



the Traveller Movement



Conference Report 2023

Future Voices

“Celebrating diverse perspectives for a brighter future”

16th of November 2023

About the Traveller Movement

The Traveller Movement (TM) is a leading national charity committed to the fulfillment of Human Rights for ethnic minority Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) people. The Traveller Movement’s mission is to develop a platform and voice for Travellers, working in solidarity with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities to achieve equality through self-determination and proactive participation in influencing and shaping policy.

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Acknowledgments

The Traveller Movement would like to thank:

- Pauline Melvin-Anderson OBE, TM Chairperson for co-chairing the event
- Jimmy Doherty, Community Intern for co-hosting the event
- Seyi Obakin, CEO of Centre point and Chair of Youth Futures Foundation, for delivering our keynote speech
- Our panel speakers: Dr. Jon Tan, Charlie Doherty, Rosemary Lloyd, Phil Regan, Sally Carr MBE, Declan O’Driscoll, Olivia Hammond, Laura Angela Collins Professor Colin Clarke
- All our workshop hosts and participants





Introduction

The UK is heading into an election year with a cost-of-living crisis, low growth and a rising numbers of young people Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET). These issues have a disproportionate impact for minority groups and are felt heaviest by our community members.

From education to employment to politics, there is a lack of access, inclusion and opportunity. Economic struggles are simultaneously affecting, and are affected by, an unfolding mental health crisis. Community reports of deaths by suicide – particularly amongst children and young people – are increasing at an alarming rate. Coupling these poor outcomes with frequent incidents of hate crime and discrimination, there is no doubt that Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities are at a systematic disadvantage from the general population.

While there is wide-ranging variety between Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities, all are united by the fact that they are poorly served by policymakers and public services. Despite parliaments acknowledgement of this failure, little change can be seen on the ground. There has never been a more important time for young people to take a stand and engage with the political landscape.

However, there is hope. For example, the number Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller students who started a degree course at a university or college doubled in 2022. At the Traveller Movement's annual conference, we shone a light on good practice and good role models and sought to understand how we can empower our future generations.

To address the profound challenges ahead, the 2023 Traveller Movement conference brought together key policymakers, passionate advocates, motivational business leaders and inspiring young people to consider the relationship between education, opportunity, and access within Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities specifically.

Throughout the conference, from compelling panel discussions to interactive workshops, the overarching objective remained constant: identifying strategies to support and empower the next generation. The sessions weren't merely discussions but thoughtful explorations into reshaping the political landscape to work in favour of Romani (Gypsy), Roma, and Irish Traveller youth. This year's conference put our youth at the centre of our discussions, with a member of our Youth Advisory Group, Jimmy Doherty co-hosting alongside our chair of trustees Pauline Melvin-Anderson OBE. As well as looking at the practical steps we need to take to build an inclusive economy for our young people we explored what belonging meant for our diverse community.

This report encapsulates the pivotal discussions, insights, and initiatives from the 2023 Traveller Movement's Annual Conference, showcasing the journey towards a more equitable and promising future for Romani (Gypsy), Roma, and Irish Traveller communities.

A Youth Manifesto

Ahead of the Local and General Elections in 2024 the Traveller Movement is writing a youth manifesto built on the lived experiences of our young people. With its initial basis in our roads to success recommendations, this manifesto will act as our key document in advocating for an inclusive economy for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller youth.

We are keen that the lived experiences raised in our annual conference as well as consultation with our young community members drive the narrative and key asks of this manifesto. Young community members can have their say by signing up to our broadcast network where we will be distributing short survey questions to participants. We cannot see an equitable future for *our communities youth* unless they are at the centre of our decision making.

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Keynote Speech: Seyi Obakin

The keynote speech this year was given by Seyi Obakin, CEO of Centre Point and Chair of Youth Futures Foundation. Seyi highlighted the strong relationship between Youth Futures Foundation and the Traveller Movement emphasising our joint efforts to support marginalized youth, particularly focusing on reducing unemployment among Romani (Gypsy), Roma, and Irish Traveller young people.

Seyi emphasized the core mission of empowering young individuals through employment opportunities and breaking down the barriers hindering their progress. He shed light on the challenges faced by marginalized youth, including workplace discrimination and obstacles in accessing education, leading to economic exclusion and disproportionate representation in the justice system.

Central to his address was the power and importance of vocational training as a crucial pathway for disadvantaged youth to access better employment prospects. Seyi championed Open Doors Education and Training (ODET) as an effective model for targeting Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller youth, highlighting the power of one-on-one online tutoring in overcoming learning barriers.

