

# **Strategy for the Co-ordination of Public Services to the Traveller Community in Clare 2005-2008.**

**- Strengthening the Integration of Settled  
and Traveller Communities -**



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## INTRODUCTION

The Census of Population (2002) estimated that there were 717 members of the Traveller Community in Clare in 2002. In order to address the needs of this community a Steering Group was formed in November 2004 to develop a “Strategy for the Co-ordination of Public Services to the Traveller Community”. It consisted of Statutory and Local Agencies (total of twenty-three) working with the Traveller Community and the Steering Group met four times over eight months (Nov. '04 – June '05). It assigned its workload to four Agency Working Groups and adopted an extensive consultation and decision-making plan to facilitate the participation of members of the Traveller Community. Community and Enterprise staff acted as secretariat and research support to the Steering Group.

### **Agency Working Groups**

Four Agency Working Groups (Appendix 1) were established, on the understanding that they could co-opt personnel as required. Community and Enterprise staff were assigned to assist each Working Group. Each Working Group met approximately four times before they began working jointly with members of the Traveller Community. The Agency Working Groups focused on:

- Work and Employment;
- Education;
- Accommodation;
- Health.

Each working group was expected to give due recognition to any issues that arose within its remit that related to Traveller Economy and Culture. The Steering Group also adopted a Consultation Plan aimed to engage the Traveller Community in identifying gaps, inadequacies and duplication in current services. The consultation process also helped to identify members of the Traveller Community who would later join the Agency Working Groups to draft a set of Actions to address the issues identified.

### **Consultation with the Traveller Community**

A detailed consultation plan was drawn up by those agencies on the Steering Group who worked directly with Travellers. Community and Enterprise staff assisted with the consultation process, which had seven elements:

#### **1. Information–Giving and Awareness Raising**

A standard briefing was prepared. All agencies that had regular contact with the Traveller Community undertook to let them know what was happening. Over one hundred members of the Traveller Community were notified in this way.

#### **2. Discussion Groups**

Discussion groups (involving more than 100 Travellers) were formed in those agencies who housed specific activities for the Traveller Community. A member of the relevant Agency Working Group attended each meeting. Approximately twenty discussions were held on the premises of five agencies - St. Joseph's Traveller Training Centre, Ennis West Partners, Clarecare, Shannon and Ennistymon Family Resource Centres. External facilitators were engaged. Each of the four Working Group topics were discussed by each Traveller discussion group. A common format was agreed. Reports from the discussions were collated centrally. The document, which was presented to each of the Agency Working Groups, was agreed at a final discussion at each venue. Community and Enterprise Staff co-ordinated this activity.

### **3. Outreach Groups**

Since many members of the Traveller Community did not have regular contact with agencies it was considered important to meet them on site, in estates or in their temporary accommodation. These meetings took place on five halting sites, two estates and with five families who were in temporary accommodation (usually funded by the Health Board). Ennis CDP undertook this work and approximately 25/30 outreach meetings took place. The feed-back was collated centrally by staff of Community and Enterprise and was given to the respective Working Groups.

### **4. Parallel Traveller Working Groups of members of their Community**

On completion of the Discussion groups and the Outreach work, members of the Traveller Community formed four Traveller Working Groups. Each had approximately six members drawn from the Traveller Community across different Halting Sites/Estates and temporary accommodation and from different parts of the county. Each Traveller Working Group met 2/3 times to prepare their input into a joint meeting with the Agencies Working Groups. This process was co-ordinated by the County Childcare Committee. Different Agencies took responsibility for the different Traveller Working Groups (**Health**–Clarecare; **Accommodation**–Ennis CDP; **Education**–St Joseph’s Traveller Training Centre; **Work/Employment**–Community and Enterprise). Each group paid specific attention to cultural matters, which impacted on them.

### **5. Joint Traveller/Agency Working Groups**

The Traveller and Agency Working Groups were introduced to each other over a half-day. An input by Travellers on their culture was provided in the first hour and half. This assisted the getting-to-know process and was organised by Ennis CDP. During the second hour and half, outside facilitators (Dr. Maurice Manning, Dr Bryan Fanning, Dr Roland Tormey, Veronica Mc. Namara) worked with the joint groups to agree the key issues to be addressed and the actions which could be appropriate. Joint Working Groups were formed. Each joint Working Group included four members of the Traveller Community. On average they each met three times with an external facilitator as necessary. They agreed the actions that were presented to the Joint Steering Group. Community and Enterprise co-ordinated this part of the plan.

