

**THE MAGAZINE FOR GYPSIES, ROMA & TRAVELLERS**

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# TRAVELLERS TIMES



## ‘WE NEED TO TALK’

**TOM JONES RAISES THOUSANDS FOR THE SAMARITANS  
WITH CHARITY HIKE IN HONOUR OF HIS DAD**

**INSIDE:** A PRISON WITH A DIFFERENCE | NEWS | GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS HELP OUT DURING CORONAVIRUS | TACKLING THE SUICIDE CRISIS | ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR | BIG DELI | THOMAS MCCARTHY | LENA MCALLISTER | YTT | THE PROBLEM WITH ‘COMMUNITY’?

# TRAVELLERS TIMES

## EDITORIAL

It's been a hard time this year. Most of you will have been posted our series of free Covid-19 specials. In the meantime, we have been keeping up with your news and views on our website at [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk), so please take a look.

We know life hasn't been easy for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller prisoners either. So, when a story came in from a prison at the last minute, we knew had to publish it. But there was no space left except this page. So I am going to hand you over to the staff and prisoners at HMP Berwyn.

**Mike Doherty**



GRT TV on the prisoners' TVs. We were also sent activity books, art materials and music from the Irish Chaplaincy. When Irish Community Care sent pin credit and stamped cards to help the community stay in touch with their loved ones, their thanks were heartfelt:

- Tell them I said God bless them and thank you
- Could you tell them im so so great full for there kindness and god bless them and there family.
- Can you pass on my tankes 2 every 1 thank you have a nice day.
- Thankyou anyone involved in putting this together at a time when things have been quite difficult
- Thank you god bless
- Thank you for all the fantastic work you are doing for the GRT community
- It's really good that they support the Irish Community and Travellers in prison
- Please thank for spends they give us ta.
- I would like to say thanks for sending the pack out, also for the support and help that yous are doing for the Irish and Travellers at Berwyn

We also marked GRT History Month with a matchstick wagon challenge. As a prison where our Governor has put equality at the heart of everything, it was fabulous last week to be able to deliver an awareness session for staff on GRT issues. It was a poignant session.

**From the staff and prisoners at Berwyn HMP**

## STOP PRESS: A PRISON WITH A DIFFERENCE

A lot of work has been spent building our GRT group at HMP Berwyn, activities that ranged from football matches, cookery, to arts and crafts. However, Covid-19 was emerging and this hit home when Irish Community Care had to cancel their visit to us on our Saint Patrick's Day event.

When lockdown hit, the GRT group were left separated, like everyone else here. Although prisons are normally associated with locking people

up, most of our time here is spent delivering purposeful activity and encouraging participation in activities for rehabilitation, so lockdown was hard on the inside.

We started weekly visits of all our GRT prisoners to provide reassurance. The help from outside enabled us to provide activity packs for the men to do in their rooms. Videos coming from Travellers' Times, Traveller Movement and Irish Community Care helped us to start



COVER PHOTO: TOM JONES WITH A PHOTOGRAPH OF HIS DAD  
© SUE THOMAS FOR THOMAS MILLER LTD.

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GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS RAISE MONEY FOR NHS © ALR PHOTOGRAPHY



## THEY CAME FROM ALL OVER THE UK!

A charity horse drive around Stockton-on-Tees has raised hundreds of pounds for the NHS say the organisers.

Over 120 Gypsy and Traveller carts, traps and wagons turned up from as far afield as London and Scotland, to take part in the NHS charity horse drive on Sunday 5th July, said organisers Charles William Tyers and Calvin Foley.

Zoe Tyers told the Travellers' Times that the organisers had used word of mouth and Facebook to promote the drive.

"My husband visited other Gypsy and Traveller charity drives to spread the word," said Zoe Tyers.

"He wanted to raise money for the NHS to thank them for their life-saving work and to show that Gypsies and Travellers were doing their bit during the coronavirus epidemic as well," she added.

