Written evidence submitted by Friends, Families and Travellers

Our evidence to the Committee concentrates on the Government’s recently published Action Against Hate, the UK Government’s plan for tackling hate crime (July 2016).

We welcome the plan and would like to make the following comments on it.

Under Chapter 4 a plan for tackling hate crime, point 39, our play Crystal’s Vardo, which has been performed in over fifty schools and is aimed at ages seven to adult is an ideal tool to educate young people. More information about the play can be found on our website at [http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/what-we-do/crystals-vardo/](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/what-we-do/crystals-vardo/)

At point 41, which refers to the refresh of the CPS’s resource pack for schools, we trust that Gypsy and Traveller hate crime will feature in this and we can assist with this if required.

At point 44, we would note that bullying amongst Gypsy and Traveller children is even more widespread than this. A Children’s Society report (2007) found that 85% of young Travellers had experienced racist abuse.

At point 46, we think it is extremely important that the ‘Reporting Diversity’ booklet covers Gypsy and Traveller issues, as according to research by Stonewall (Profiles of Prejudice, 2003) Gypsies and Travellers are the group people are most likely to feel less positive towards (35% in this MORI poll stated this), and, after parental influence, television and newspapers are cited as the highest influences on how people feel.

At point 47, we think it is important that journalists receive training on all strands of hate issues, as, for example, we have seen racist incidents against Gypsies and Travellers increase when newspapers print inflammatory articles about Gypsies and Travellers such as the ‘Stamp on the camps’ articles which the Sun newspaper ran and which resulted in increased vigilante attacks on Traveller encampments.

At point 50, we think that a specific website for Gypsies and Travellers to report hate crime, similar to those that already exist for the Jewish and Muslim communities (the Community Security Trust and Tell MAMA), would be an excellent initiative to fund and would result in increased reporting of hate crime from these two groups who currently significantly under-report.
At point 54, as members of DCLG’s Gypsy Traveller Liaison Group, we were wondering what form this support will take?

At point 72, we would suggest that an evaluation of True Vision is undertaken to see who it is reaching and to make sure that it is reaching all relevant groups.

At point 94, we feel all police forces need to disaggregate data on all strands, including hate crime committed against Gypsies and Travellers, as currently not all forces monitor ethnicity relating to Gypsies and Travellers which means we not have a coherent national picture.

At point 99, the Police Officer’s Guide to the Holocaust, it is essential that the Gypsy experience of the Holocaust is included in this, as many people are still not aware that Gypsies were victims and as many as 500,000 were killed. Gypsies we have worked with in Sussex have had swastikas daubed on their homes.

Yours sincerely

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