### **6. Base-lining the current situation**

In order to baseline the current situation for each the agreed action so that progress could be monitored and measured, St Joseph’s Traveller Training Centre undertook to work with members of the Traveller Community. Support was provided by Clarecare, Ennis West, Ennis CDP, Shannon and Ennistymon Family Resource Centres and Community and Enterprise.

### **7. Joint Steering Group**

The final Meeting of the Steering Group included sixteen members of the Traveller Community (four from each Joint Working Group). It was a half-day event to establish whether:

- each identified action was necessary
- each identified action had a lead agency or/and was supported by linked agencies.

The Actions agreed by the Joint Steering Group are presented in this Strategy

## 1. STRENGTHEN THE CULTURE OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

### Objective 1.1 Develop culturally appropriate enterprises and enterprise training

Action 1.1.1: Develop the business of Breeding, Training and shoeing horses.  
**Lead Agency:** Members of the Traveller Community.

Action 1.1.2: Implement enterprises and employment training that builds on current skills (e.g. tin-smithing, coppercraft) and which develops them in a market-oriented manner  
**Lead Agency:** St Joseph's Senior Traveller Training Centre

Action 1.1.3: Develop, Agree and Pilot models of culturally sensitive employment contracts.  
**Lead Agency:** County Enterprise Board and Traveller Forum

### Objective 1.2 Promote the Culture of the Traveller Community in Schools

Action 1.2.1: Develop a module on Traveller Culture to coincide with the delivery of NCCA Guidelines on Intercultural Education.  
**Lead Agency:** Department of Education and Science (Mid-West Region)

Action 1.2.2: Involve the Traveller Community in the design and delivery of the module.  
**Lead Agency:** Department of Education and Science (Mid-West Region)

Action 1.2.3: Inform the Regional Office, DES.  
**Lead Agency:** Department of Education and Science (Mid-West Region)

### Objective 1.3 Increase the awareness and understanding of Traveller Culture.

Action 1.3.1: Quantify the number and identify the role of frontline public health service staff attending the HSE Mid-West 'Cultural Diversity' training.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West

Action 1.3.2: All Statutory, Community and Voluntary agencies will adopt a POLICY of supporting staff attendance at Anti-Racism training.  
**Lead Agency:** All Agencies

Action 1.3.3: All frontline staff of Statutory, Community and Voluntary agencies who deal with the Traveller Community will undertake Anti-Racism training.  
**Lead Agency:** All Agencies

Action 1.3.4: A member of staff, who has undertaken the HSE Mid-West 'Cultural Diversity' training, will be available in A&E to talk with members of the Traveller Community.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West

Action 1.3.5: Provide training in cultural diversity for GPs and pharmacists working in Co. Clare.  
**Lead Agency:** Lead Awaited

## 2. STRENGTHEN THE SELF-GOVERNANCE CAPACITY OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

### Objective 2.1 Develop a Traveller Forum

Action 2.1.1: Co-ordinate the Traveller Community at county level.

**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.2: Provide training and support for effective internal communications

**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.3: Train and support the Traveller Community to engage in effective consultation.

**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.4: Train and support representatives of the Traveller Community.

**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP

Action 2.1.5: Train and support the Traveller Community to identify and bring forward policy initiatives and lobby for change.

**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP

### Objective 2.2 Develop a mechanism and process among the Traveller Community to advance policy initiatives.

Action 2.2.1: Develop an overall structure to ensure policy initiatives, including bereavement, hospital stay, attendance at A&E, GPs and pharmacists, can be brought to the relevant fora.

**Lead Agency:** Traveller Forum, Community and Enterprise

### Objective 2.3 Enhance the capacity of the Traveller Community to manage and govern their accommodation units and estates

Action 2.3.1: Develop criteria/rules for using caretaker units by Travellers on a pilot basis.

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.2: Pilot the use of caretakers units for purposes other than caretaking on 2 sites.

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.3: Evaluate the pilot and make amendments to the draft criteria.

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.4: Develop criteria/rules to make barrier keys available to the Traveller Community.

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.5: Pilot the availability of keys to barriers on 2 sites.

