

LOCAL ISSUES

For Information:

This paper summarises the key issues/developments/initiatives relating to the Roma community in local areas, as submitted by organisations in those areas, to enable Forum members to get a fuller picture of what is happening across the UK.

Bradford – Bradford MDC

In response to continuous demands on Council and partner agency resources from Eastern European communities residing in Bradford since Accession, a Public Health Needs Assessment (PHNA) was conducted in October 2014, which identified Bradford to have the largest Slovak community in the UK. The needs assessment drew together intelligence and knowledge to inform future planning of health and social care services. Coinciding with the release of the PHNA, the Council and its partners witnessed further service demands as a direct result of the 2014 Welfare Reforms, which had adversely impacted on Roma communities due to failures of compliance with Department Work and Pensions (DWP) requirements and subsequent Housing Benefit (HB) withdrawals. These developments impelled Council officers to coordinate a response based on the PHNA in conjunction with the assistance of partner agencies in order to alert the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT), of the specific issues acting as barriers to socioeconomic integration and so settlement.

A review on Council and voluntary agency demands aided by the PHNA was undertaken in the latter part of 2016, and presented to CMT. The review identified a continuum of hardship/indebtedness resulting from the reforms, which had fuelled a dependency on the irregular or grey economy due to a number of reasons such as a lack of transferable/qualified skills compounded by inadequate English language proficiency.

One agency stated that, 100% of EU families seeking assistance worked within the 'black' or unregulated economy citing instances of not receiving payment for labour, or receiving £30 for a 12 hour day, payslips outlining 24 hours when in reality 60 hours had been worked.

In addition, Council and partners reported an array of social issues such as poor living conditions, instances in which tenures were tied to labour/trafficking raising CSE concerns.

Other areas identified were:

- High levels of teenage pregnancies – in 2014, 32% of teenage pregnancies were of Slovakian origin. Including other EU nationalities on the caseload, the figure rose to 38% in 2017.
- Drug misuse and running amongst EU teenagers – during 2015-16, the Young Peoples' Drug Services (YPDS), saw 156 young people of this 22 (14%), were

primary Heroin users (mainly Roma). The service also expressed concerns regarding the level of drug-running conducted by young Roma people including girls.

- Marriages to foreign nationals in order contravene immigration controls.
- NHS used as a de facto GP or dentists, high levels anxiety in addition to other forms of abuse forcing Children Social Care (CSC) interventions. Last year, of the 5, 549 referrals to CSC 391 were made up of children of White Other or 'Roma/Roma Gypsy' Gypsy Roma ethnicity.

Alternatively, greater fluidity/transient communities attributed to rent arrears, returning to counties of origin, or relocating to other parts of the district or country in search of employment, which may provide some explanation for school absenteeism along with waiting periods to register.

A Council wide cost analysis for language interpretation highlighted EU demand to have overtaken historical South Asian demand e.g. between 2014 to 2016 EU demand equated to 7855 appointments compared to 3678 for South Asian languages within the same periods.

Educational demands, despite the upheavals outlined above, witnessed an upsurge between 2014 and 2016, which was said to have increased by 31%.

Identifying the lack of English language skills as the primary obstacle to socioeconomic development amongst Roma communities, and so sustaining the issues outlined above, the Council was successful in securing funding through the Migration Impact Fund in order to initiate relevant interventions with respect to language deficiencies in addition to practical measures aimed at breaking the cycle of exploitation.

Godwin Enyori, Business Improvement Officer, Bradford Council

Coventry – The Roma Project

Charity Registration

The focus of this year's activity has been building the capacity of the organisation to become sustainable and obtain funding to increase our capacity to deliver services to the community.

In June we submitted an application to the Charity Commission to register as a Charity. We received a response in August that our application needed further information and clarification. We worked constructively with the Commission to revise our Objects and clarify focus and scope of our work for the public benefit and in October we were notified that our application had been successful - registered Charity Number 1169819. Our amended constitution that includes the revised objects is attached to this report.

Advocacy and Information Service

We have continued to deliver our advocacy and information service to the Roma community. Our advocacy service is based at the Coventry office of the Law Centre, operating on 4 days (Monday – Wednesday – Thursday – Friday) on an appointments basis with emergency cases being seen on the same day. On a Tuesday morning, we run an outreach drop in service in Foleshill where many Roma families live.

We record information about advocacy and information services delivered by appointment using AdvicePro. From this we know that we have provided advocacy and information support to address 1977 separate issues for 322 families in one-to-one sessions. This is a slight increase on the 311 families we supported in the first year of the project.

No of presenting issues and sub issues identified

Advice area	No. of presenting issues	No. of sub issues
Actions Against the Police	1	1
Community Care	2	2
Debt	101	203
Education	19	38
Employment	22	42
Family	7	14
General	10	17
Housing	581	1293
Immigration - Asylum	5	9
Miscellaneous	382	721
Welfare Benefits	847	2021
Report Total	1977	4361

A key achievement in the service noted this year is the relatively low number of families seeking our support in year 2 of the project. From our data, we have identified 136 families who we had helped in year 1 seeking our support in year 2. While the remaining families may still be involved in the project in other ways, they have not contacted us for advocacy services. We believe this is because they now have sufficient understanding of the systems and language skills as well as confidence to solve their issues as they arise or seek support from mainstream services. We plan to obtain feedback from these families and understand if this is the right conclusion in the evaluation we will be commissioning in the final year of the project.

We have identified Housing, Welfare Benefits and support with self-assessment and /or dealing with HRMC as the largest areas we are asked to provide support. A breakdown of cases and advice areas are attached to this report.