**Mike Doherty for TT News**



## THE NICEST GROUP ON FACEBOOK?

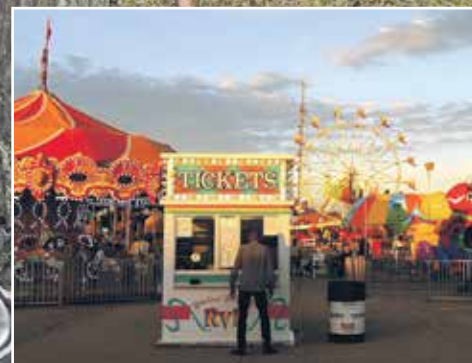
A Facebook group for Gypsies and Travellers to share recipes and pictures of food has reached over six thousand members during the Covid-19 crisis.

'Traveller and Gypsy recipes and tips' Facebook group was created in March 2018 by the then Traveller Movement employees Cassie-Marie and Christina who wanted to see if they could get enough recipes to write a Traveller cookbook.

"Early into lockdown we were thinking of ways we could give people something else to think about, how to give them a break from the doom and gloom of coronavirus," Cassie-Marie and Christine told the Travellers' Times. "And then we remembered the group we had created and it has grown and grown during the coronavirus crisis. People are posting amazing pictures of their foods, some traditional, some more modern, and we love them all."

**Mike Doherty for TT News**

PICTURE BY QUINN KAMPSCHROER FROM PIXABAY



## CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWNS "CATASTROPHIC" FOR FUNFAIR INDUSTRY SAY SHOWMEN

The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain has written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and MPs asking them not to overlook the funfair trade during the coronavirus crisis – and to offer to help out with drivers and equipment.

The Travellers' Times understand that the move is supported by campaign organisation the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group.

"The travelling funfair and touring circuses businesses have seen our markets disappear, from outdoor events, festivals, private functions and fairs we have been shut down and our income streams have gone," says Joe Mercer, General Secretary the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain.

"The Showmen community does have the capacity to support government efforts to combat Covid-19 by providing drivers, equipment such as generators and other expertise. We will not be able to assist if our industry fails."

**Mike Doherty for TT News**





## FAIRS CANCELLED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS

## NEWS

**T**he famous Appleby Horse Fair was among many fairs that did not take place this year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Billy Welch, who is the Gypsy and Traveller representative on the Fair's Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group, said that it would be irresponsible for the Fair to go ahead at a time when everyone must do everything they can to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

"It is not just disappointing for the Gypsy and Traveller community but for the settled community too and the local economy," said Billy Welch.

"But people's health must come first. Everybody in the UK needs to pull together now and do their best to beat this terrible virus."

A few fairs and drives did go ahead later in the summer when the lockdown eased.

The Travellers' Times created a film to mark the date of the cancelled 2020 Appleby Horse Fair. To see this film visit our website at [www.travellerstimes.org.uk/heritage/memories-appleby-fair](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk/heritage/memories-appleby-fair)

**Mike Doherty/TT News**

LEFT: APPLEBY FAIR IN HAPPIER TIMES

© NATASHA QUARMBY

BELOW: TYSON FURY AT A FUNERAL PICTURED WITH ROMANY GYPSY CAMPAIGNER BETTY BILLINGTON, WINNER OF THE FFT SUSAN ALEXANDER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD © ANNE CROCKER

BELOW LEFT: TRAVELLER PRIDE AT LONDON PRIDE 2019

© JOSEPH MITCHELL



## TYSON FURY SAYS "IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE AND THE CHANGE IS TODAY"

**T**yson Fury has spoken out about racism towards Travellers and Travellers Lives Matter in a dynamite video interview with Kugan Cassius for boxing YouTube channel IFL TV.

"2020 is a year of change. It's refreshing to see Black Lives Matter and Black people standing up to be respected and counted," said Tyson Fury, adding that Travellers need to use the opportunity to stand up and say no to racism against themselves.

"Travellers get hated on and discriminated against and they don't say anything because – 'oh that's the way it's always been'. And now it's not. It's time for a change and the change is now."

