and better multi-agency working in relation to co-ordinating services such as waste collection. The following figures show the costs of dealing with UEs in 2011/12 compared to the previous financial year:

<b>31 sites 2011/12</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£2981.00</b>
<b>29 sites 2010/11</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£5438.00</b>
<b>27 sites 2009/10</b>	<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£9950.00</b>

The GTLS have established good working relations with both the G/T community and other agencies, which has meant that all parties have been more willing to work with the GTLS and to observe the Devon-wide protocol for managing UEs.

## **2.4 Multi Agency Work**

The GTLS has been successful in engaging wider agencies in helping to deliver services to G/T's, through being involved in and supporting various pieces of work during the year. The main work this year to report on is:

**Race/Hate Crime Project:** In 2009/10, the GTLS were successful in attracting a £20,000 project grant from the Department of Communities and Local Government, specifically for projects to tackle race/hate against the G/T community.

A multi-agency steering group was set up (meets every 3-4 months) which includes workers from the GTLS, Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council (PDREC), Devon and Cornwall Police, Community Council of Devon and the Traveller Achievement Team.

A brief was put forward to the group and an agreed way forward was established on how to make best use of the money for the G/T communities across Devon; bearing in mind the size of the grant. The main agency commissioned to deliver the work on behalf of the steering group is the PDREC.

The service is pleased to report progress made during 2011/12 as follows:

### **Schools, colleges and universities:**

The steering group approved the funding to deliver 18 G/T cultural awareness sessions in educational establishments across Devon. The aim of these sessions is to teach students and teachers about G/Ts and the issues they face in order to increase understanding and lessen prejudice and discrimination.

### **Media project:**

Funding was also approved for a media project, this involved working with Media organisations to build up closer links with them and enable them to gain a greater understanding of G/T communities and to understand the damage that constant negative articles/news items can do to vulnerable communities. We completed a Media booklet, which gives skills to G/Ts to enable them to challenge inappropriate media coverage. On the basis of this project the worker was invited to speak at a national Policy Review conference in London.

Below is a table showing the various other projects that the Service has also had input into this year and the numbers of G/T's who have benefited as a result.

Project or Event	Further Description of Service (if needed)	Number of G/T's who benefited
Romany health day, linked with PDREC	This event was part of the Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month which the GTLS supported	20
Fire Visits	Haldon and Sowton sites	57 Adults, 17 Children
Consultation event with Haldon residents	Helped facilitate and collect consultation responses	35 Adults

G/T law course. PDREC and Community Council of Devon led, GTLS supported	Organising and publicising. 1 day planning course for G/Ts	16
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## 2.5 Other Areas of Work

The GTLS have this past year been working especially hard in other areas helping to bridge the gap often experienced with G/Ts trying to access basic services. To follow is a breakdown of the types of work we have been supporting.

- Health and Wellbeing:** This year the GTLS has been working hard to try and address the inequalities that the G/T community face when trying to access health related services. Specific ‘benefits’ training has meant that the GTLS has been able to support the community in a way that would not previously have been possible. As a result the GTLS has noticed that other health-related issues are being brought to the surface by individuals within the community – something which would previously have been a cultural taboo. The GTLS see this as a huge step in the right direction in terms of reducing health inequalities for G/T’s.

The following table shows other areas that have seen activity this year:

Description	Number of G/T's benefited (if known)	Comments
Benefits Forms	28	Mostly Community Care Grant Forms and Disability Living Allowance Forms
Warm Home Applications	13	
PALS and Care Direct	-	Regular contact for various issues relating to the elderly in the community and G/T's with disabilities
Mental Health	-	This year we have seen a big increase in the number of G/T's using the GTLS as a point of contact. Both G/T's and concerned family members use the GTLS when mental health issues arise on UEs
Charity Applications	9	Parts of the G/T community are extremely vulnerable, applications for things such as bedding and wood burners for heat are the main concern in the winter months. Breakdown of Charities: 3 Application – Dibs Charity 6 Applications – Northcott
Turntable	3	Reusable furniture store based in Exeter
Eye tests	12	Linking with health to promote better health outcomes for the G/Ts
Women's health screening	9	As above
Stop smoking	5	As above

- **Gypsy Traveller Roma History Month:** The GTLS has several core purposes – one of which is to improve the relationship between settled and G/T communities across Devon, by working to develop a better understanding between the differing cultures in order to help break down the barriers that exist. This is linked to the Gypsy Traveller Roma History Month, which takes place each June. This is an opportunity for community members to come together and celebrate the rich history of their culture through awareness and community events. Most events are community led.