Core to Seyi's address to conference was the importance of working with young people to build a stronger future. Too often policies are made for young people without having their voices at the centre. Only by advocating for active participation from young people not in education employment or training (NEET) can we shape the solutions to this issue.

However, we cannot solve issues if we do not have the full picture. In his speech, Seyi called for improvements in collecting high-quality data on minority youth experiences, expanding evidence-based approaches to bolster employment outcomes, fostering enhanced engagement from employers, and advocating for comprehensive government support for young people.

His overarching message conveyed the urgent need for collaborative efforts to address systemic challenges faced by marginalized youth. The speaker reiterated the importance of continued partnership with the Traveller Movement to create a brighter future for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller young people by securing quality employment opportunities. The address called for concerted action, collaborative partnerships, and inclusive approaches to empower young individuals and create equitable employment opportunities for all.



“We must not do things to young people; we must do things with young people”

Panel 1: What is the Roadmap?

Are we doing enough to offer good employability skills and inclusive strategies to open up pathways to fair and equitable education training and employment opportunities? This panel brings together a wealth of knowledge and experience to share successful policies and hear directly from practitioners and community voices.

Speakers:

Dr. Jon Tan (Senior lecturer in Education for the Centre for Race, Education & Decoloniality (CRED) at the Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University)

Charlie Doherty (Youth Engagement and Development Officer at the Traveller Movement)

Rosemary Lloyd (Regional Judge of the First-Tier Tribunal). Rosemary was formally a judge at the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Phil Regan (Youth Participation Officer with the Traveller Movement) leading partnerships efforts under the Reaching Out mme.

This panel will look at what the policy shortfalls are within youth employment and what are the ways to open up pathways to assist young people in obtaining good employability skills and inclusive strategies to open up pathways to fair and equitable education training and employment opportunities.

Bringing his perspective as an academic in social policy and education, Dr Jon Tan spoke on the need for an education system that is flexible. Dr Tan also highlighted that whilst public bodies often look to inspire young people out of employment, they simultaneously fail to solve the growing issues surrounding the growing numbers of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET), thus making the situation worse.. By presenting young people with a goal without the foundations for them to reach their potential, it often sends young people into a cycle of hopelessness.

The Traveller Movement's Youth Engagement and Development Officer, Charlie Doherty is a young Irish Traveller. Charlie left school at 11 to work in the family business, but then returned to education at the age of 19, starting an access course in business studies. Charlie shared his experiences in education as well as reflecting on the barriers young Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller people face when accessing education, training and employment (ETE). These barriers can be cultural as well as explicitly and implicitly racist. Charlie highlighted our findings from the Roads to Success report which found that Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Travellers say that traditional family roles can be a barrier to ETE. But questioned why they can not have both. Charlie called for flexible youth provisions. Only 20% of youth provision organisations prioritise tackling systemic racism as an important factor to providing youth provision. Charlie highlighted the economic benefit of reducing NEET young people in the UK. Offer outreach to need it most. I was unaware of the opportunities available to me. Need a fair equal distribution of youth provision in the UK. Many young people ask eat or learn. Cross cultural training is needed in education. Fear of assimilation do not want to lose their way of life. Some children hide who they are for fear of being bullied. We need young people involved in making the changes we need. Youth Manifesto.

Regional Judge Rosemary Lloyd spoke to conference about the need for meaningful employment as a means for social change. As a regional judge of the First-Tier Tribunal and formally a senior solicitor at the Equality and Human Rights Commission EHRC Rosemary brought her experience tackling discrimination through extending the law. Rosemary highlighted the fact that we can achieve social change through meaningful employment for young Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller people. Much of the discrimination faced by our communities is through policing and the criminal justice system.

By increasing the representation of our communities in the legal system we can ensure we are not only seen but also ensure that changes are made that reduce the discrimination we face. When looking at building an inclusive economy, Judge Lloyd emphasised the importance community members looking at law as a career path to enrich themselves but to also enrich the communities as a whole.

Phil Regan, Youth Participation officer with the Traveller movement spoke on the work he has been spearheading under our reaching out programme. The aim of his work is to create pathways into education, employment and training for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller young people. Phil highlighted the importance of collaboration building across different sectors in order to achieve success for our young people. Phil spoke on the good practice that exists out there especially on a local level as well as the barriers faced to ensuring young community members have access to opportunities. Aside from the systemic barriers facing our young people, Phil emphasised that a barrier to accessing opportunities is often division in the sector. Phil called for a joined-up response within Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller organisations as well as enterprises in order for us to achieve success for our young people.



