The Traveller Movement Annual Conference 2026

Thursday 26th November 2026 at Lambeth Town Hall

Power

Place

Participation

(Delivering Inclusive Devolution for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller Communities)

Keynote Speaker: Penny Hobman - Deputy Chief Executive, Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Workshops to include:

1: Reimagining Futures: Skills, Employment and Economic Opportunity for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller Young People

2: Our Mothers, Our Stories: Improving Maternity Care Through Lived Experience, Advocacy and Community Leadership

3: Men's Mental Health: Breaking the Silence, Building Support

4: Building Inclusive Councils: Stronger Partnerships, Better Services and Thriving Communities

Scan here to book

#TMconference26

Overview

The UK is entering a new era of local and regional decision-making. In England, the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 represents a significant shift of power away from Westminster, giving mayors, local leaders and communities greater influence over the places where they live. The Government's ambition is for decisions about jobs, skills, housing, transport, economic development and public services to be made closer to the people and communities they affect.

For Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller communities, this creates both an opportunity and a challenge.

Devolution only works if everyone has a voice in the decisions that shape their lives.
For communities who have experienced generations of exclusion, discrimination and under-investment, moving power from Westminster to local government does not automatically mean better outcomes. There is a real risk that longstanding inequalities are simply reproduced at a different level, particularly where local decision-makers lack knowledge of our communities or where participation is tokenistic. With an increased devolution, local decisions will have a profound impact on everyday life. But who gets to shape those decisions?

This year's Traveller Movement Annual Conference, Power, Place and Participation, will bring together Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller community leaders, together with activists, policymakers, elected representatives, academics, practitioners and allies to explore what the changing landscape of local power means for our communities.
Together, we will examine how we can move beyond consultation towards genuine participation, influence and accountability. We will ask what it means to ensure that our communities are not simply consulted after decisions have been made, but are involved in setting priorities, shaping policy, allocating resources and holding decision-makers to account.

We will explore:

- **Power: Where is power moving, who holds it, and how can Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller communities access and influence it?**
- **Place: How can local and regional policy address the realities of our communities, from accommodation and transport to education, employment, health and community safety?**
- **Participation: What does meaningful participation look like, and how can communities build the capacity, representation and relationships needed to have lasting influence?**

The conference is an opportunity to look beyond the structures of devolution and focus on what they mean in people's everyday lives. It is a chance for decision-makers to hear directly from communities, for community organisations to share expertise and solutions, and for everyone involved to consider how local power can be used to tackle, not reproduce, the inequalities that have held our communities back.

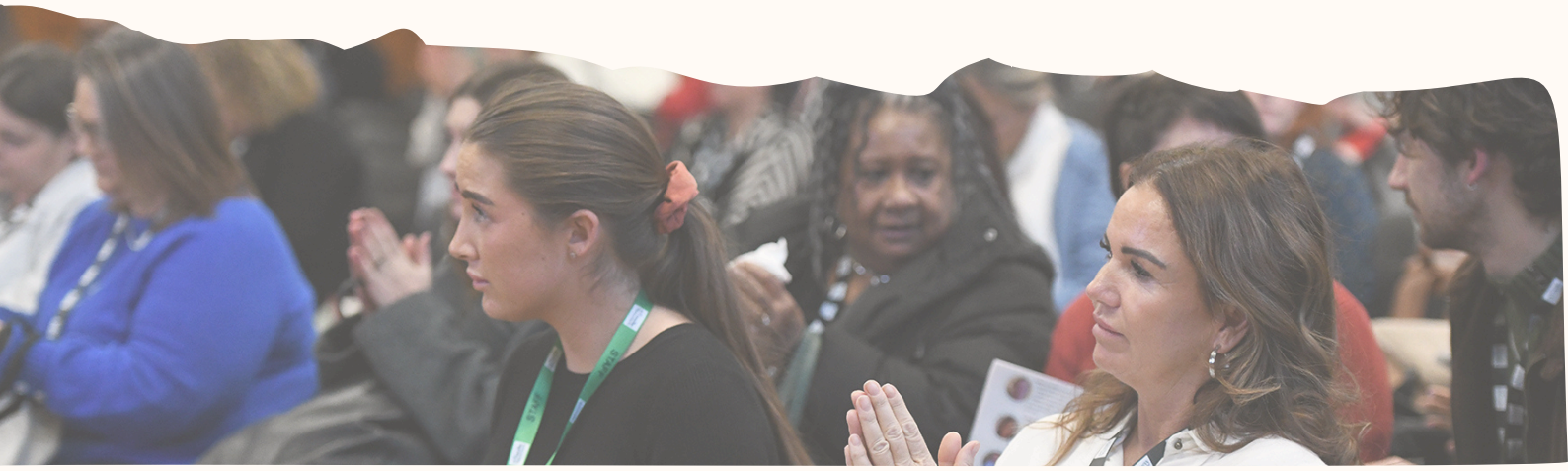
The Government has described devolution as a way to give communities greater control over the decisions that shape their lives. Our challenge is to make sure that Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irisjh, Scottish and Welsh Traveller communities are at the table when those decisions are made.