The World Heavyweight Boxing Champion recorded the interview in his "humble home" in Morecombe. The interview took place the day after Tyson Fury made waves by leading a peaceful protest against the 24 pubs, restaurants and garages who were refusing service to Travellers in the Lancashire town. Tyson Fury, who boxes under the name 'The Gypsy King', also revealed that the protest was spontaneous and organised on the evening it took place.

"If I go into a place and I'm acting rude or out of order then I should be banned. You can't ban an entire race of people," said Tyson Fury.

**Mike Doherty/TT News**



## LGBT TRAVELLERS SUPPORT EACH OTHER DURING CORONAVIRUS

**A** group of LGBT Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, who took part in the world-famous London Pride Parade for the first-ever time last year, have been supporting each other during the coronavirus epidemic.

Pride events across the UK were cancelled this year due to the coronavirus epidemic.

The group, who include Showmen, Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers, Roma and Bargee/Boaters, have instead been keeping in touch online, determined that the impetus of last year's historic Traveller Pride presence will not be lost.

Tyler Hatwell, one of the Traveller Pride founder members, said that the group were headed to Manchester Pride but that was cancelled.

"Next year we would like to go a Pride event somewhere outside of London, potentially in addition to London Pride," said Tyler Hatwell. "We also have tentative plans to have a presence at some kind of horse fair or similar."

Tyler added that in the meantime, the group had been creating support packs for Trans people and that he himself, a psychotherapist, had been offering free counselling for LGBT Travellers.

**Mike Doherty/TT News**





## NEWARK TRAVELLERS

The grey stone edifice of the Royal Courts of Justice in London towers above the small group of Romany Gypsies gathered outside. The women allowed to go inside to the socially distanced court hearing are dressed to the nines with Charlotte Smith in a trim black suit and Gemma Lamb in a stylish red coat and matching high heels. The rest of the group will have to stay outside in the rain. There is a stir and their lawyer Keith Coughtrie arrives and the women follow him into the beating heart of English justice.

"If the decision doesn't go our way we will be back roadside," says Charlotte Smith. "We are trying everything we can to keep our home," adds the mother of four young children. "Most of us have lived on side of the road before."

But even the option of moving back on to the road may soon be blocked off because the Government is threatening to make roadside living illegal in new laws it is set to announce later this year.

Inside the court, the case doesn't go well, despite the best efforts of the Gypsies' Barrister Marc Willers QC. The judge obviously has sympathy for the families' plight, but the case hinges on procedural points of law and not on judicial empathy. When the court breaks for lunch the Gypsies have already lost on two of their three grounds of appeal.

"We are trying to settle down and my kids are doing well in the local school," says Charlotte Smith. "We don't want to be in a battle to keep our site and it's bankrupting us, but the council are not allowing us to live on our land."

After a freedom of information request from the Travellers' Times, Newark council finally published an important legal document that counts the number of extra Traveller pitches they need to plan for. It's a massive 120 pitches and the council will struggle to do this. The document may help the families in the long run, but if they lose today there may well be no long run.

The second half of the case is better and finally the judge ends the proceedings and announces that he will deliver his judgement in three days' time. The Gypsy women lift their hands to their faces, a picture of hope and despair.

Outside one of the Gypsy men asks me why the council doesn't just pass their site and provide six of the pitches they need at no cost to the taxpayer. I say that I don't have the answer to that.

**Mike Doherty/TT News**

MAIN PIC: WENDY MOUNSEY WITH HER GRANDDAUGHTERS' LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER – 'CAN WE PLEASE STAY ON OUR LAND?'

INSET: CLOSE UP OF LETTER

BELOW: BARRISTER MARC WILLERS QC, CHARLOTTE SMITH AND GEMMA LAMB CELEBRATE OUTSIDE COURT

PHOTOS © MIKE DOHERTY/TT

## STOP PRESS

**The Gypsy families won and the original planning inspector's decision to refuse them planning permission was quashed. They will now face another planning inquiry at some point in the future.**





**TOM JONES**  
"WHEN HE TOOK  
HIS OWN LIFE MY  
DAD LEFT A BIG  
HOLE IN OUR LIVES"

## TOM JONES

A Traveller man from Hampshire has raised nearly eight thousand pounds in a 100-mile charity hike for the Samaritans in honour of his dad who took his own life.