As well as an appointment service we also provide a large and growing quantity of ad hoc advice by telephone (and in-person on an emergency basis) during, and out of, office hours. Demand for telephone advice has increased in line with improved English language skills amongst the community and out of hours calls are used by people who may be working in the daytime.

We estimate that each of the two advisors receives on average 15-20 calls a day for telephone advice. Some of these calls will be from clients already registered with the Project and some will be from new enquirers. We do try to arrange an appointment for new enquirers so that we can register them but this is not always possible. This is a large part of our work – responding to issues as they arise to help families avoid crisis. We do not currently have a system for recording this work but are exploring practical methods of doing this.

We support a further 2 (on average) families a week by attending meetings with Children's Social Care Services, Coventry City Police and Coventry City Council education services, acting as interpreters and a liaison between services and families. We are contacted by services directly to assist in this work.

The vote to leave the European Union in June created an enormous amount of uncertainty amongst the Roma community living in Coventry and we believe has resulted in a larger number of Roma people moving to Coventry since the referendum than we would have otherwise anticipated. People want to be here before any 'cut off' on EU citizen's rights is announced. While there is perceived uncertainty over Roma people's rights in the UK, the community is very vulnerable to widespread misinformation and exploitation by unscrupulous advisors. We worked hard in the period directly after the referendum using our connections in the community and SMS messages to reassure the community that their rights in the UK remain unchanged but we foresee this being a continued area of work in the coming few years.

We have been unable to deliver English language classes this year due to volunteer availability and lack of resources to pay for room hire. Through the funding from the People's Health Trust we will aim to build in increased knowledge of English language to the Life in the UK sessions.

Influencing policy and practice

We have continued to work with West Midlands Police delivering training to their staff and working in partnership to increase knowledge of rights and responsibilities amongst the Roma community:

- Delivered 3 workshops reaching approximately 20 police officers from across the West Midlands to increase their understanding of working with the Roma community. As well as training we facilitated 2 community walk arounds for officers involved to give context to the training.
- Took part in an operation to serve European Arrest Warrants in the local community with West Midlands Police and Romanian Police. Our role was a liaison between the community and the police forces involved.
- Workshop with community members (25 people attended) delivered by the police on the legal requirements of owning and using a motor vehicle.
- We attended an update meeting with staff at the Migration Group Support Services – Schools support service of Coventry City Council.

Our Chair represents the Project at the Regional Anti- Slavery Network (attends as part of paid employment). Another member of our Board serves on the Roma – Police Liaison Board (national organisation).

Bernie Flatley, The Roma Project

Doncaster – Youth Association

Issues around Brexit:

- Generally Brexit is feared.
- Many in Doncaster gone back to Slovakia and might not return to the UK.
- Young people say their families are worried that they will not be allowed to stay in the UK.
- Anecdotal reports of Slovak authorities not allowing them to return to the UK – claiming that orders are from Britain.
- News reporters visited their village and questioned them of their intentions when they are refused entry to Britain.
- Young people asking how to become a British citizen to ensure their right to stay; some want to do this without their parents knowing.
- Lot of new families arrived recently, shortly after Brexit was triggered.



Dmitry Fedotov, Youth Association

Leeds – Leeds City Council

LCC initiatives

- Eastern European Activities timetable has been developed to engage with all Eastern Europeans with a particular focus on Roma friendly activities and the opportunity to develop Roma specific activities.
- REAP (Roma Engagement Access Project) – this is developed from the Migrant Access Project successful model but specifically for engaging with the Roma community. This has allowed opportunity for Roma to take part in weekly sessions to learn about services, understand how they work and access and most importantly for them to take important messages back to their community.

- Eastern European Sub Group is held every three months. This vision is to take this to other parts of Leeds where local services can run their own sub group with local Eastern Europeans. The aim is to ensure the interests and perspectives of Eastern European community to inform and influence the key strategic agenda for Leeds. It identifies the needs for Eastern Europeans in that local area and the meetings represent Roma community. This meeting feeds into the Leeds Migration Partnership which held a workshop on Roma Engagement. This was to raise awareness of Roma in Leeds, their culture, lifestyles, discrimination etc and how other services could add value to their service. As a result a service specifically commissioned to support asylum seekers and refugees supported a Roma volunteer to run her organisation from their location and this led to a joint partnership.
- GRT Outreach & Inclusion Team -The GRT Outreach and Inclusion Workers provide direct work, support and guidance to Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) families in order to ensure their children are ready for learning and to raise standards of educational attainment of children and young people living within these communities.

Local initiatives supported by LCC

- The Roma Café providing the weekly brunch club has become a successful activity in engaging with diverse communities. Local residents enjoy the traditional food cooked by the Roma volunteer and exchanging experiences and knowledge. Services attend and this improves engagement and improving access to services. This example illustrates both personal and community benefits.
- Vision, Advocacy and Employment is another organisation set up by a Roma volunteer who was supported by the Council's Migrant Access Project to attend training, and some volunteer expenses.
- POMOC is an organisation set-up by a member of Eastern European community and provides a free drop-in service to offer advice and guidance to people from Eastern European countries with limited English. They run from the One Stop Centre in Armley and Harehills POMOC now wish to expand their work to

Some local initiatives in more details

Pomoc means help in Eastern Europe and two POMOC drop-ins are held weekly at two Community Hubs. The aim is to support people by overcoming barriers such as language and improve access to services. The idea of POMOC came from a Polish gentleman who initially set it up in a Community Hub in one part of Leeds to support Eastern European community (mainly Polish). A Roma lady who volunteers decided to set this up in another part of Leeds to support Roma.