Panel 2: ‘Reembracing our sense of belonging (a seat around the campfire)

Panel two sought to answer the question: can our communities rise to the challenge, embrace difference and all have a seat around the campfire? This panel of diverse, intergenerational community leaders discussed how their different paths in life strengthen their connections to their communities.

Panellists:

Sally Carr MBE, Northwest director of Street Games, Associate Lecturer and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion consultant at Manchester Metropolitan University and Director of Pride Sports. Sally is a member of the Advisory Board of the Traveller Movement. Sally was awarded an MBE in 2012 for services to marginalised children and young people. Sally has worked across many sectors and is a Trustee and Director of a number of communities, youth, and sports organisations in the U.K. Sally is a proud LGBTQ+ Romany Gypsy

Declan O’Driscoll, Senior Policy & Advocacy Officer at the Traveller Movement. Declan oversees education policy and the Education Advise & Advocacy Support Unit (EAASU), as well as the Equality & Social Justice Unit (ESJU). Declan works steering multiple community and support groups; such as, the Pride Road Collective, a group of LGBTQ+ Gypsy, Roma and Traveller individuals who develop resources for support. Declan is also Vice-Chair of Trustees for an Academy Trust in Hampshire.

Olivia Hammond, Creative Marketing Coordinator at Lancaster & Morecambe College. Olivia is an advocate for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller people accessing education, a founding member of Pride Road Collective: Supporting LGBTQ+ GRT People and a Romany Gypsy, currently living in Preston, Lancashire

Laura Angela Collins works with the Traveller Movement. She is a mother to three children and the author to the book called *The Tinker Menace; The Diary of an Irish Traveller*. For 8 years she has chaired Justice 4 All Women & Children, a support group for survivors of institutional abuse. Her work as a community activist, led her to be awarded with a Traveller Pride Award in 2019 and to work independently alongside the Traveller Movement on a variety of campaigns, the development of a Safe Space for Women and she also participated in the last annual conference. She is now the Women’s Equality Intern at the Traveller Movement, where she will continue to amplify the voices among Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities.

Professor Colin Clarke is an Advisory Board member of the Traveller Movement and is an Associate Dean (Research and Innovation) and Professor of Sociology and Social Policy in the School of Education and Social Sciences at the University of the West of Scotland.

Panel 2 provided a thought-provoking insight into the multifaceted challenges faced by Traveller communities, encompassing issues of discrimination, cultural identity, education, and societal integration.

Collin elucidated the pervasive nature of discrimination within educational institutions, emphasizing the prevalence of institutional racism exhibited by both students and staff. His poignant insights highlighted the broader societal issue of systemic racism, which permeates every facet of life, profoundly impacting Traveller communities.

Liv underscored the importance of bridging the divide through mutual understanding and education, encouraging individuals to engage in meaningful dialogue to dispel prejudice. She stressed the need for comprehensive education to foster a society free from prejudicial biases, enabling individuals to move forward without preconceived notions.

Laura and Pauline shared personal experiences of feeling compelled to conceal their identities to assimilate into institutions, elucidating the struggle of Travellers to find acceptance in environments that often lack inclusivity. They advocated for the incorporation of Traveller history into educational curricula, emphasizing the significance of role models and a sense of belonging within the community.

Declan delved into the complexities of identity. He highlighted the challenges faced in reconciling cultural differences and navigating societal perceptions, particularly concerning issues like sexuality and community integration.

The discussions emphasized the imperative of fostering pride in one's identity, advocating for inclusivity and intersectionality. Participants stressed the importance of acknowledging diverse experiences within the Traveller communities and debunking stereotypes perpetuated by external sources.

The panel encapsulated the diversity within Traveller communities and highlighted the necessity of embracing this diversity to navigate the current political climate effectively. The emphasis was on unity, dispelling homogenized perceptions, and empowering individuals to challenge societal norms.

In conclusion, the discussions echoed a call for mutual understanding, patience, and active engagement from both Traveller communities and the broader society. By fostering dialogue, embracing diversity, and advocating for inclusivity, it is believed that communities can unite, ensuring a more equitable and accepting future for all.

Key takeaways

Education and Identity:

The need to integrate Traveller history into educational frameworks, creating a sense of pride and belonging while dispelling myths and stereotypes.