The GTLS supported the respect festival, which takes place in June (history month) by attending both days and displaying boards and answering questions around G/T culture and history. It's a fun festival that celebrates multiculturalism through music, education and food.

The GTLS also supported a Romany Woman's Health day (March 2012), funded by LINK, which saw a group of Romany women come together and have access to carer's well being checks and stop smoking services that normally they wouldn't have the time for and wouldn't know how to access even if they did. The day was very successful, story sharing and a chance to have some relaxation time was appreciated.

- **Supporting Housed G/Ts:** Not only is it an objective to support any G/Ts wishing to access bricks and mortar housing, the service also continues to support that transition once housing has been allocated. This has proven to be essential in improving the wellbeing of G/Ts once in brick and mortar accommodation and reduces the number of G/Ts dropping out of housing further down the line. The value of this preventative support is hard to measure for the purpose of this report, but is key to successful integration into the settled community and reduces the need for other services in the future.
- **Bi Annual Caravan Count:** the GTLS work with some District Councils (who are responsible for carrying out a twice yearly caravan count) to make sure the count goes smoothly and is as accurate as possible. Joint work has improved not only officer relationships, but also that between district staff and G/Ts.
- **Parish council and other community events:** The GTLS recognises the need to help bridge the gap in awareness of all G/T issues including the issues faced by the settled community. The Gypsy/Traveller Liaison Officers (GTLOs) actively participates in any community event that they are invited to. The GTLOs also attend Parish Council meetings as requested to address and overcome specific issues within communities. Multi-agency events, which raise awareness of G/T issues to other communities, are also attended. This year the GTLS have attended two parish council meetings specifically addressing concerns within that community. Everyone will not receive the answers they want, but clear concise information is shared.
- **Regional G/T Liaison Officer Groups:** The GTLS chairs and participates in regional GTLO meetings, which happen twice yearly. This is to share best practice and grasp an understanding of what is happening in neighbouring authorities around accommodation provision; what the obstacles are and examples of how other areas are tackling them.
- **Police Independent Advisory Group:** The GTLS sits on this group to feed back to the Police any issues around engagement or any issue of community tension so that this can be addressed. This is then fed back to the community directly (or indirectly through our partners).

- **Funding for Gypsy/Traveller sites:** This year the GTLS has been supporting one of the District Councils in their bid for a grant to formalise an unauthorised encampment. Supported Teign housing in their consultation with Haldon residents. More information about this in section 3.

As well as direct work with other agencies, the GTLS has played a part in bridging the gap for delivery of services to G/T's by liaising with a whole host of agencies. This is part of managing UEs across Devon, and by facilitating this service for G/Ts; it helps address the short fall in access to services that this community face.

The table below shows some of the agencies and stakeholders the service liaises with in order to advocate for the community:

Agencies and Stakeholders
Social Workers across Devon
Rethink
Carrgomm (Housing support)
Cool House
Women's Aid
Community Council of Devon
The National Parks Authority
Regional Gypsy Traveller Liaison Officers (GTLO's)
National GTLO's
Local Highways Service Groups across Devon
Devon Welfare Rights
Exeter Drugs Project (EDP)
Mental Health Teams across Devon
NHS Dentist – Big take up this year
Age Concern
Forestry Commission
Friends, Family and Travellers
Travellers Advice Team
Consumer Direct
Community Service and Probation
Department of Work and Pensions
Turntable
Shelter
Social Inclusion Units
Adult Education
Young Carers
RSPCA
Cats Protection League
Hope Project
South West Planning Aid
Counsel and Care
Whizz Kids
Devon Carer's Centre
Westbank Life Centre

### **3. Examples of work within the GTLS**

The following case studies help to illustrate the different roles undertaken by the GTLS. All names, where relevant, have been changed to preserve the persons' anonymity.

#### **3.1 Case Study One**

Devon County Council's policy around G/T issues are covered by a joint protocol; Devon Consortium Wide Joint Protocol for Unauthorised Encampments.

Since its adoption by DCC in 2006, the protocol has been an efficient and productive policy for dealing with UEs on our land including highways maintained land. Due to legislation change it was agreed that a target for the GTLS this year was to update the document in conjunction with partners across Devon.

A multiagency meeting was held with representation from each of the district councils, Police, Fire, Health plus charities working in the field to discuss what worked, what needed to be changed and why, and as a result what should feature in the updated version.

It was also an opportunity for colleagues across the county to discuss the accommodation situation and best practice in some districts in relation to G/T issues.