Join us for Power, Place and Participation as we explore how we can turn the promise of local power into meaningful change, stronger communities and greater equality.



CPD Certified

We are delighted to announce that once again, this year's Conference has been CPD certified.
If you would like to find out more about this, please contact the Head of Operations on officeadmin@travellermovement.org.uk



Keynote Speaker: Penny Hobman - Deputy Chief Executive, Equality and Human Rights Commision (EHRC)

Panels



Panel 1: From Westminster to the Town Hall: Devolution, Democracy and what this means for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller Communities

Featuring: Liam Shrivastava- Lewisham Mayor; David Beaney - Kent County-Cllr; Jackie Duffy - CEO, Leicestershire Gypsy and Traveller Project; Dobromir Trifonov – CEO, Roma London Howard Dawber – Deputy Mayor for London for Business and Growth

As powers shift from Westminster to local and regional government, devolution presents both a real opportunity and a genuine risk for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller communities. This panel brings together advocates, policymakers and community voices to explore what local power really means in practice, and how we can ensure it delivers for some of the most marginalised people in the UK.

The discussion will focus on:

- Representation and participation, ensuring communities have a seat at the table when decisions are made
- Local decision-making, understanding how new powers over health, housing and education will be used
- Health, education, housing and employment, what devolution could change on the ground
- Preventing a postcode lottery of inequality, ensuring devolution doesn't leave some communities further behind
- Partnership, not consultation, moving beyond tick-box engagement so Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller communities help shape the future, not just respond to it

Panel 2: Around the Campfire: Identity, Belonging and Representation

Featuring: Olivia Morrison - Chair; Liv Hammond - Community Advocacy and Engagement Officer, TM; Wolfgang Douglas - Business Man; Tina McInerney - Women's Advocacy and Support Officer; Davie Donaldson - Development Lead at IRISS and DEI Consultant; Roseann Black - CEO of Traveller and Gypsy Support CIC;

An honest and reflective conversation about identity, belonging and representation.

This session will explore:

* Who gets to speak for our communities? * The importance of lived experience
* Cultural identity and pride * Intergenerational leadership * Young people's voices
* Building a stronger collective voice while respecting the diversity of our communities.



Workshops

WORKSHOP 1: Pathways to Opportunity: Skills, Employment and Economic Inclusion for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller Young People

Facilitators: Alanna Witney - Luton Irish Forum; Karl O'Dare - Ignite; Ayesha Baloch - Impetus; Roger Mitchell - Rippley Academy; Esther Stubbs - National Education and Participation Lead; Olivia Arkaah - DWP

Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller young people experience some of the poorest educational and employment outcomes in the UK, yet they remain largely invisible in NEET strategies, skills funding and local economic planning. As powers over apprenticeships, employment support and economic growth shift to Combined Authorities, there is a real chance to change that, but only if provision is designed with, not for, these communities.

This workshop is a space for honest, solutions-focused conversation. We will bring together young community representatives, policymakers, employers and skills providers to explore what is working, what is failing, and what must happen next.

This workshop will explore:

- The NEET blind spot, why Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller young people are routinely missed by mainstream strategies and data collection
- Apprenticeships and training, practical barriers to access and how to remove them
- Devolved skills programmes, how Combined Authorities can reach communities that national schemes have failed
- Inclusive recruitment and employer responsibility, what employers must do differently, from outreach to retention
- Entrepreneurship and self-employment, supporting traditional enterprise while opening new routes
- Youth voice in economic strategy, ensuring young people shape the local skills agenda, not just respond to it

WORKSHOP 2: Our Mothers, Our Stories: Improving Maternity Care Through Lived Experience, Advocacy and Community Leadership

Facilitators: Lourdes O'Brien - The Traveller Movement; Crystal Grace Smith - Rooftop Group; Elizabeth Cox – NHS Hammersmith and Fulham; Tina McInerney - The Traveller Movement; Representative from NCT

Health inequalities remain a major concern for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller communities. Building on the findings of the Amos Report on Maternity Care and the Traveller Movement's award-winning Maternity Plus programme, this workshop will explore how devolved health systems can work differently with communities.