The charity hike of father of three, Tom Jones, 34, took place in the late summer of this year over the rolling hills of the South Downs from Winchester to Eastbourne.

"My dad loved the outdoors and he was a charitable person. It just made sense to choose a mental health and suicide charity to raise money for my walk," says Tom.

"The Samaritans is for everybody and my dad was charitable to everyone and not just Travelling people."

Tom had to battle through two storms in his six-day hike and at times he says it was only "willpower" that kept him going. "The first storm was on the first day and everything got drenched," says Tom. "This meant that the next day the blisters started. I was in real pain throughout the

hike. I actually thought at one point, it's OK to give up. But I didn't and willpower alone kept me going."

Tom's dad – also called Tom Jones – was well known among the Travelling community for his singing and performances at Traveller weddings up and down the country. Tom Jones was also popular among his local community for his charitable work and his "larger than life character," says Tom.

Tom Jones appeared to have everything to live for. He was a popular, talented and generous man with a loving wife, four children and three grandchildren – and a "have-a-go hero" who received a top award for bravery from Hampshire's Chief Constable when he intervened in a robbery. Yet mental health problems can happen to anyone, says Tom.

"My dad suffered with mental health issues for a number of years," says Tom. "And then in 2016 him and my mum were in a local bank and there was an armed robbery and dad got shot in the

face whilst wrestling one robber to the ground and then stabbed in the chest by the other robber."

After his heroic bravery Tom's dad was left with a bullet lodged near his brain, on medication, and with post-traumatic stress symptoms.

"Dad hit the bottle really hard," says Tom. "We tried really hard to save him but he was on a downward spiral."

Tom says that despite the hardships, his charity hike has brought healing.

"It was bit of therapy for myself to get out in the open and reconnect with myself a little bit because I haven't had the chance to do that since my dad's death," says Tom.

"If the money I've raised can help save other people's lives and stop them going through the same pain that my family is still going through, then I've done my job."





ABOVE: 'DON'T BE BEAT' MEN DO WANT TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH SAY LEEDS GATE' © LEEDS GATE  
LEFT: 'LET'S TALK' SAY WEST YORKSHIRE GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS' © LEEDS GATE

## LEEDS GATE DON'T BE BEAT

A charity in West Yorkshire is saving lives with their 'Don't Be Beat' mental health project that is tackling the suicide crisis among Gypsy and Traveller people.

"The obvious need for Don't Be Beat started when we became really aware that everybody wanted to talk about mental health – everybody," says Leeds Gypsy And Traveller Exchange (Leeds GATE) worker Ellie Rogers. "And then we started to explore what mental health services Gypsy and Traveller people were accessing and it was nothing."

"One of the strengths of Gypsy and Traveller communities is the amount of care that they give to each other, but

that also means that they are going to be really impacted by that loss," says Ellie. "The ripples of suicide are felt far and wide."

Don't Be Beat works by empowering Gypsy and Traveller people in West Yorkshire to talk to each other about their mental health.

"It's not that people don't want to talk, they are just not given the opportunity and as soon as mental health is raised people are passionate about wanting to do something," says Ellie. "We've definitely seen an increase in the amount of openness about this." And it's not just women that want to talk, adds Ellie. "Men do talk but no one ever asks them. It's about starting that conversation in a practical way, like when they are in the office to get help with a tax return or something."

An example of how Don't Be Beat works is James. "James started to tell us how he was struggling," says Ellie. "The first thing he spoke about was getting help for his family. When he saw this was helpful he started to open up more about his own issues." James is now spreading the Don't Be Beat message of hope.

And that message, says West Yorkshire Gypsies and Travellers, is to talk about your mental health and don't let shame stop you; it doesn't make you less of a man to reach out for help, and give each other support so you don't pass this on to your kids.