The council supported her to do this, and liaises with both volunteers regularly. Workshops have been held and continue to be held to improve POMOC. This involves the council, voluntary sector and the volunteers themselves to take part by contributing experiences, sharing concerns as well as good practice. We now have some dedicated time to collate evidence and analysis of the impact of POMOC. We know that more Roma are accessing services at the hub through the POMOC route.

One of the challenges is around the role of POMOC as they provide advocacy within the community hub whereas this is not the role of the council. We will look at the best way to incorporate this as a mainstream service. A small amount of funding is provided for this initiative in way of volunteer expenses and items they may need such as stationery.

By working together and involving the volunteers helps us overcome challenges and the way we work. we are currently looking at how people can access support as and when needed and outside of POMOC so people are not waiting for one weekly session to seek advice. Through the volunteer we have a new volunteer who is shadowing at POMOC to learn and this will allow for more opportunities to replicate this in other parts of the city where there is demand.

GRT Outreach & Inclusion Team -The GRT Outreach and Inclusion Workers provide direct work, support and guidance to Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) families in order to ensure their children are ready for learning and to raise standards of educational attainment of children and young people living within these communities.

The team works with any GRT family with children and young people aged 0-19, with the purpose of achieving the Outcomes set out in the Leeds City Council Children and Young People's Plan; specifically that all children and young people do well at all levels of learning and have the skills for life. It does this by providing bespoke, specialist support and interventions that compliments, not replaces, the functions of other teams within the Children and Families Service.

In addition to referrals we receive, some of our regular initiatives include: **School Based Group Work** – 6-week sessions in schools to support Central / Eastern European / Roma young people in raising aspirations and staying safe in their communities; **FreshStart**- A weekly programme designed for young people awaiting school places. The community-based sessions look to prepare young people for school. **The Welcome Group** aimed to support mainly Roma families with advocacy. A weekly drop-in session with appointments was introduced for Roma families offering support with children, education, advocacy and signposting. This service provides interpreters and there are opportunities for Roma community members to volunteer at this group to develop their English learning and other skills

Pria Bhabra, Leeds City Council

Liverpool - Granby Toxteth Development Trust

Here in Liverpool I am involved with the Roma families. Most of them are from Romania. I am employed by Granby Toxteth Development Trust. They support me in my projects and they are open for new collaboration that improve the Roma community. I organise different activities and presentation also for the British families and representatives of the Public Institution from Liverpool about the Roma history and culture and to break the stereotypes that they have about us.

I work a lot with individual families to help them to be easier to integrate in this city. The Roma come to find advices how they can access different services or to register for ESOL classes, to find a job. I give individual advices, included translation / assistance completing documents. (Challenging a benefit decision, challenging a tax credit decision or to renew the tax credit, benefit overpayments, benefit Fraud, illegal eviction, how to pay fines, appointments for the insurance number).

I am also involved with 3 schools and with the parents from Liverpool were are the Roma children. I explain them about some letters with information from the school, because they

have the English in the beginning level or there education is not advanced to understand some academic words. I participate in the meetings with the parents and school representative to facilitate the communication and to find a mutual understanding in different situation. I organize a Roma club and Roma week in the school to celebrate our culture and history.

Next you will see some activities organised in the last months.

Find Your Identity - Be Young Be Roma

In Cullen Street we organise activities for the children's. We start with the draw of what mean for them the word Roma and what is Tigan. After this we spoke about the Roma history and the culture to understand why is more good to call us Roma and no gipsy, tzigania or tigan. Was a day with a lot of emotions. We learn "Gelem Gelem" that is our anthem and that we are a nation with a flag and an international language. They were very enthusiasm to hear that we come from India, but also surprised that in Romania our ancestors were for 500 years slaves. In the same day we spoke also that we need to be proud that we are Roma and we start the week with the slogan Be Young Be Roma.



Knowledge is the best way for the integration

In April we added to our list the Museum of Liverpool with all the great things that you can learn about Liverpool.



Was very exciting to take children for the first time to the museum and to show them a place full of knowledge and information. It was the first step to know better your city that host you and want to be a part of it.

We have 4 educational sessions: Understanding Transatlantic Slavery, Liverpool home for home, Emigration, Liverpool Gateway to the world.

Was a good opportunity for the Roma children to bring them in another place outside from the school and the community. They behaved very nice and they come with a lot of new ideas how they can improve their knowledge's and to share all of the information with their parents. One of the child tell me that she will come next time with his parents to the museum to show them what he learn and to be their guide.

Recycling in your community

On 19th of January was organized a workshop to introduce for the Roma kids the thematic of recycling. 26 Roma children participate. We had a storyteller about Albie the albatross. We spoke with them about the importance of their role in the community and how a little thing can change the environment and the future of living beings.

Energy saving workshop- Be Green, Be a SuperHero

On 27th of January was organised an energy workshop in the Roma community. 24 Roma children attended. The story about the Green Family and how their children start to be superheroes because they save energy, was received with interest by the participants. The Roma children understand that if they share this tips how to save energy they can also became heroes in their community.

Volunteering

On 13th of February and 16th of March was decide after long involvement in the community with different activities and events that is time to receive back from the Roma community support and involvement in the projects about their integration. In 13th of February we have the first meeting and we are pleased that a Roma family registered like volunteers - a woman with her daughter (19) and the son (18). They are glad that they can have this opportunity to be involve in our work and that we trust them. We chose to make every month a meeting in 45 Cullen Street, open for the new volunteers who wants to register and to discuss about future projects. Is a good opportunity to work together, to improve the Community and to make a safe place for the Roma and Non-Roma to live.