After discussion, draft documents were sent for comment and these have been included in the final draft, which will be signed off next financial year. This will be reported on in next years report.

#### **3.2 Case Study Two**

Haldon is a long term tolerated unauthorised site on DCC land within the Teignbridge district council (TDC) boundaries. It has been in existence for nearly 10 years. An enforcement notice was served by TDC upon the site in 2011, with a condition that the site be vacated by 2013 to comply with planning changes that occur after this date.

TDC, DCC and Teign housing (Registered provider of social housing) worked together to submit a bid to government to access central money to develop the site and formalise it. This process was initially delayed due to the funding being no longer available as a result of a change in central government. It was however then reinstated under a different department and the bid was resubmitted.

Funding was granted for 15 permanent pitches for Travellers at this location. The GTLS attended multiagency meetings, supported Teign housing with consultations with the community at Haldon, supported other engagement, design and layout. A plan has been drafted and also a draft pitch agreement form agreed. Multiagency meetings has had buy in from DCC, TDC, Fire, Police, NHS, Exeter District Council plus district and county councillors.

This piece of work is exciting for two reasons; it offers Devon's first newly built site in many years and also highlights Teign housing as best practice, they are one of the only housing associations to take forward the development and running of a G/T site. It is hoped this news will be encouraging for other areas to develop sites for G/Ts.

### **3.3 Case Study Three**

Health screening continues to be high on our agenda this year, following on from last year's success in this area.

This example focuses on the benefit of linking an individual with the screening process.

Mature woman with a hearing impairment and learning difficulties, encouraged by the GTLS and other family members to undertake basic woman's health screening for the first time in her life.

The GTLS facilitated her carers (who are family members) to access the support needed with the woman's health centre. As a result of the screening, the lady was diagnosed with cancer. The treatment process and aftercare was important to get right from the start in order to keep her confidence in the process. Good linking services by the GTLS meant that the health workers and the lady built a relationship, this included making sure that she was seen by the same worker each time she made a visit to the centre. Education around cultural issues with the centre meant barriers were broken down and the knock on effect was that other family members also had basic screening for the first time as they felt confident enough to do this.

The health drive that the GTLS pushed for made sure that this issue was picked up in the early stages and the outcome has been successful this time. There is still a lot of work to do within the community, to break down the barriers to accessing basic health screening that the settled community take for granted.

This piece of work also led into the Romany woman's health day, which the GTLS supported as part of Romany history month in June.

Multiagency links were with the following: working with the health centre, hospital transport and audiology departments as well as carers link and PDREC for the health day.

#### 4. Statistics

This section shows the number of G/Ts and UEs the GTLS have come into contact with. Please note that the vast majority of UEs will have been visited on more than one occasion.

##### 4.1 Authorised Sites

District/Name of Site	Adults	Children
Exeter, Sowton	22	2
East Devon, Broadclyst	11	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>

##### 4.2 Unauthorised Encampments (UEs) (highly mobile and longer term tolerated)

District	Adults	Children	Total UEs for district
Exeter	21	8	5
East Devon	58	15	8
Mid Devon	15	4	2
North Devon	13	3	4
Torrige	0	0	0
West Devon	5	0	1
Teignbridge	35	15	1
South Hams	60	26	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>31</b>

##### 4.3 Totals Table (authorised sites and unauthorised encampments)

Adults:	Children:	Sites:
240	81	33

##### 4.4 Planning

The process of gaining private planning permission for a G/T family site can prove a costly one and a very lengthy one, the GTLS will liaise with the family, make a site visit (often more than one) and support the family by confirming G/T status and any other supporting work that is necessary, such as support with literacy issues.

District	Number of planning applications supported
East Devon	4
Mid Devon	7
North Devon	1

West Devon	0
Teignbridge	3
South Hams	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

#### 4.5 Housing

The GTLS supports G/T's who wish to access more formal accommodation through local housing authorities. Liaison with the applicant and the local Housing Authority is required plus any other support necessary, such as support with literacy issues.

