

# The Traveller Movement Annual Conference 2024

## An Era of Change

*“Revolutionising tomorrow”*

*Keynote Speaker to be  
announced*

*Tickets on sales from Monday 2nd September at 9am*

Lambeth

Town Hall

Thursday  
21st November 2024

*Workshops*

*include:*

Shaping Tomorrow's Education

Empowering Her

A New Dawn

Who do you think you are?



## Overview

The Traveller Movement 2024 conference, 'An Era of Change' will celebrate the beginning of a new chapter and will explore innovative policies that can bring about substantial improvements in the lives of these communities. While the challenges we face loom ever large now is the moment to chart a new path and call upon decision makers to break down barriers for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities to bring about a new dawn.

Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities face multiple interconnecting disadvantages which have worsened since the Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing cost-of-living crisis. Poor access to services, lack of access to adequate education, over-policing, overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, and an unfolding mental health crisis are among the barriers these communities face. Coupled with the persistent discrimination faced by the communities across every facet of their lives there is no doubt that Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities face systemic challenges in the UK.

The communities also face chronic democratic underrepresentation, with their inequalities often ignored by policymakers and labelled as unimportant. Often left out of conversations about systemic racial discrimination and pushed to the side in broader equality and improvement initiatives, their unique challenges and needs remain unmet.

But with a new Labour Government comes a new opportunity for policymakers and community members to the table to collaborate on revolutionary policies which will break down barriers which have long held communities back. Only with innovative policy solutions can the multiple, interconnecting crises facing Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities be tackled.

To address these challenges and bring about bold new ideas, the 2024 Traveller Movement Conference will bring together Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller community members, campaigners, policymakers, and other stakeholders to lead the way towards the new dawn of policymaking for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities.

Through panels and workshops we will bring together changemakers and passionate advocates to bring about 'An Era of Change'.

The Traveller Movements Operation Traveller Vote campaign highlighted how powerful the communities' voices can be when they are combined for one goal; change. This year our conference will aim to channel those voices to tackle years of structural and institutional failings by revolutionising the policy landscape with new and creative ideas.



# Keynote Speaker: To be announced

## Panels

### Panel 1: Charting the Way Forward: Empowering Romani Travellers and Roma under the New Labour Government

*Mick Cash - Former General Secretary of the RMT Union and a Ward Councillor;*

For decades, our communities have faced marginalization and token gestures. Now, as we stand at the threshold of a new political era, it is time for substantive change.

This session will focus on outlining key actions and a strategic plan needed from the new Labour government. From dismantling barriers to meaningful inclusion to implementing targeted interventions, we advocate for policies that prioritize Romani Travellers and Roma.

Our esteemed panelists will discuss the urgent need for joined-up thinking and genuine representation at decision-making tables. We will explore pathways to ensure our voices are heard and our issues addressed effectively. Together, we will articulate a vision for a future where Romani Travellers and Roma thrive, empowered by policies that uphold dignity, equality, and justice for all.



### Panel 2: "Beyond the Campfire: Exploring Identity, Heritage, and Equality among Travellers, Romani, and Roma Communities"

*Chair: John McCarthy – Traveller Movement Trustee. Speakers: Thomas McCann - Travellers Counselling Service; Betty Billington Smith – Kushti Bok; Patrick O'Leary; Lourdes Green – TM; Charlie Doherty – TM; Olivia Morrison – TM*

Join us for an enlightening and compelling panel discussion delving into the rich tapestry of identity, evolving dynamics of cultural heritage, and equality among Travellers, Romani, and Roma communities. From the diaspora that spans continents to the evolving roles and gender dynamics within these communities, we will explore the complex relationships with mainstream society and the internal conflicts faced in defining cultural identity.

What does it mean to be a "real" Romani, Roma, or Traveller in today's world? How do we navigate the complexities of cultural preservation amidst changing social landscapes? This session will address these critical questions, focusing on how embracing change can strengthen cultural identity rather than dilute it.

Our expert panellists, who bring a wealth of personal experience and professional insight, will discuss the challenges and opportunities that come with protecting heritage.

They will share strategies for fostering inclusion and celebrating the rich diversity within the Romani, Roma, and Traveller populations.



## Workshops

### **WORKSHOP 1: Shaping Tomorrow's Education: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities**

*Liv Hammond (TM); Shaun Mongan (TM); Pauline Melvin-Anderson OBE (TM Chairperson); Clare Cruise (Southwark Law Centre); Philippa Sadgrove (Co-op academies); Sam May (Romani Gypsy Teaching Assistant, Kent); Kirsty McMahon (Apprenticeship Recruitment and Progress Coach Co-ordinator)*

Join us for a dynamic workshop designed to equip young Gypsies, Romas and Travellers, educators and policymakers with the knowledge and tools to navigate the evolving educational landscape. In this session, we will explore the latest trends and pressing issues that shape the future of Romani Gypsy, Roma and Irish Travellers accessing and attaining a good education. We will discuss topics like the T code use, reasonable classroom adjustments, productive elective home education and the benefits of a great education. Through interactive discussions, expert insights and collaborative problem-solving, participants will gain valuable perspectives and practical strategies to create future-ready, inclusive, meaningful and positive learning experiences.