Recycling trip

11 Roma children have the great opportunity to be involve in a programme were they were able to visit to the Gillmoss Recycling Discovery Centre to see recycling in action out more about what happens to their waste. The project is to spread the recycling message as part of an imaginative initiative by the Granby Toxteth Development Trust.

Healthy teeth

24 Roma children attended on 16th of March in 45 Cullen Street. They participate in fun activities make it by a professional dentist with the message to clean your teeth and to grow healthy. In the end of these activities each of these kids received toothpaste and toothbrush.

Energy poster

16 Roma children on 23th of March, participate in 45 Cullen Street to the Energy workshop where they designed a poster to show the ways to save the Energy.

Learn To Be Safe

On 24 February at our breakfast morning we have special guest from the Police–Community Engagement Unit. The kids were very excited to meet with Bobby, a mascot from the Police and to learn about the importance to have trust in the Police, to be safe in your family and in your community.

Children tried the police uniform and equipment. They understand if they want in the future to have a career in Police that they can have the support to receive all the information and advices about this and also to start a volunteer programme in the Police



Celebrate the diversity

In 8th of April was a beautiful day to celebrate the Roma Community. We make a great work with the Roma from the area and this day was a good day to be thankful and to celebrate them. In 8th of April 1971 was hold first world Roma Congress held in London and they decided the flag, Roma international day and the anthem “Gelem Gelem”.

Our partners from the Unity Youth & Community Centre provide us with the venue and staff. The venue was very helpful because we have different places where we can make our activities. In that day we have a football tournament and pool tournament. The young people enjoy to play this spots and to learn more about the history and culture of the Roma people through the exposition that we have there.

The children enjoy to make gardening activities and to see the young people how they interact and play with the Non-Roma young people from the area.

We celebrate the day of diversity and integration of the Roma in the community.

Alexandra Bahor, Granby Toxteth Development Trust

Leicester – Leicester City Council

The increasing numbers of Eastern Roma families coming to reside in the city, tend to live in private tenancies. Most Roma live in family units with one or two families living together. The majority are from Slovakia and the Czech Republic, but there are increasing numbers from other Eastern European countries, notably Romania.

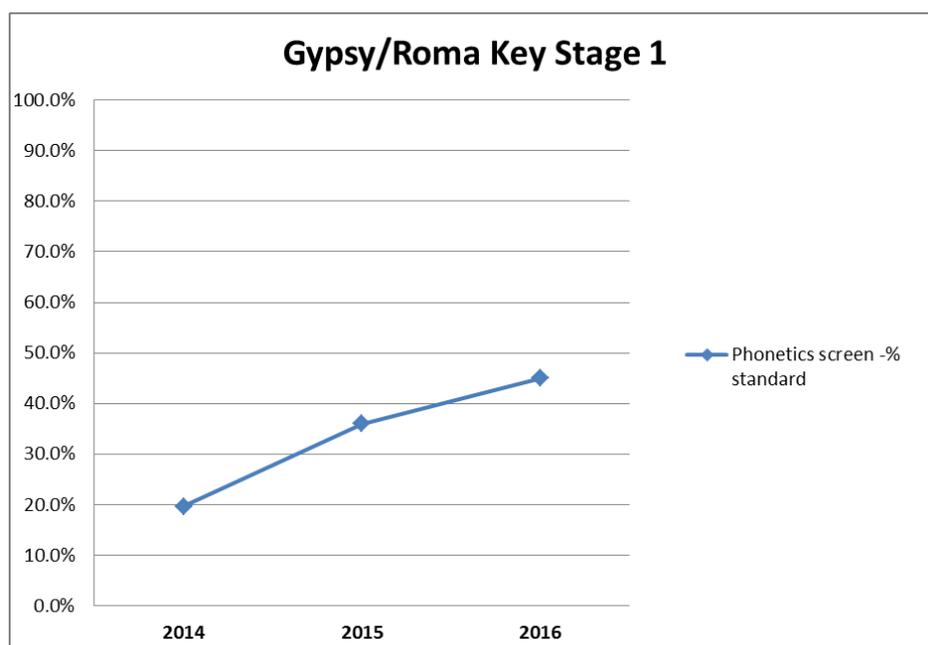
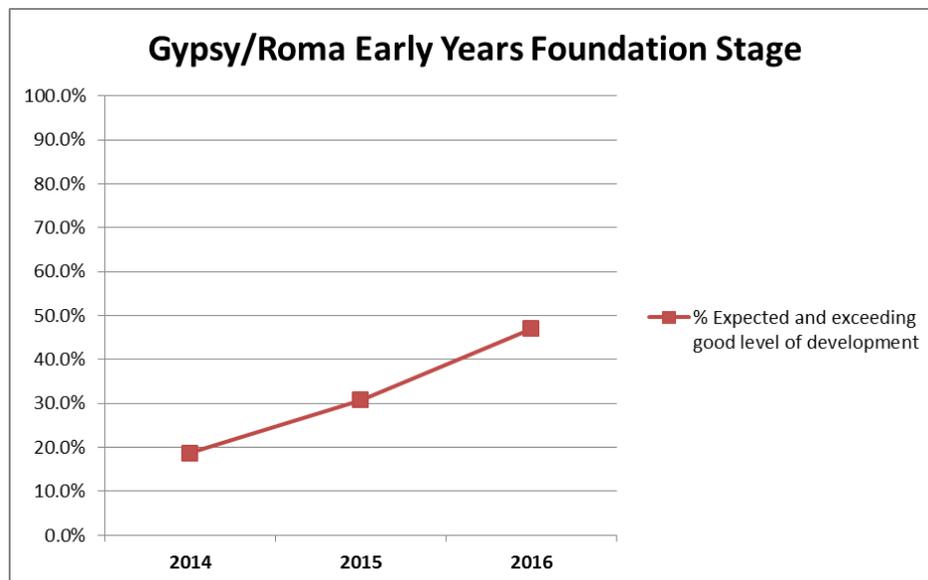
- Number of Primary schools with Ascribed Roma pupils – 20
- Number of Ascribed Roma pupils in Primary schools – 189
- Number of secondary schools with Ascribed Roma pupils – 10
- Number of Ascribed Roma pupils in secondary schools – 96
- Approximate total number of Ascribed Roma Pupils in Leicester City Schools – 285