This workshop will explore:

- Women's experiences of maternity services.
- Improving trust between communities and health providers.
- The role of doulas and community advocates.
- The contribution of Elders and intergenerational knowledge.
- Strengthening the voice of Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Traveller women in health decision-making.
- Moving from consultation to genuine co-production.

WORKSHOP 3: Men's Mental Health: Breaking the Silence, Building Support

Facilitators: Liv Hammond - The Traveller Movement; Charmaine Abdul-Karim - Pride of Romany; Nevada Smith - Pride of Romany; Rachel Tynan - People's Health Trust; Felix Lynne - The Traveller Movement; Daniel Balaz - Connecting Roma; Jake Ferguson - Black Men For Change (BM4C)

Mental health and wellbeing are increasingly recognised as priorities within local and regional strategies, yet the experiences of Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller men remain underrepresented.

This workshop will explore:

- Barriers to accessing mental health support.
- Challenging stigma and encouraging early support.
- The impact of expectations around masculinity.
- How community-led approaches can strengthen wellbeing.
- Understanding the cause of mental health issues within community members.
- How Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Traveller men fare whilst held in police custody/serving a prison sentence.

WORKSHOP 4: Building Inclusive Councils: Stronger Partnerships, Better Services and Thriving Communities

Facilitators: Mark Watson – Traveller Movement; Mena Mongan - London Gypsy Travellers; Councillor Binnie-Lubbock - Hackney lead on Travellers; Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson - Brent, Chair of Housing Scrutiny committee; Karen McGuire - Enfield Council; Cllr Natalie Thomas - Lewisham Council

Councils are on the front line of devolution. As powers over housing, health, education and community safety shift from Westminster to town halls, local authorities have a real chance to do things differently, but only if they build genuine partnerships with the communities they serve.

For Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller communities, the question is simple: what does an inclusive council look like? Drawing on Traveller Movement work with councils across England this workshop moves beyond theory into practice. We will explore how councils can stop consulting and start sharing power.

This workshop will explore:

- Inclusive council leadership, what tone from the top looks like in practice
- Community engagement and participation, moving from outreach to genuine ownership
- Improving access to services, health, education, housing and planning done differently
- Community safety, building trust, not tension, between councils, police and communities
- Accommodation and site provision, housing as the foundation of wider inclusion
- Embedding lived experience, putting community knowledge at the heart of local decision-making

Agenda

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9.30 – 10.00: Registration and Networking

09.45: Speakers to gather at main reception desk for photographs

10.00 – 10.10: Welcome from the Conference Co-Chairs
Pauline Melvin-Anderson OBE (TM Chairperson)/Charmaine Abdul-Karim (CEO, Pride of Romany)

10.10 – 10.30: Keynote Address: Penny Hobman - Deputy Chief Executive, Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

10.30 – 11.40: Panel 1: From Westminster to the Town Hall: Devolution, Democracy and what this means for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller Communities

Liam Shrivastava- Lewisham Mayor
David Beaney - Kent County-Cllr
Jackie Duffy - CEO, Leicestershire Gypsy and Traveller Project
Dobromir Trifonov – CEO, Roma London
Howard Dawber – Deputy Mayor for London for Business and Growth

11.40 – 11.50: Refreshment Break

11.50 – 13.00: Panel 2: Around the Campfire: Identity, Belonging and Representation

Olivia Morrison - The Traveller Movement
Liv Hammond - Community Advocacy and Engagement Officer, TM
Wolfgang Douglas - Business Man
Tina McInereney - Women's Advocacy and Support Officer, TM
Davie Donaldson - Development Lead at IRISS and DEI Consultant
Roseann Black - CEO of Traveller and Gypsy Support CIC

13.00 – 14.00: Lunch and Networking

14.00 – 15.30: Workshops:

Workshop 1: Pathways to Opportunity: Skills, Employment and Economic Inclusion for Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish, Scottish and Welsh Traveller Young People

Workshop 2: Our Mothers, Our Stories: Improving Maternity Care Through Lived Experience, Advocacy and Community Leadership

Workshop 3: Men's Mental Health: Breaking the Silence, Building Support

Workshop 4: Building Inclusive Councils: Stronger Partnerships, Better Services and Thriving Communities

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

For any enquiries, please contact the Office Manager at 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

BAND D: £75.00

Individual (self-funded) - Freelancers, or anyone attending in a personal capacity (paying the fee themselves rather than via an employer)

STUDENT RATE: £25.00

BOOK NOW USING THE CODE

Limited number of free places available for Unwaged Romani (Gypsy), Roma and Irish Travellers. Please contact the office.

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, CANCELLATIONS & CPD:

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.

To obtain the CPD Certificate, you must have completed attendance at the whole conference.

The conference will provide an ideal platform for information sharing, and a vital space for discussion amongst Romani (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