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.6: Evaluate the pilot and make amendments to the draft criteria.

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.7: Each Accommodation unit or estate to appoint its own liaison person as a contact for all service delivery agencies.

**Lead Agency:** Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.8: Where families are in agreement, caretaking on sites to be entrusted to them

**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.9: Establish mechanisms to identify rentable land adjacent to Traveller accommod.

**Lead Agency:** Members of the Traveller Community

Action 2.3.10 Provide leadership and advocacy training to the Traveller Community

**Lead Agency:** Department Social and Family Affairs.

### **3. ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE TRAVELLER COMMUNITY**

#### **Objective 3.1 Develop and implement a consultation mechanism and mediation process.**

Action 3.1.1: Develop and implement a consultation mechanism and mediation process to minimise incompatibility of residents and improve communication with agencies.  
**Lead Agency:** Traveller Forum, Community and Enterprise (Clare County Council)

#### **Objective 3.2 Provide Information in a user-friendly manner.**

Action 3.2.1: Provide more literacy friendly signage in the HSE Mid-West hospitals.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West and Clarecare

Action 3.2.2: Provide information on medical cards in a Traveller friendly way to all families.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West and Clarecare

Action 3.2.3: Train and inform frontline staff so that, where relevant, they can refer Travellers to the agencies dealing with substance misuse, violence and psychological distress.  
**Lead Agency:** Department of Social & Family Affairs

#### **Objective 3.3 Implement a long term programme of lifestyle choices.**

Action 3.3.1: Design and Implement a long-term programme of healthy lifestyles for men, women and children in the areas of culture, social, health, fitness and nutrition.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West

#### **Objective 3.4 Develop a Traveller Youth Strategy.**

Action 3.4.1: Audit Existing activities available to young Traveller boys and girls.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West

Action 3.4.2: Identify current gaps.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West

Action 3.4.3: Increase the participation of young members of the Traveller Community in social and sporting activities.  
**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West

#### **Objective 3.5 Support Travellers to make the best use of their accommodation.**

Action 3.5.1: Provide a programme for Travellers to get the best out of living in their home.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

Action 3.5.2: Visit newly accommodated Traveller Families on a regular basis for the first six months and more occasionally thereafter.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

Action 3.5.3: Provide a specific course for newly accommodated Travellers and others to support them to financially manage their situation.  
**Lead Agency:** Money Advice & Budgeting Service

**Objective 3.6 Deliver the Per Cent for Arts Scheme in accommodation units and Group Housing Schemes.**

Action 3.6.1: Identify potential arts projects with Travellers where accommodation is provided.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare Arts Officer

Action 3.6.2: Apply for the Per Cent Scheme  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

**Objective 3.7 Encourage the establishment of Voluntary Traveller Housing Groups**

Action 3.7.1: Inform the Traveller Community of the Voluntary Housing Programme.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

Action 3.7.2: Establish the level of interest in progressing the Voluntary Housing option.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

Action 3.7.3: Support the potential of Voluntary Housing through the Traveller Forum.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

**Objective 3.8 Identify accommodation factors and supports that would impact positively on the quality of life**

Action 3.8.1: Establish if over crowding exists in current housing accommodation and if so build larger houses in new schemes.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council & Members of the Traveller Community

Action 3.8.2: Appoint a liaison Garda to each accommodation unit who will visit and introduce themselves and inform Travellers of services and programmes that Gardai support and introduce initiatives that the Gardai and Travellers may develop.  
**Lead Agency:** Gardai

Action 3.8.3: Appoint a dedicated social worker to work with the Traveller Community.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

Action 3.8.4: Provide a breakdown of the cost of Traveller accommodation between land acquisition, services/utilities, construction and other associated costs.  
**Lead Agency:** Clare County Council

Action 3.8.5: Identify obstacles to: optimising the match between need for and supply of Accommodation; to transferring to appropriate accommodation size (including Special needs and downsizing for older people); to making on-site changes e.g. building extensions, making alterations, painting accommodation; to purchasing own home e.g. on a halting site; to making halting sites more visually attractive; to developing meeting and leisure facilities on site.  
**Lead Agency:** Members of the Traveller Community and Clare County Council.