A conservative estimate would be that the true figures should be doubled for the Gypsy/Roma categories. Ofsted and the DFE now accept that there is a problem nationally with

the correct recording of GRT pupils. Under recording of Gypsy/Roma is believed to be inflating the recording of "Other White European". Therefore any analysis of attendance and attainment data for GRT pupils should be mindful of this under recording of correct ascription as statistics can be potentially skewed due to the very small numbers being included in the data sets.

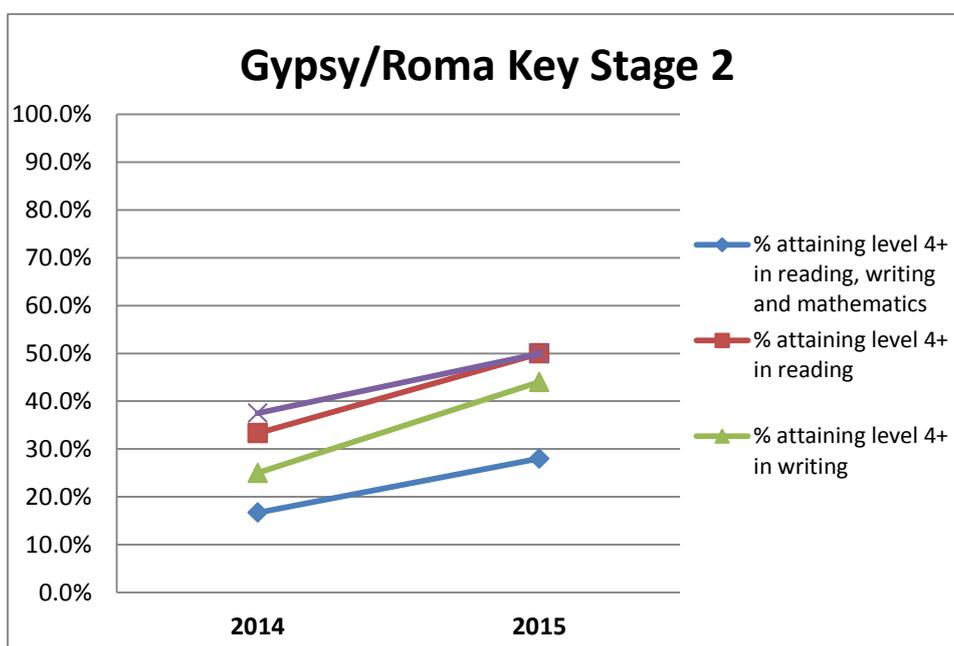
Raising the ascription rates is an on-going priority of the GRT strategy in Leicester and the GRT Advisory teacher works hard with schools and families, along with family support Workers and Roma professionals working in schools to encourage correct ascription and share the good practice adopted in successful schools across the city: the increased numbers show that this is clearly being successful. Leicester is achieving both national and international recognition for its increasing practice of working with community members. It is predicted that this will be reflected in improved attainment and attendance rates for GRT pupils over the coming years.

Attainment



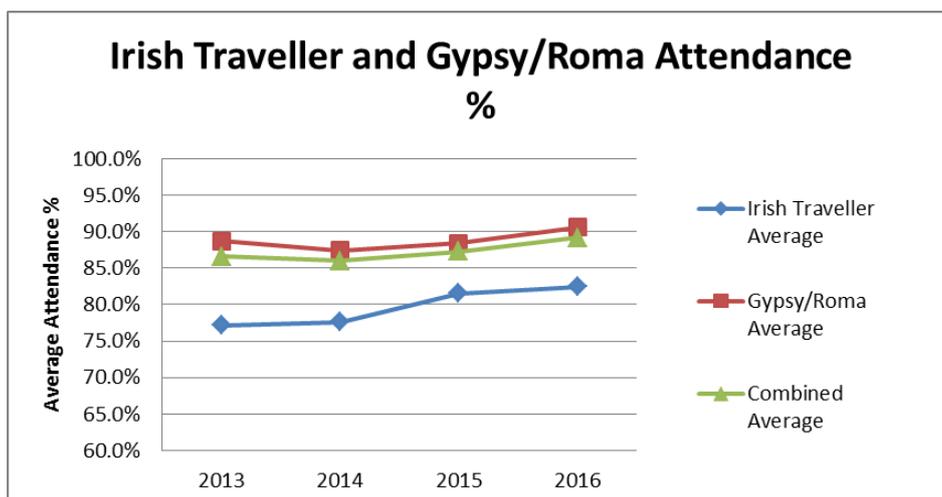
Despite there still being some reluctance for Roma families to take advantage of early years provision, the data is showing a very positive trend of a significant upward trajectory in Early Years Foundation and some Key stage 1 results and is a direct result of more Gypsy/Roma children taking up both F1 places in school nurseries and accessing alternative provision in a range of other settings, including private nurseries. As a result of this, they are more likely to enrol for school before statutory school age and are much more 'school ready' when they do start. This is why it continues to be vital that the GRT Advisory Teacher to work closely with the Childrens' Centres and to have representation on the Central Cluster Advisory Board where high numbers of the Roma families live.