Cultural Understanding:

Embracing cultural differences and enhancing understanding within and beyond the Traveller communities to mitigate conflicts and foster societal cohesion.

Support and Empowerment:

Advocating for greater support for disenfranchised members, including GRT LGBTQ+ individuals, women, and youth facing educational barriers.

Challenges of Perception:

Addressing internalized negativity and myths within the community, challenging preconceived notions of what defines a "real" Traveller.



Workshop 1 From margins to movements: building political power for Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller youth

Chair: Phil Regan (TM Partnerships Officer)

TM Lead: Thomas Raeside (Policy Officer)

Speakers:

Austin Harney (Civil Servant and PCS Union Representative in the Justice Sector);

Virgil Bitu (Roma Human Rights Activist Green Party);

Jimmy Doherty (The Traveller Movement);

Elisha Holt (Community Engagement and Development Officer).

The Workshop 1 delved into the critical need for increased representation and engagement of Romani (Gypsy), Roma, and Traveller (GRT) youth within the parliamentary political system. Against a backdrop of socio-political uncertainty, economic challenges, and growing industrial action, the imperative for the active involvement of young individuals in politics has never been more needed.

The workshop emphasized three pivotal themes: accessibility, representation, and the necessity to adapt the political system to better serve the GRT communities' needs.

Austin brought attention to the significance of lobbying for a GRT representative within the Trade Union Congress (TUC), underscoring the urgent need to amplify recruitment efforts and enhance representation within GRT communities. The discussion centred on identifying barriers hindering political engagement and the search for authentic representation within parliamentary structures.

The importance of local government involvement was emphasised, notably mayors engaging with TUC regions at the local level. The workshop highlighted the importance of the aiming towards the TUC conference in September as a key influencing target.

Employment and apprenticeships emerged as crucial facets of the discussion, with an emphasis on mayoral teams collaborating to expand access to apprenticeship programs and advocate for increased workplace representation.

The workshop concluded with a resounding call for action, urging a concerted effort to dismantle barriers, foster political literacy, and empower GRT youth to actively participate in political discourse. The session provided invaluable insights into the strategies required to bridge the gap between the GRT community and the political landscape, aspiring to create a future where political inclusion knows no boundaries.

Key takeaways

Representation and Diversity:

The imperative of diversifying voices and representation within political spaces to accurately reflect the GRT community's multifaceted needs and perspectives.

Political Accessibility:

The need to break down barriers inhibiting youth engagement in politics and ensuring accessible pathways for involvement within parliamentary systems.

Collaborative Initiatives:

Emphasizing collaboration between local governments, mayoral teams, and trade unions to foster increased opportunities for apprenticeships and workplace representation.

Workshop 2 The different paths to a prosperous future

Chair: Olivia Hammond (Romany Gypsy FE Teacher)

TM Lead: Christian Johnson (Policy Officer) & **Shane Curran** ('ODET Education Officer')

Speakers:

Olivia Hammond (Romany Gypsy FE Teacher)

Mikey Lawrence (Psychology student/ civil servant)

Shannon Roncari (Student)

Dan Rosenberg (Education solicitor)

Most Important Issues within the Education Sector

Representation and Inclusivity

Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller young people face major barriers in the education system. These groups face challenges due to high exclusion rates, inadequate representation, and a lack of voice in policy-making discussions.

An issue raised in the workshop was the need for flexible learning approaches that cater to individual needs and experiences. Traditional classroom-based education may not suit everyone, and there was a call for embedding real-life experiences into lessons and curriculum to make education more holistic from participants.

The importance of valuing lived experiences was emphasised during the workshop. For policy reforms to work these experiences need to be acknowledged and integrated into the educational system as a matter of crucial urgency.

To address the issues of representation and inclusivity, foundational training for teachers and educational institutions is essential. This training should equip educators with the tools and mindset to create inclusive learning environments that acknowledge and embrace diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Policy reforms and increased funding are crucial steps toward resolving these issues. The Department for Education (DFE) need to allocate resources strategically, ensuring that there's funding directed towards the inclusion of marginalized communities and flexible learning initiatives. This will come down to strong advocacy work collaborating with educators, policymakers, youth organisations and communities.

The most crucial issues within the education sector revolve around representation, flexible learning, and valuing lived experiences. Addressing these issues requires foundational training for teachers, policy reforms, increased funding, and collaborative efforts among various stakeholders.

