

# HHAG NEWSLETTER NUMBER 7 (1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2009)

Hello Everyone,

First of all, apologies for the fact that this is the first newsletter in two weeks. Even we little volunteers have to take a holiday sometime!!

## CONTINUING SUCCESS

We had a great response to our recent public letter. The mailing list for these newsletters now stands at just under 150 addresses. Including all the couples living at the same address and the original members of the main group, that means that we are now well in excess of 200 concerned members of the public. Who said the British are bad at complaining?

## CLOSING DATE FOR RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION

While I was away the window for objections closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. You'll be pleased to hear that we ended up with about 650 objections, including our further objections to the late-delivered planning details.

We now await the verdict from WDC. We are led to believe that they will reach a decision by early August. But of course, that assumes that the travellers don't spring any more surprises on us.

## HOW THE TRAVELLERS ARE ORGANIZED

A lot of you are new to these newsletters and I may have covered this subject before, but a repeat won't go amiss.

The Gypsies & Travellers (G & Ts) are well organized in the UK. They have their own G & T Council and they have a wide-ranging support network. This includes a planning company, Green Planning, who are run by an ex Lib Dem MP and a firm of solicitors who carry out all their legal work.

As I mentioned above, the unauthorised setting up of G & T camps has now been outlawed in Southern Ireland (our own little group are from there) and in Scotland. So, it now falls to England and Wales to suffer these invasions.

There is even – would you believe – a web site that gives G & Ts all the information they need to set up unauthorised camps and advises them on the methodology for avoiding eviction. As you will know, in our case, they held off putting in their final plans until the absolute last minute and, because they are “a special case”, any local council has to go along with any delaying tactics that are used. As many of you have commented, if any of us tried to buy up a bit of land – especially in an AONB - and then set up a mobile home on it, we'd be turfed out quicker than you can say Jack Robinson.

It might be fair to add at this point that there is some history to this thing. For years, the government has been pushing local councils to find “approved sites” for G & Ts and the fact that they haven't has led the G & Ts to form their own Council and get on with “land-knapping”. There are a lot of further arguments on both sides about the rights and wrongs of this and this newsletter isn't the place to rehearse them. But, ultimately, it still means that small communities like ours are becoming a political football and people who have been law-abiding, worked hard and strived to better themselves have found that that all counts for nothing in what is nowadays a relatively lawless society.

## BUCKS FREE PRESS

One of our number sent a letter to the BFP recently (which wasn't published, of course) and copied me in on it. I've asked him if I can reprint it for you to see. Just click on the attachment

above, marked BFP Letter. As you will see, he has done some research and found out why Lucy Toynbee writes these strange letters to the BFP. He has discovered that it fits in with her job as a Social Outreach Worker.

### PUBLICITY

Hopefully, most of you caught our piece on the BBC Oxford News on the telly recently. It was a good piece and ran for much longer than they had given us hope it would. In fact, they liked the story so much that they saved it up for a week, so it didn't get squeezed out by the local elections and other stuff that they had to cover.

We got three bites at the cherry with a piece following the 1.00pm news, the 6.00pm news and the 10.00pm news.

We are trying to get it saved as a file that we can add to the web site for all to see. By the way, we're still working on the web site and hope to have it up soon

There's been a lot of press recently about us and about other sites that have been invaded. Here are a selection. Some of them are quite funny in a sad, politically-correct way.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/5663156/Builders-forced-to-work-on-100-million-gipsy-camps.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1193810/Want-GP-Gipsies-come-NHS-tells-doctors-travellers-seen-straight-away.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1194961/Residents-uproar-gipsy-site-planned-seaside-town-centre.html>

[http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/4454873.600\\_oppose\\_gypsy\\_site\\_as\\_deadline\\_looms/](http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/4454873.600_oppose_gypsy_site_as_deadline_looms/)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/5551747/Schoolchildren-to-be-taught-about-why-gipsies-are-misunderstood.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/5559022/Gipsy-families-ask-for-2-million-to-leave-illegal-camp.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1192968/The-Gipsy-King-Ex-MP-makes-money-advising-travellers-illegal-camps.html>

<http://www.dailypress.co.uk/posts/view/105955/My-440-000-home-ruined-by-gypsies>

### FIGHTING FUND

Most of us don't like spending money, but you might be surprised to hear that several supporters have written to me asking what we are doing about a fighting fund that everyone can contribute to. Well, I'll put together a "**FIGHTING FUND SPECIAL**" in the next day or two and give you as much info as possible about what we've been spending money on and how you can make a contribution yourself.

### WATCH THIS SPACE!!!

Stay Well!



**BOB STREET, HHAG**

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