The upward trajectory of Gypsy /Roma attainment continues across key stage 2 and increasing numbers of pupils are both meeting and exceeding age-related expectations. Such projects as the keystage 2 **Roma buddies Reading Project** where older siblings are paired up with younger siblings to raise attainment in reading for both partners.



The Gypsy/Roma students continue to make year on year progress in their GCSE attainment across all of the markers with the cohorts remaining fairly stable. More students are now going on to Further Education vocational courses at colleges in Leicester.

Attendance



Overall Roma attendance is showing a steady upward trajectory across all keystages. A majority of Roma pupils are now having regular attendance percentages of well over 90%

Most Roma families increasingly recognise the value of maintaining good attendance and the link to good educational outcomes. Families are communicating with schools much more openly and positively about the traditionally fraught issues of attendance and likewise schools now work much more closely with the GRT Advisory Teacher, Family Support Facilitators and Education Welfare Service to promptly address and identify patterns of non-attendance. Families are recognising through the serving of penalty notices that procedures are in place to ensure absence can only be authorised in line with school, local and national policies. Also the introduction of off-roll protocol ensures that pupils are not taken off roll without the school and authority being informed of an onward destination.

Most of the Roma families in Leicester generally live a very settled life and schools and EWS have worked very hard with families to ensure that the children do attend school very regularly and do not have extended trips back to their countries of origin.

In Leicester City Multi-agency communication and partnership will continue to be the key to closing the attainment gap for Gypsy/Roma pupils and it is paramount that the continuity and consistency of this approach is at the forefront of provision in the city. Time and time again, senior staff in both schools and other services tell me that they believe the real key to success in working with these families is by having the ongoing stability and continuity of the professional in post.

Fran Warsop, Advisory Teacher for GRT Education, Leicester City Council

Luton – Luton Roma Trust

We now have over 653 clients on our database. We are seeking to increase our capacity to respond to the growing number of clients we have here in Luton and the ever deepening needs they have in every area of their lives. As well as Roma, we have a growing number of Romanians. We run a music project for the Roma children and our choir is appearing regularly at public events in Luton.

We are currently creating a new post for a Senior Roma Community Champion who we hope will start in September. This will bring our team to 4. We are seeking funding for premises of our own - working in cafes has its problems!

There is great anxiety amongst all our Roma re Brexit and we need help in how to guide them at this time of uncertainty.

Our work at Luton Roma Trust is linked to the Churches Network for Gypsies Travellers and Roma (which I chair) and also to Roma Networks - a Europe wide network of Roma and non-Roma who are working with churches and projects. I report to the network on projects in the UK and other N. European countries.

Martin Burrell, Luton Roma Trust

Manchester – Roma Community Member

Main issues of Roma communities in Manchester region:

- Anxiety about Brexit
- Benefits are harder to access – across different groups of Roma
- Rise in racial attacks – including psychical attacks, and lack of meaningful reaction from police
- Europia has some funding to help victims of hate crime, racism and hate speech - working with Eastern Europeans including Roma
- Continuing tensions between locals (White British) and Roma
- Many Roma families have their children taken away from them by social services due alleged neglect

Liviu Dinu, Co-chair of NRN

Peterborough - COMPAS

ROMOS: is a new mentoring project aiming to support and coach young Roma people. We will have a national event bring many Roma professionals round a table and sharing their positives stories. This will take place next month in Leicester.

Petr Torak, COMPAS

Rotherham – YMCA/Myplace

The Reaching Communities Project is a 4 year project, funded by Big Lotto. Our youth clubs are attended by over 79% young people from Eastern European backgrounds, although I would argue that percentage is now a little higher, as that stat is from last September. We offer youth clubs, advice, information and support to young people aged 10-19 years old. The three youth clubs are well attended and we also have some committed members of the Myplace Steering Group.

We have recently been involved in various projects and events in Eastwood and Rotherham Town Centre, here are a few of them:

- Holocaust Memorial Day 2017 – Young People’s event at Rotherham Town Hall on Thursday 26th January. A Roma young woman from Myplace wrote her own rap about love and relationships and performed it in front of an audience of young people, youth workers and VIPs, including the Madam Mayor of Rotherham.
- International Roma Day 2017 – celebrations, information and activities during our Chat & Chill and Senior Youth Clubs on 6th & 8th April. Young people celebrated with food from across Europe and Asia and they played traditional and contemporary tunes on the youth club piano, guitar & Cajon.
- Eastwood Fun Fest, Eastwood by the Sea on Saturday 20th May 2017 – a community event offering free activities, food and drink to the local community, celebrating the great community spirit of Eastwood. Fun Fest was coordinated by Clifton Learning Partnership. Myplace offered free drawing and games activities and two Roma young people performed two songs alongside youth worker, Nicola Harding on the stage.

- MeAsia – a Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance project, which is taking place in July. REMA have provided workshops at some of the youth sessions at Myplace, making giant paper flowers and origami doves, ready to celebrate Mela.
- Graffiti Project – Myplace have been working alongside local graffiti artist, Phil Padfield, during the Chat & Chill sessions, to create graffiti canvas art that has transformed the youth space area. According to one young person, making it ‘feel like home’. Phil is also currently working on a commissioned piece, which will reflect the projects that Myplace have been involved in over the last couple of years.