Moving forward, a holistic approach to learning, increased representation in the curriculum, and continued advocacy for policy reforms and training will pave the way towards a more inclusive and effective education system.

Key takeaways

Holistic Approach to Learning:

Moving forward, a holistic approach to learning should be the focus. This entails developing more flexible learning models that accommodate diverse experiences and needs. It also involves embedding these experiences into the curriculum to create a more inclusive and relatable educational environment.

Increased Representation in Curriculum:

Enhancing representation within the curriculum is essential. This involves incorporating diverse perspectives, cultures, and lived experiences into educational materials and lessons, ensuring that every student feels represented and included.

Policy Reforms and Training:

Further policy reforms, increased funding, and training initiatives are necessary steps. Policies need to reflect the importance of inclusivity and flexible learning, and educators need training to implement these approaches effectively.

Workshop 3 “Is there really no room at the Inn?”

Chair: Charlie Doherty (Youth Engagement & Development Officer)

TM Lead: Declan O’Driscoll (TM Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer)

Speakers:

Charlie Doherty (Youth Engagement & Development Officer)

Martin Howe (Public Law Solicitor)

Marc Willers (Public Law Barrister)

Chloe Pugh (Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Lawyer)

There’s a dire need for legal reform to ensure easier access to justice for the Gypsy/Traveler community. Policy priorities should include initiatives to:

- **Improve Legal Representation:** Encourage and support more lawyers and legal professionals to specialize in understanding the discrimination faced by our communities. Engage with law schools to introduce programs focusing on these issues.
- **Legal Aid and Support:** Establish legal aid programs specifically catering to Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveler individuals. This includes providing funding, after-event insurance, and support from bodies like the European Human Rights Centre.
- **Policy Amendments:** Advocate for changes in policies to make justice more accessible. This involves ensuring that settlements outside court don’t include clauses that limit disclosure or discussion of discriminatory incidents.

Participants stressed the importance of spreading knowledge about avenues to report discrimination. Education and awareness initiatives must target both the Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveler communities as well as wider society.



The group discussed settlements outside court and confidentiality clauses, acknowledging how these aspects might limit broader awareness of discriminatory practices. They debated ways to encourage individuals to pursue cases further, despite the apparent ease of settlements, to establish precedents and deter future discrimination.

Community Awareness campaigns within Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities are needed to spread awareness about their rights. This will enable community members to understand their avenues for reporting discrimination and the importance of pursuing legal action to set precedents. Service providers also need educating. There needs to be a concerted effort to advocate for education programs aimed at service providers to sensitize them about their legal duties and foster empathy. We also need to encourage restorative justice, training, and employment opportunities for the communities.

Participants elucidated that there needs to be a focus on accurate media representation and advocacy. The conversation highlighted instances where engaging with the media had mixed outcomes. While it can raise awareness, there were concerns about misrepresentation and potential risks. We need to encourage responsible and accurate media coverage of discrimination cases while navigating the complexities and potential risks associated with media representation. Engage with the press responsibly to shed light on discriminatory incidents without risking misrepresentation.

In order for media representation to be sensitive we need media regulations that ensure fair and accurate reporting, especially when it comes to sensitive topics like discrimination against Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveler communities.

In summary, the conversation delved into various aspects, including the importance of evidence gathering, complexities in engaging with the media, challenges in settlement clauses, the need for legal expertise, policy changes, and encouraging engagement to combat discrimination against the Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveler communities. The group recognized the importance of advocacy, awareness, and legal action to drive impactful change and create a fairer, more inclusive society.

Key takeaways

Community Empowerment and Reporting Channels

Develop comprehensive community outreach programs to educate Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveler individuals about their rights and the reporting channels available to them. This includes disseminating information about reporting discrimination via phone, email, or website portals.

Legal and Policy Sectors

Legal practitioners have a responsibility to provide fair representation and guidance, encouraging the pursuit of discrimination cases where there's strong evidence. They should advocate for policy changes and fight for justice for the community.

Media Engagement and Awareness

Media outlets should responsibly cover discrimination cases, avoiding misrepresentation while still highlighting incidents of injustice against the Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities. Collaboration between advocacy groups and the media can ensure accurate representation. Government bodies and regulatory authorities must ensure media codes of conduct that prevent sensationalism or misrepresentation.