### **WORKSHOP 2: A New Dawn: From Retribution to Reform – Innovating Criminal Justice Practices**

*Grace Preston (TM); Mark Watson (TM Trustee); Mark Blake (Criminal Justice Alliance); Abimbola Johnson (Police Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board for the Police Race Action Plan) Kathuna Tsintsadze (Zahid Mubarek Trust)*

With the dawn of a new government and hopefully a new agenda, it is more essential than ever to begin charting a new path from a criminal justice system focused on punishment to one that emphasizes prevention and rehabilitation. This workshop aims to seize this moment for bold ideas and innovative reforms, building on years of accumulated knowledge and research.

Participants will explore evidence-based strategies and practices that prioritise community-based solutions and foster long-term community safety. Discussions will cover sustainable models of policing, sentencing, and probation.

This workshop is designed for policymakers, criminal justice professionals, community leaders, and advocates who are committed to transforming the criminal justice landscape. Through a collaborative session and expert insights, attendees will gain practical tools and frameworks to advocate for and implement transformative changes for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller communities.

### **WORKSHOP 3: Empowering Her: Advancing Gender Equality for Women and Girls**

*Aoife Delaney (TM); Annalise Corcoran (TM); Bridget McCarthy (TM Trustee); Lizzie Brothers (Plan International); Hayley Dean (Young Womens Trust)*

There is a long history of strong Irish Traveller, Roma and Romani (Gypsy) women who have paved the way for future generations. Whether it was working on the roadside, fighting against discrimination or advocating for their families, women have not only been empowering themselves but empowering their communities.

In this workshop, we want to harness the powerful voices of inspirational Irish Traveller, Roma and Romani (Gypsy) women and ask them, in this era of change, what are the next steps we need to take to advance gender equality for women and girls?

In answering this question, this workshop will explore the value of role models, the importance of building one another up and the actions the government must take to support a community-led definition of empowerment and gender equality.

### **WORKSHOP 4: Who Do You Think You Are?: Evolving Identities on the Road Less Travelled**

*Olivia Morrison (TM); Lourdes Green (TM); Liza Mortimer (Traveller Times); John McCarthy (TM Trustee); Damien Le Bas; Rosaleen McDonagh; Gentyliia Lee;*

The old ways are changing, you cannot deny..." These are the first lines of the famous song titled The Thirty Foot Trailer but are the days of the Traveller really over?

Join us as we explore what it means to be a Romani (Gypsy), Roma and/or Irish or Scottish Traveller in the 21st Century. In this session, we will discuss evolving cultural expectations, norms and identities. Through interactive discussions and activities, we will also consider the importance of representation, maintaining cultural traditions and changing attitudes.

# Provisional Agenda

**9.30 – 10.00:** Registration and Networking

**10.00 – 10.10:** Welcome from the Conference Co-Chairs

Pauline Melvin-Anderson OBE (TM Chairperson) and Shaun Mongan (TM Policy Intern)

**10.10 – 10.30:** Keynote Address: To be announced

**10.30 – 11.40:** Panel 1: Charting the Way Forward: Empowering Romani Travellers and Roma under the New Labour Government

Mick Cash - Former General Secretary of the RMT Union and a Ward Councillor;

**11.40 – 11.50:** Refreshment break

**11.50 – 13.00:** Panel 2: Beyond the Campfire: Exploring Identity, Heritage, and Equality among Travellers, Romani, and Roma Communities

Chair: John McCarthy – Traveller Movement Trustee

Thomas McCann - Traveller Counselling Service

Betty Billington Smith – Kushti Bok

Patrick O’Leary

Lourdes Green

Charlie Doherty

Olivia Morrison

**13.00 – 14.00:** Lunch and Networking

**14.00 – 15.30:** Workshops:

Workshop 1: Shaping Tomorrow’s Education: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

Workshop 2: A New Dawn: From Retribution to Reform – Innovating Criminal Justice Practices

Workshop 3: Empowering Her: Advancing Gender Equality for Women and Girls

Workshop 4: Who Do You Think You Are?: Evolving Identities on the Road Less Travelled

**15.30 – 16.00:** Plenary Session

**16.00:** Conference ends

**CHANGES TO THE PROGRAMME:** TM reserves the right to alter the programme, venue and the timing of the sessions without notice due to unforeseen circumstances.





To book your tickets, use the QR code below

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

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

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

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

## Prices

### **BAND A: £189.00**

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

### **BAND B: £125.00**

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

### **BAND C: £90.00**

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

### **STUDENT RATE: £25.00**

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

Tickets on sale  
from Monday  
2nd September  
using the QR  
code



## DATA PROTECTION

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

## BOOKING CONDITIONS SUBSTITUTIONS AND CANCELLATIONS:

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

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

**Legal Disclaimer: The Traveller Movement are not liable for any adverse reactions or health issues resulting from the consumption of the food provided at this Annual Conference 21.11.24**