Over the summer young people will have the chance to take part in various activities and projects in and around the centre, including a ‘Day In The Life Of....’ filming project, a residential visit to Scarborough and an Introduction to Volunteering Course for young women. The young people involved in the Myplace Steering Group are actively taking part in the planning of activities and projects, including the residential visit.

Some leaflets, which outline the youth provision run by the Reaching Communities project here at Myplace.

KLUB MLADÉŽE V "MYPLACE"
POMÁHA MLADÝM LIDEM BUDOVAŤ JEJICH BUDOUCNOSŤ

PONDEIOK Junior Club (11-14 rokov) Vstup Zdarma od 17:00-18:00	STVRTOK Starsia Club (14-19 rokov) Vstup zdarma od 18.00 - 20:00	SOBOTA Pokec a relax (11-19 rokov) vstup za £0.30p, 11.00-13.00 zdarma pitie a toast
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Myplace Radaia Skupina
13-19 let, 18.00 - 20.00

My place sa užasne vybledlo a nie sú problémy ktoré zasahujú mladých ľudí v Rotherham. A navrhuje možnosti počas rok aby sa mohli pripojiť k rôznym komunitným projektom. Dobrovoľne ponúknuť čas na na odobudnutie kvalifikácie, alebo ísť na ich organizovaných návštev. Máme tiež bezplatné Wi-Fi, počítačové

bilardový stôl, stolný tenis, výkonné práce, kreslenie a prístup ku zrejme najlepšie práce a mládežou v Rotherham!

Školské prázdniny: prosím opýtajte sa našich mládežníckych zamestnancov na detaily kde sa plánuje na školské prázdniny.

YMCA WHITE ROSE Myplace Rotherham St Ann's Road, S65 1PH www.myplace-rotherham.org.uk 01709 837 428

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SESSIONS @ MYPLACE
HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE BUILD A FUTURE

MONDAY Junior Club (11-14yrs) Free entry, 5-6pm Myplace Steering Group 13-19yrs, 6-8pm	THURSDAY Senior Club (14-19yrs) Free entry, 6-8pm	SATURDAY Chat & Chill (11-19yrs) £0.30p entry, 11am-1pm free hot drink & toast
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Myplace gets involved, raises and explores issues that affect young people in Rotherham and offers opportunities throughout the year to get involved with various creative projects, volunteering and the chance to gain qualifications or go on our organised residential visits.

We also have free WiFi, use of laptops, pool table plus table tennis, arts & crafts and access to probably the best youth work team in Rotherham!

School Holidays: Please ask your youth work staff for details of what's on during holiday times.

YMCA WHITE ROSE Myplace Rotherham St Ann's Road, S65 1PH www.myplace-rotherham.org.uk 01709 837 428

Nicola Harding, YMCA

Rotherham – Clifton Partnership

Main issues of Roma communities in Rotherham:

- More children and youth engaging with our centre which makes an impact on families and community, slowly rising aspiration
- New families (the majority are coming from other cities in the UK – such as Glasgow and Bolton) and so many children out of school waiting for places
- Increase of social care in the area due to risk of neglect or sex. Exploitation;

- Many families felt forced to go back to SK or CZ – this is due to inability to support themselves (the main issues are difficulties in getting a job and accessing benefits) and social services involvement (mainly due to alleged neglect)
- Due to increase in a number of claims for Personal Independence Payment made by Roma many who should be getting it are not, as claims are dismissed as not genuine
- Housing issues [bad landlords, the houses are in horrible state, houses are not big enough... most are 2beds, people move too often to get anything sorted]
- We struggle to get people for Adult learning – providers require regular attendance which Roma often cannot do due to having other pressing needs – housing, income etc.; ESOL is a priority but restricted access
- New Company “Kingdom” ... harsh fining for littering.... People end up in debts

Olina Fuseini, Clifton Partnership

Sheffield – Darnall Well Being Slovak Roma Health Project

Key Message

To follow on from our Update at the end of last year, we would like to inform you that we do not currently have funds to maintain or development our Slovak Roma Health Project beyond the end of June 2017.

After over two years of embedding a holistic, targeted approach to improving the health and wellbeing of the Roma community in Sheffield, we are again faced with having to wind down the project.

We have been approached by a number of wide-ranging organisations, exploring exciting opportunities for partnership-working and links to our project. Unfortunately, this has not resulted in any longer-term investment and therefore does not resolve our urgent need to cover core delivery costs.

Achievements

Our greatest achievement has been the recruitment, support and training of a team of Slovak Roma workers that enabled us to test a community development approach to improving health and wellbeing and increasing access to services.

Trust, consistency, professionalism, peer support and signposting have improved the interaction between community and statutory services, giving us valuable learning about how best to meet the needs of new arrivals and provide an evidence-base for best practice.

We've captured over 3,500 points of contact with the community, across five GP sites with 300+ clinics taking place and received over 200 Health Trainer referrals. In addition to this, we've run smaller-scale and pilots including: children's engagement activities, family learning, community events and home visits. More recently we worked with the Parent Carer Forum and Dundee University to undertake Roma family interviews and contribute to valuable research.

What happens next?

Please get in touch if you would like to meet with us to explore partnership/funding opportunities. We plan to **arrange a visit** to our delivery partners before the end of June and capture any final thoughts and answer any questions you may have. Please don't hesitate to contact us in the meantime.