District	Number of Housing applications supported
East Devon	0
Torridge	0
West Devon	1
Teignbridge	26 (Haldon applications)
South Hams	1
Mid Devon	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>27</b>

## 5. GTLS Targets 2011/12 – STATUS

Target	Outcome	Date Completed
Implement Mobile Homes Act on both authorised sites	Better benefits for residents	COMPLETE
Revision of the Devon Consortium-wide Gypsy and Traveller protocol for Unauthorised Encampments	A revised document with renewed sign up from District colleagues	ONGOING
Continued Health drive on both authorised and unauthorised sites	Better health outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers	ONGOING
Planning response to central governments consultation for Gypsy Traveller planning	A Devon County Council (DCC) response to the national consultation	COMPLETE
Attend conferences on the planning consultation	To be better informed about planning procedures for Gypsy Traveller planning across Devon	COMPLETE
Broadclyst Lease	Formal agreement with the National trust	ONGOING
Broadclyst improvement works	Better water connections and electricity meters	ONGOING
Consultation with residents on the express terms of the site licence agreement (authorised sites)	Clear and concise site licence agreement conditions	ONGOING

### 5.1. 2012/13 Targets

Target	Outcome	Date Completed
Revision of the Devon Consortium-wide Gypsy and Traveller protocol for Unauthorised Encampments	A revised document with renewed sign up from District colleagues	ONGOING
Continued Health drive on both authorised and unauthorised sites	Better health outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers	ONGOING
Broadclyst Lease	Formal agreement with the National trust	ONGOING
Broadclyst improvement works	Better water connections and electricity meters	ONGOING
Consultation with residents on the express terms of the site licence agreement (authorised sites)	Clear and concise site licence agreement conditions	ONGOING
Race/Hate survey, part of the Race/Hate project	A better understanding of the Devon picture	2012/13
Devon and Cornwall Police, integration of diversity	Police officers better equipped to deal with Gypsy/Traveller issues	2012/13

## **6. Conclusion**

2011/12 has been another successful year for the GTLS. It is a forward thinking proactive service with areas of work being identified and resources allocated to deal with emerging gaps and opportunities. This has resulted in a bigger drive towards health equalities for residents on both authorised and unauthorised sites. We have seen an improvement in outcomes for people who could not or would not otherwise have accessed services because of barriers such as literacy and fear.

Implementation of The Mobile Homes Act has seen different working conditions on the authorised sites at Sowton and Broadclyst with better protection for residents generally. This is welcomed and a definite step in the right direction for G/Ts in terms of aligning their rights alongside the settled community.

There is still a distinct lack of authorised site provision across the county which means that the issues associated with managing unauthorised encampments are not going to disappear overnight.

However, the allocation and planning for Traveller sites has been a talking point this year and we wait to see what impact this may have on the development and allocation of sites in 2012/13. We will continue to work with District colleagues to try and ensure that they meet their responsibilities.

The costs to the public purse relating to the large numbers of unauthorised encampments are increasing, and the provision of official sites would be more cost effective, as well as giving security to the G/T communities, and (eventually) reducing community tensions. Nevertheless, an efficient GTLS, supported by a protocol covering unauthorised encampments is much more cost effective than the situation in some parts of the country, where recourse to legal and court action is more common. Furthermore, having a proactive service has meant that the GTLS has managed to reduce the actual spend overall of the budget substantially compared with previous years (see appendix).

## Appendix 1

### A. Summary Budget 2011/12

Expenditure:	
Staff salaries including travel, training and on costs	£72,569
Site maintenance and repairs	£13,303
Electricity and water on sites	£9,056
Miscellaneous including DCC in-house recharges	£5,933
<b>Total</b>	<b>£100861.00</b>
Income:	
Rents	£36,945
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>£63,916</b>

### B. Breakdown of comparative costs

This section is highlighted to show what the potential costs would be if the County Council decided to take action to evict Gypsy and Traveller groups on a routine basis. Whilst such action would not be necessary in all cases, as groups often move on before court action is taken, it does show that the continued approach taken by the County Council is much more cost effective.

The other consideration is that, once evicted from one site, many groups simply move onto another council owned site, resulting in multiple actions being taken against the same G/T. This is without taking into account the human costs of such an approach.

#### **Potential costs using an eviction only policy:**

Fees for legal and court costs per eviction	770.00
Liaison with sites to collect relevant information for the legal team	100.00
Transportation of 1 x caravan to secure site	*400.00
*Some families have more than one caravan, so this estimate is conservative	
Total cost of eviction per family: (Average for 2 Adults and children with 1 caravan)	1,270.00
Total families for 2010/11 (238 Adults / 2)	102
Total cost for eviction only policy (102 x 1270)	<b>129,540.00</b>
Estimated cost if management of the two authorised sites were contracted out	45,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>174,540.00</b>
Actual current costs relating to UEs and management of authorised sites: 2 x Staff Annual Salary – including on costs, travel and training	72,569.00
Costs for portaloos provision for UEs	2,981.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,664.00</b>
<b>Total savings using the current system for in house management and a tolerated sites policy</b>	<b>98,876.00</b>