#### 4. IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS GAPS IN CURRENT PROVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

##### **Objective 4.1 Identify Gaps in Current Provision and ensure consistency with relevant National Strategies**

Action 4.1.1: Undertake an Audit of current supports for Traveller men, women and children.

**Lead Agency:** St. Joseph's STTC, Community and Enterprise

Action 4.1.2: Reconcile all education actions with the forthcoming Traveller Education Strategy, of the Department of Education and Science

**Lead Agency:** Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

##### **Objective 4.2 Increase the involvement of young members of the Traveller Community in Youthreach programmes.**

Action 4.2.1: Employ a Youth Worker.

**Lead Agency:** National Association Traveller Training Centre & St Joseph's STTC

Action 4.2.2: Appoint a Trainee Youth Worker (Traveller).

**Lead Agency:** National Association Traveller Training Centre & St Joseph's STTC

Action 4.2.3: Affiliate Youth programmes with Clare Youth Service.

**Lead Agency:** Clare Youth Service

Action 4.2.4: Involve the Traveller Enterprise officer to support and mentor members of the Traveller Community who are engaged in work related training programmes.

**Lead Agency:** FAS

##### **Objective 4.3 Develop an integrated model for pre-school care and education for Traveller Children.**

Action 4.3.1. Draw from the experience of Integration in Carlow and Roscrea.

**Lead Agency:** Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

Action 4.3.2. Enlist the support of National Education Officer for Travellers, Social Inclusion And the Regional Office Dept. Education and Science

**Lead Agency:** Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

Action 4.3.3. To begin the process of integrating the Pre-school for Travellers

**Lead Agency:** Regional Office, DES and Visiting Teacher Service, DES

##### **Objective 4.4 Develop Income, Employment and Enterprise opportunities**

Action 4.4.1: Employ an Enterprise Development Officer

**Lead Agency:** FAS

Action 4.4.2: Employ an Assistant Enterprise Development Officer from the Traveller Community

**Lead Agency:** FAS

Action 4.4.3: Provide a countywide support and liaison service for Travellers and Employers that will identify employment opportunities, prepare CVs, support employers and travellers in working together, provide on-going support and mentoring to employees, organise on-the-job skills training or off-site job-related training

**Lead Agency:** FAS

Action 4.4.4: Seek open market employment opportunities and formalise employment contracts.

**Lead Agency:** FAS

- Action 4.4.5: Assist Travellers in registering as sole traders, street traders and in acquiring the necessary licences and permits.  
**Lead Agency:** FAS
- Action 4.4.6: Arrange Work Placements  
**Lead Agency:** FAS
- Action 4.4.7: Establish the feasibility of setting up a Clare Traveller Enterprise Agency  
**Lead Agency:** FAS
- Objective 4.5 Assist Travellers' participation in Job Search, Work Experience and in Active Labour Market Programmes**
- Action 4.5.1 Identify members of the Traveller Community interested in open market employment and Active Labour Market Employment (eg. Community Employment etc.)  
**Lead Agency:** Local Development Agencies
- Action 4.5.2 Prepare and centrally collate a profile of Travellers' skills  
**Lead Agency:** Local Development Agencies
- Action 4.5.3 Identify local vacancies and opportunities  
**Lead Agency:** Local Development Agencies
- Action 4.5.4 Support applicants' interview and CV preparations.  
**Lead Agency:** Local Development Agencies
- Action 4.5.5 Transfer successful applicants to the Clare Traveller Enterprise Officer for support.  
**Lead Agency:** Local Development Agencies
- Action 4.5.6 Develop Work Experience Opportunities  
**Lead Agency:** Local Development Agencies
- Objective 4.6 Address the needs of young Traveller adults who are outside the mainstream education and Training system.**
- Action 4.6.1: Appoint a youth and community mentor.  
**Lead Agency:** VEC
- Action 4.6.2: Increase referrals to and uptake of current services  
**Lead Agency:** VEC
- Objective 4.7 Provide for the childcare needs of Education and Training participants**
- Action 4.7.1: Establish a Steering Committee to examine the feasibility of a dedicated Childcare Service to support the training at St. Joseph's  
**Lead Agency:** St Joseph's STTC
- Action 4.7.2: Undertake a feasibility study and make an application for equal opportunity childcare programme funding.  
**Lead Agency:** St Joseph's STTC
- Action 4.7.3: Investigate other opportunities for Childcare Services for Travellers in the county  
**Lead Agency:** Clare Childcare Committee