The full Don't Be Beat report is available on the Leeds GATE website at [www.leedsgate.co.uk](http://www.leedsgate.co.uk)

**Mike Doherty**





## ALL THE FUN OF THE HORSE FAIR

Not all of the fairs were cancelled this year and in the late summer a few went ahead as the coronavirus lockdowns and pandemic eased. Jessica Scarlett took herself along to the fairs and horse drives that did happen and the Travellers' Times is really pleased to be given permission to publish just a few of the amazing photographs that she took. Jessica Scarlett also has a Facebook page where you can find more photographs.

"I discovered horse fairs when I moved to the UK last year and first heard about Appleby," says Jessica Scarlett. "I went for the day to see what it was like and found out I feel very much at home within the culture because it reminds me of my own heritage as my ancestors were Bargee Travellers. Since then I got more into photography and travel around the country to attend more fairs and document the lifestyle."

**Pictures by Jessica Scarlett**







# THOMAS MCCARTHY – THE ‘LAST MAN STANDING’

MAIN PICTURE: THOMAS MCCARTHY, THE LAST MAN STANDING © PHILLIP WOLMUTH  
RIGHT: VOLUNTEERS WORKING ON THE RECORDING. PICTURE © DEFEAR PRODUCTIONS



A project called the Last Man Standing has recorded the centuries-old songs of Pavee/Irish Traveller traditional singer Thomas McCarthy.

“An award-winning singer and storyteller, Thomas was born in Ireland and brought up in the UK. He has become the heritage bearer for the undocumented songs unique to the Travelling community in the UK,” says Brian Despard, an expert folk music producer and the brains behind the Last Man Standing project.

“Unfortunately, these songs are on the brink of extinction and if not documented and recorded, could disappear forever,” added Brian.

“Ever since a portable TV could be hooked up to a car battery our musical tradition practically died overnight!” said Thomas McCarthy.

“When I’m gone it’s gone.”

Thomas McCarthy was born into an Irish Traveller family for whom singing was an important part of their lives and went back generations. Born in Co. Offaly in 1965 he heard songs from an early age: from his grandfather Johnny McCarthy, his uncles, aunts and especially his mother Mary McCarthy (from another branch of this singing family).

She moved with him to London when he was aged 10 and made sure that he learned the family songs in daily sessions as well as hearing her sing around the house.

The Last Man Standing project recorded and documented a number of these songs over a number of months, just before the coronavirus lockdown, with the help of volunteers who also received training in recording techniques. Supported by Heritage Lottery Fund, The Selby Trust, EnterTrainers and Brian Despard’s Deafear Productions, these recordings are freely available on a CD and online to the wider community.

The Travellers’ Times went to visit the Last Man Standing recording studio, based in a community centre in north London, in January earlier this year. The project was just wrapping up and the finished CDs had just been delivered. Most of the volunteers were new to folk music, but not all. A couple also had some recording experience but the rest were new to that as well. “It was great working with the volunteers,” said Thomas McCarthy.

Coronavirus lockdowns permitting, the CD will be getting a belated launch at a series of concerts in the near future.

Details and dates will be published on the Travellers’ Times website at [www.travellerstimes.org.uk](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk)

Copies of the CD are available for free to individuals, schools, libraries and community centres. Please contact [brian@deafear.co.uk](mailto:brian@deafear.co.uk)

For more information; visit the Last Man Standing website at [www.lastman-standing.co.uk](http://www.lastman-standing.co.uk)





# DREAMING BIG AND TAKING PUNCHES WITH RAPPER BIG DELI



"A dream is as big as you're going to make it," said Rapper Big Deli, towering over those around him at Liphook's train station on a chilly but sunny autumn Sunday.

At 6-foot three, Rapper Big Deli, or Will Keet, 29, looks over the majority of the population. Don't let his stature intimidate you though, it is immediately recognisable from his eyes that this is a man with a deep capacity for emotion and human connection. This glint-of-the-eye makes you look at him as a man of the earth rather than a man who grew up on many different council estates across the south of England.

Big Deli didn't choose that life though. Life was more kushti when he was younger, living next to his parents' and extended family's garden centre in Churt until they were thrown off their land by the local council when he was 12.