Workshop 4 Healthy Relationships

Chair: Laura Angela Collins (TM Partnerships Coordinator)

TM Lead: Aoife Delaney (Senior Women's Coordinator)

Speakers:

Michaela Queensborough (Against Violence and Abuse)

Laura Angela Collins (Traveller Movement)

Tina McInerney (Traveller Movement)

Crystal Grace Smith (Traveller Women Helpline)

The focus of Workshop 4 was to equip women, girls, parents, and practitioners with essential knowledge regarding relationship health and safety, emphasizing the critical need to discern the signs of healthy versus unhealthy relationships. Delving into red flags, available support, and strategies for ensuring the safety and well-being of girls, the workshop aimed to empower and support the next generation.

Participants stressed the importance of enhanced communication and transparency among professionals, parents, children, and young people (CYP). Suggestions included utilizing newsletters, phone calls, and dedicated workshops for parents. Emphasizing independence from other agencies like the police or social services, the goal was to foster trust and engagement within the community.

An open, flexible, and tailored approach emerged as essential, acknowledging literacy barriers for both parents and CYP. Participants advocated for gender-specific classes while also exploring the option of joint sessions for parents and CYP. Cultural sensitivity was highlighted, emphasizing co-production with Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller parents and CYP to ensure relevance and inclusivity.

The course content recommendations encompassed a broad spectrum, including discussions on stereotypes, feminism, consent, online safety, and the impact of coercive control and emotional abuse. Notably, stories from the Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities were seen as a powerful tool for education, aiming to highlight both the positive aspects of relationships and red flags while encouraging accountability for unhealthy behaviours.

The workshop underscored the necessity of fostering trust, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity in healthy relationships education. It highlighted the importance of tailored approaches, cultural relevance, and community involvement in designing effective programs. The emphasis on communication, transparency, and partnership between professionals and the community was pivotal in fostering an environment conducive to learning and growth.

In conclusion, Workshop 4 provided valuable insights and practical strategies to support and empower the next generation, stressing the significance of comprehensive, culturally informed healthy relationships education that goes beyond traditional settings to create a more resilient and knowledgeable community.

Key takeaways

- Resources
- Forging Partnerships between community-based organizations and leading healthy relationship charities.
- Youth Provision
- Expanding Healthy relationships education beyond schools, recognizing the need for broader community engagement.

Conclusion

Future Voices underscored critical themes demanding immediate attention and action. Across various workshops, a unified call for change emerged.

Political representation for GRT youth took centre stage. Discussions emphasized the pressing need for authentic representation in political arenas, highlighting the lack of diverse voices and the necessity for increased accountability among politicians. Key points focused on robust lobbying efforts, recruitment drives, and restructuring local government interactions to ensure genuine inclusion.

Education stood out as another pivotal concern. Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller children's unequal educational experiences necessitate immediate reform. Flexible learning models, inclusive curriculums, and increased funding were advocated for to level the playing field and offer fair opportunities to all.

Discrimination against Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities, notably in the hospitality sector, remains a pressing issue. Participants stressed the urgency for legal reforms, accessible justice, and responsible media portrayal to combat this ongoing injustice effectively.

Additionally, fostering healthy relationships among Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller women, girls, parents, and practitioners was deemed crucial. Culturally sensitive approaches and community partnerships were highlighted as essential components for empowering and educating about healthy relationships.

A significant milestone during the conference was the introduction of the Traveller Movement's Youth Manifesto. This manifesto encapsulates the aspirations of GRT youth for a more equitable future, particularly focusing on demands for a fair economy and better societal representation.

In conclusion, the conference called for immediate action. It highlighted the need for political engagement, educational reforms, combatting discrimination, and promoting healthy relationships. The Youth Manifesto stands as a testament to the aspirations of Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller youth for a fairer society. The 2023 annual conference set out tangible strides needed to ensure political inclusion, educational parity, and social justice for all Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities.



Conference evaluation in numbers



135
Attendees



Whole event
90.2%
said the event was excellent



Venue facilities
58.5%
said the venue facilities were excellent and 39% good



Food/ Refreshments
68.2%
said they were excellent



Quality of workshops
65.8%
said the quality of the workshops were excellent and 26.8% said good



Meeting expectations
73.1%
said the event was excellent



Organisation on the day
80.4%
said organisation on the day was excellent



Subjects presented
82.9%
said the subject presented were excellent and only 2.4% said they were average



Booking process
70.7%
said the booking process was excellent and 24% said it was good

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SAVE THE DATE

**Our next Annual
Conference**

**Will be on November
21st 2024, Lambeth
Town Hall.**

For more information about the
Traveller Movement's Annual Conference
contact the Policy Manager at
policymanager@travellermovement.org.uk

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