**Objective 4.8 Develop and implement training programmes of appropriate duration.**

Action 4.8.1: Determine criteria for establishing the duration of training.  
**Lead Agency:** St Joseph's Senior Traveller Training Centre

Action 4.8.2: Adopt relevant criteria from VTOS and Youthreach models.  
**Lead Agency:** St Joseph's STTC

Action 4.8.3: Obtain approval from the VEC for the training identified.  
**Lead Agency:** VEC

Action 4.8.4: Standardise measurement, assessment and evaluation approaches.  
**Lead Agency:** St Joseph's STTC

**Objective 4.9 Increase school retention rates.**

Action 4.9.1: Train and support members of the Traveller Community to participate on the Steering Committee of the School Completion Programme.  
**Lead Agency:** Completion Programme, Ennis Community College, Criost Ri

Action 4.9.2: Broaden the School Completion programme to include other schools where members of the Traveller Community are in attendance.  
**Lead Agency:** Completion Programme, Ennis Community College, Criost Ri

Action 4.9.3: Develop peer led mentoring programmes to support continued participation of members of the Traveller Community in school.  
**Lead Agency:** Completion Programme, Ennis Community College, Criost Ri

**Objective 4.10 Extend Training Opportunities countywide**

Action 4.10.1: Conduct an audit of training needs of adult Travellers in Shannon & Ennistymon.  
**Lead Agency:** VEC

Action 4.10.2: Increase the number and duration of the training interventions of local development agencies (LDAs) in Shannon and Ennistymon and strengthen their linkages with any new interventions developed.  
**Lead Agency:** VEC

Action 4.10.3: Develop a transferable model of good practice in addressing the training needs of the Traveller Community including drawing on the experience of St. Joseph's STTC.  
**Lead Agency:** VEC

**Objective 4.11 Strengthen the "After Schools Programme" and "Homework Club"**

Action 4.11.1: Ensure continued funding for Homework Club.  
**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP & Ennis West Partners

Action 4.11.2: Target children not in any other programme.  
**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP & Ennis West Partners

Action 4.11.3: Promote the "After School Programme" and "Homework Club".  
**Lead Agency:** Ennis CDP & Ennis West Partners

**5. CO-ORDINATE AND MONITOR THE DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY.**

**Objective 5.1**     **Establish a bi-annual forum for service providers' staff who have regular contact with the Traveller Community.**

Action 5.1.1:     All agencies delivering services to the Traveller Community will mandate their staff, who have direct contact with the Traveller Community, to meet twice yearly to:

- ensure effective delivery of the Strategy (identify targets achieved, blockages encountered, emerging duplication, gaps in provision)
- where necessary, and in consultation with the Traveller Forum, amend the action plans of the following 6 months.

**Lead Agency:** Community & Enterprise Section.

Action 5.1.2:     Annually provide the information necessary to monitor the implementation of the HSE Mid-West Traveller Strategy for County Clare.

**Lead Agency:** HSE Mid-West.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Agencies and the Traveller Community Represented on the Joint Working Groups**

#### **Health Joint Working Group**

Four members of the Traveller Community  
Clarecare  
Clare Sports Partnership  
Clare Haven Services  
HSE Mid-Western Area  
Department of Social & Family Affairs

#### **Education Joint Working Group**

Four members of the Traveller Community  
After School Programme – Homework Club  
Clare Youth Services  
Ennis Community College  
VEC  
Clare County Childcare Committee  
Department of Education & Science  
Ennis West Partners  
St. Joseph's STTC  
Visiting Teacher Service, Dept. Education and Science

#### **Income, Work and Employment Joint Working Group**

Four members of the Traveller Community  
Clarecare  
Clare Supported Employment  
RAPID  
Trasna Equal Project  
Clare County Enterprise Board  
FÁS  
Shannon Family Resource Centre

#### **Accommodation Joint Working Group**

Four members of the Traveller Community  
Arts Officer,  
Clare County Council  
Ennis Town Council  
Garda Síochána  
Ennis Community Development Project  
Ennistymon Family Resource Centre  
Money Advice & Budgeting Service

**The Director of Community and Enterprise chaired the process.**

**The staff of Community and Enterprise supported each of the Joint Working Groups.**

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