He recalls being harassed by the police: "We would be on our way out with me [sic] nan, to the chippie or whatever, and they would stop us every time. As a 10-year-old you ask yourself: is this because they think we're up to no good? Or is this because we're Gypsies?"

"Sometimes I look back, you know, and it gets to you. It gets you in the sternum. It

hurts. But I look at my children and I look at my partner, and if I were to crumble, who would look after them? It's my responsibility to keep them going, as a man," he added. This is what got him through lockdown, which saw his father-in-law die of cancer – on the first day – as well as his mother having to undergo a triple bypass heart surgery.

Holding strong is all Big Deli seems to know, as he comes back after each blow like scar tissue: harder and enduring. This comes out in some of his tunes, such as INSIGHT, a dark, menacing track, the kind which plays in your head when you walk down a street by yourself in the dead of night.

He brings these hard-learned lessons to young persons' music charity Music Fusion, a charity which once saved him, but one to which he now contributes his time and love when he has the opportunity to do so.

His latest track, Bacon Pudding, seems like it will be a little more lighthearted – perhaps a cultural ode to his heritage, as a Gypsy man. "Love what you are. Life's too short not to love what you are," he concluded.

**By: Greg Roxburgh**







LENA MCALLISTER © LENA MCALLISTER

## LENA MCALLISTER

# 'I JUST FELT LIKE I NEEDED TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP OUT AND SUPPORT'

**L**ena Mcallister, a cancer survivor from Carlisle, raised over £2,400 **as part of a 10K for 10 days** challenge to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

Back in May, Lena Mcallister pushed her wheelchair 100km as part of the **race for life at home** challenge to help raise money and awareness for **Cancer Research UK**.

The disability rights activist said, "I was only 27 when I got diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2018, young people don't expect to get it. It was such a shock, but it goes to show that you can't put an age limit on cancer, it can touch anyone at any point in their life."

With many of Cancer Research UK's fundraisers on hold, including the

annual nationwide Race for Life events the 29-year-old told TT, "I felt it was important to do, everyone's attention is fixed on coronavirus, but cancer is still as important and deadly. People aren't going to get checked and the number of people being diagnosed has dropped. We have to keep everyone aware because if people are deciding to wait a couple of months before going to see a doctor that a couple of months can save someone's life."

The fundraiser event marked one year since Lena has been in remission. She received chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and the drug Herceptin, which Cancer Research UK scientist contributed important research which led to the development of the drug, which helped

her recovery. However, this wasn't the first time that Lena faced a life-changing battle. A few years previously she was involved in a car accident on the motorway that left her paralysed.

She said, "I saw the race for life, and I was going to do 5k, but that wouldn't be a challenge to me, so I wanted to do 10k. If I was living my life before the accident, I would be out helping during the pandemic but because I'm in the position I'm in now I just felt like I needed to do something to help out and support."

Lena set out to raise a modest £500 but ended up raising over £2,400.

**Lisa Smith**



# THE DIKHLO COLLECTIVE IS A COMMUNITY RUN PROJECT CREATED BY LOIS BROOKES – JONES AND NAOMI NEGRON.

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our parcels from GRT artists, and dikhlos where possible. We also include memory requests with each parcel which includes a name of a GRT Holocaust victim to encourage commemoration of individuals over dehumanised numbers.

These packages are completely free to anyone who is GRT. We want to put across the message that accessible identity is important. We operate on a system where you pay what you can, and if you can't, you don't pay anything. This doesn't just extend to the physical items but also in postage. People are able to donate if they would like to pay forward for another

person's postage and parcel. Me and Naomi initially began putting our own money into this project, and now work alongside donations and a recent acceptance for funding by the Challenge and Change Fund.

We're continuously evolving in what we can include in packages, with recent funding meaning our bigger goals appear more achievable. We want to amplify and hire GRT artists, and represent our values that change is just as important from an individual level as it is from an institutional one. Movements don't need to have faces, and The Dikhlo Collective shows that this is a community-wide effort. Change comes from collective action, and by accessing The Dikhlo Collective, an act of resistance is being enacted. The act of representation, cultural identity, and a fundamental belief in accessibility.