Delivery

Our clinics in all surgeries will cease week ending 25th June 2017

Health Trainer Referrals

We have already placed a pause on referrals from outside Darnall and Tinsley for Roma patients in need of healthy lifestyle/condition management or signposting support.

Signposting alternatives

You may find it helpful to refer Slovak Roma clients to the following provision:

- Community Support Workers: short-term signposting support for vulnerable adults not on a care package. Email: CSWReferrals@sheffield.gcsx.gov.uk. Phone: Duty Line (0114) 205 7120
- SOAR: a community regeneration charity that provides a range of services designed to improve a person's health, well-being and employability, covering the North of Sheffield. Website: <https://soarcommunity.org.uk>. Phone: (0114) 213 4065
- PACA: information and advocacy services in Page Hall including a variety of projects working with the Roma community. Website: <http://www.pacacentre.org.uk>. Phone: (0114) 261 9130

How can you help us?

It's not too late to offer your support to the project in one of the following ways;

- **Write a letter of support**, detailing the impact this service has made on the health and wellbeing of the Roma community – how do we help improve access to services? How does this approach help our city welcome new communities? What would happen if this service wasn't available?
 - You can send this directly to us for collation and we will forward to the relevant persons,
 - Or **Lobby** your local Councillors or Locality Lead and raise awareness of the issue,
- **Share statistics** or data with us that you think could help us demonstrate impact, develop our business model and strengthen the case for how our project improves wellbeing and saves money,
- **Consider making a donation** to the project. We are happy to meet with you to discuss options but if all our partners gave a contribution, we might be able to continue,
- Offer your thoughts about delivery and service design that could feed in to future funding bids.

We hope you have found this Update useful. Thank you for all your support.

Contact: (0114) 249 6315, lucy@darnallwellbeing.org.uk / jo@darnallwellbeing.org.uk

Sheffield – Sheffield City Council

Community

We continue to work with partners to listen to and support Roma residents in Page Hall, Grimethorpe, Darnall and Tinsley as part of our community development project. New community projects include improvements to Grimethorpe Family Centre used by Roma as a church and the base for other community activities, regular community litter picks bringing different communities together and Darnall Sports Day at the local Athletics Stadium. This Roma focused community development project comes to an end on the 30th June.

In Tinsley we are reopening the old Tinsley Infants School as Tingas, a new social enterprise for start ups and as a community and economic hub. In Darnall we are organising the second Darnall Sports Day in July which brings together children from 6 different schools.

PACA, based in Page Hall continue to support the development of the Sheffield Roma Network, and provide weekly advice sessions as well as a range of other community activity.

A new organisation called Roma Futures is being created in Sheffield.

We have responded to the Eurocities Roma survey.

Health

We have restarted our new arrivals practitioner group for health professionals with support SCHARR (School of health and Related Research at the University of Sheffield).

We continue to have health related Roma projects in Sheffield, in Darnall, Tinsley, Fir Vale and Firth Park areas, including Roma Health Champions based at Darnall Well Being.

Community Education and ESOL

The project is now entering its final phase and will be providing a summative evaluation of the work done to date at the end of July; inclusive of approaches and strategies used.

Summary of key findings to date:

- **Recruitment and Engagement:** In terms of Community Learning the team have tried and tested a number of approaches of engagement – what works best is Publicity, word of mouth, direct informal conversations with Roma building trust and confidence. In terms of identified outputs:
 - Engaged with 247 adults as of March 27th with 91 of these moving on and progressing onto a learning programme (1-6 weeks in duration).
 - Total of 42 families engaged.

- Two thirds of learners attending classes were women
- Majority of learners fall into the 25-40 age group profile
- Main barriers to learning are family responsibilities, pregnancy, anxiety and transport
- Main request made by Roma was for ESOL classes
- Learners often used classes to request support for completing paperwork relating to benefits, schooling concerns and other Council correspondence
- **What programmes did we trial:** These ranged from informal cooking sessions, Health and Beauty, Keep fit, ESOL – Formal and Informal (conversational).
- **Issues with Community Learning classes:** Regular attendance is an issue, complex family and personal issues that are prioritised above learning
- **ESOL at Home:** This was an innovative approach that has worked and involves taking ESOL provision to the homes of families and exploits the extended family structures that exist within the community. People then learn together in an environment that is 'safe' to them and works for them.
- **Other areas / approaches tested:** Attempted working with schools. Not always receptive to working in partnership. Currently working with the Police to build relationships, opportunities and general understanding between both parties.
- **Roma Concerns:** Brexit is an issue and the feeling of uncertainty for many families in the future. Undertaking a focus group questionnaire this month which may provide further information.
- **What would we do going forward:**
 - Retain and build on the ESOL at home initiative and identify key families to work with
 - Develop a skills recognition framework for those that have attended regularly – to raise their aspiration and give them some currency of worth. (Currency of volunteering)
 - Building bridges concept – work with schools to develop a bridging course / programme of bringing out the best of those employed in schools (in terms of upskilling) and allows these to become role models for others in the community
 - Work with identified employers and the Roma community to create pathways into employment; where possible deliver training to assist them into work.

We also help young people access apprenticeships and training through Talent Match, in partnership with Sheffield Futures. This is primarily tailored for those who have English as a second language, who are not in education, employment or training, and could really do with extra support due to their lack of English language, skills, or just navigating their way around the UK system.

Those participating will receive support from a work coach to help them overcome barriers to accessing work.

For further information on any of these projects please contact Colin Havard on 07775407063 or email colin.havard@sheffield.gov.uk