If you're excited about this movement, you're already a part of it. We are a faceless movement whereby every GRT person who accesses us is welcomed to the "Dikhlo Collective Community". We don't want a "seat at the table", we want the table to cease to exist.

**P**eople within our communities have been feeling as isolated as ever during Covid-19, and we wanted to create a way to make sure that anyone who is GRT (Gypsy Roma Traveller) could know that they are seen and appreciated, writes **Lois Brookes-Jones**.

We have noticed that a lot of activism is focused on changing the minds of white gorja society, and doesn't focus on the individual empowerment of GRT people. GRT activists are expected to put up with harassment and abuse from all ends of the political spectrum, and we as The Dikhlo Collective wanted to create a safe space that says "No", focusing solely on community resistance through cultural heritage maintenance. We wanted to be able to give to community members a package that doesn't promise to fix everything, but just says that you are heard and valid.

Each package contains handsewn hair ribbons, a dikhlo, and GRT artist prints. We have also worked with Petr Scuka from "Scuka Shop" to provide Romani flag masks during COVID-19. We make sure to support GRT business as and when possible in each area of our packages, in purchasing artwork for





# YOUTH TRAVELLERS' TIMES



LEFT: MR AND MRS HERRING © SARAH HERRING  
OLIVIA HERRING AND HER YOUNGER SISTER © SARAH HERRING  
BELOW: ANIMATIONS © STEP

## YOUNG TRAVELLER SUPPORTS NHS KEY WORKERS DURING LOCKDOWN!

Twelve-year-old, Olivia Herring decided to turn the simple game of 'rock, paper, scissors' into a fundraiser to support the NHS by encouraging parents to play against their children, with the added element that the winner gets to squash a cake into the other's face.

Olivia said: "I came up with the idea of getting my Mam and Dad to do a 'cake in ya face challenge' to support the NHS where they play rock, paper, scissors and the loser gets caked in the face."

Olivia and her family wanted to do something to show their support to frontline NHS workers who were risking their lives across the country. Sarah Herring, Olivia's mum told the Travellers' Times, "We only set a target of £500 and have been overwhelmed by the support we've received from people around the world."

In total the 'Cake in ya face' fundraiser raised a whopping £34,201.35.

Well done Olivia from all at the TT Team.

**Lisa Smith**

## 'I WANT TEACHERS OR OTHER PEOPLE TO KNOW MORE' SAYS YOUNG SCOTTISH TRAVELLER



Young Scottish Travellers from Coupar Angus Primary School have created the animation 'Two Fires' to educate others about their culture as part of a project led by The Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP).

One of the young animators said: "It's about us. It's about Travellers. About who we are – what we do. People don't know enough about Travellers. I want teachers or other people to know more. Like that family is most important."

Dr Pauline Duncan told Travellers' Times: "The pupils felt it was important for others including their peers, teachers and the wider community to know more about Travellers; who they are, what they do and where they go."

The initiative was part of a project aimed to improve relationships between Gypsy/Traveller communities and service providers through arts-based interventions.

In partnership with STEP expert animator Jim Stirk supported pupils and young people from education settings and Gypsy/Traveller sites across Falkirk, Dumfries, Galloway, Perth, Kinross and the Highlands to express their views on important issues. The pupils have presented their animated films at internal film screenings for the school, families and community members.

To watch the full animation visit STEP families here: <https://step-families.co.uk> They are launching an animation toolkit which will feature masterclass videos to support young people trying out animation amongst heaps of other fun activities and resources!

**Lisa Smith**



# #YTT COMMUNITY



PHOTO © JOSEPH MITCHELL

## WHY I HATE THE WORD COMMUNITY

Chelsea McDonagh (24) is a Pavee activist and campaigner from London, and a Master's student at King's College London. She is also the Education Policy and Campaigns Officer at the Traveller Movement. Chelsea shares part of her research and thinking behind her master's thesis with TT.

I'm not sure how far I was into activism when I developed a hatred for the words community and community member. They produce in me the kind of visceral reaction to nails drawn down a chalkboard or the grinding of teeth. It took me much longer to be able to identify what it is about those words that I hate and how to verbalise it to other people. The words community, communities and community members are used a lot when discussing Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people. It litters government policy documents, it punctuates the webpages of organisations and it abounds in the vernacular of all of those who discuss us.

Part of it for me comes from how 'community' is used by the media to scapegoat a group of people for the actions of an individual. They love to create

this imagined community and in some ways it is a way of reinforcing the idea that you don't belong there. That you are other. It also homogenises groups of people who are incredibly diverse. When a Traveller commits a crime their connection to this 'community' is brought to the forefront. You'll hear tell of the Irish community, of the Traveller community, of the Black community but I am yet to hear about the White community, the British community or the English community. I am yet to hear it referenced when an individual who is part of one of those 'communities' commits a crime. Perhaps because it doesn't exist and instead the term community exists only as a code for other.

I still remember my confusion when someone first described me as a

'community member'. As time goes on it feels more and more like being wheeled out like an 'exotic' exhibit in a show. I came into the world of activism as a professional in my own right and I sit at tables to speak in areas I am qualified to, so to reduce my participation to that of my ethnicity can feel degrading. It isn't meant like that but sometimes it is the unintended consequence. Gradually, I have phased out the usage of these terms in my academic and professional work. I try to encourage others to think about how we use these terms and what the unintended meanings and consequences can be. It is a question for the whole sector moving forward and an answer that needs more than one voice.

**Chelsea McDonagh**



# HELPLINES AND USEFUL WEBSITES

## GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUPS

### TRAVELLING AHEAD

Support & advice for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities across Wales.

**0808 802 0025**

**[travellingahead@tgpcymru.org.uk](mailto:travellingahead@tgpcymru.org.uk)**

### TRAVELLER MOVEMENT

Providing support and advice nationally to Gypsies and Travellers visit our website.

**[www.travellermovement.org.uk](http://www.travellermovement.org.uk)**

**0207 607 2002**

**[info@travellermovement.org.uk](mailto:info@travellermovement.org.uk)**

### FRIENDS, FAMILIES & TRAVELLERS

Working on behalf of all Gypsies, Roma and Traveller regardless of ethnicity, culture or background.

**01273 234777 | [fft@gypsy-traveller.org](mailto:fft@gypsy-traveller.org)**

**[www.gypsy-traveller.org](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org)**

### LEEDS GYPSY AND TRAVELLER EXCHANGE

Confidential support and advocacy for Gypsies and Travellers living in or passing through West Yorkshire.

**0113 2402444 | [www.leedsgate.co.uk](http://www.leedsgate.co.uk)**

### ROMA SUPPORT GROUP

supporting and empowering the Roma community Contact us on.

**0794 908 9778**

**[info@romasupportgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@romasupportgroup.org.uk)**

**[www.romasupportgroup.org.uk](http://www.romasupportgroup.org.uk)**

### ONE CALL AWAY

Gypsy & Traveller Mental Health and Support.

**077489 97617**

### LGBT TRAVELLER PRIDE ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR LGBTQ + GYPSIES, ROMA & TRAVELLERS

**07395 355 066**

**[www.lgbttravellerpride.com](http://www.lgbttravellerpride.com)**

### TRAVELLERS ADVICE TEAM

legal advice and support for Gypsies and Travellers facing eviction.

**0121 685 8677**

**[www.communitylawpartnership.co.uk](http://www.communitylawpartnership.co.uk)**

## GENERAL

### SAMARITANS

**116 123 | [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

### CHILD LINE

**0800 1111 | [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

### NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE

**0808 2000 247**

**[www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk)**

### WOMEN'S AID (DOMESTIC ABUSE)

**[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)**

### MIND

For better mental health.

**0300 123 3393 | [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)**

### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

**0800 9177 650**

**[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)**

### MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

providing physical, financial and emotional support to people living with cancer and their families.

**0808 808 00 00**

(7 days a week, 8am – 8pm)

**[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)**