

# **Gypsy and Traveller Attachment to People and Place: a contradiction in terms?**

How do adult family members from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place in their childhoods?

Melanie Hamilton-Perry

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**Abstract**

This thesis seeks to examine how adult family members from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place in their childhoods.

The research described in this thesis consists of the use of adapted Adult Attachment Interview questions during guided conversation interviews. The transcripts were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) methodology.

The findings indicate that for the participants of this study, interesting variations on the meaning of attachment emerged. It was noticeable, for example, that for most of them, 'movement' created some of the conditions for their stability and 'felt security'. The addition of the word 'felt' is pivotal here: it is their nuanced memories of connection to 'people and place' that forms their lived experience of attachment. As with many Travellers, this is an unconventional, untypical and, from the house-dweller's perspective at any rate, 'unexpected' way of experiencing security, but for many Gypsies and Travellers, 'constant planned movement' was how they were able to feel safe as a child. Therefore, for many other Gypsies and Travellers, 'being settled' is in effect, unsettling, resulting in increased feelings of emotional insecurity and loss of their secure base.

The findings also highlighted that the Gypsies' and Travellers' cultures within this study seem to enjoy a shared approach to caring for the children within their family group. This appears to have provided the children and the group with the best chance of survival. Most of the participants reported that they had multiple care providers during childhood, enabling them to develop attachment relationships with their older siblings, grandmothers and aunts.

The lack of secure sites, together with constant forced evictions, have fragmented the children's attachment relationships to both people and place and have had a negative effect on the children's feelings of safety and security.

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David Shemmings' and Anna Gupta's specialist knowledge bases have complemented each other and provided me with their perspectives, which has been supportive and challenging in equal measure.

This thesis has been undertaken on a part-time basis, while I have worked full time as a Senior Child Protection Social Worker. Working full time and undertaking this research has at times been very challenging and has only been made possible by the love and support of my family and friends.

I have been exceedingly fortunate to have had my partner John Howes alongside me these past seven years and more. John made this research possible in many ways, firstly this thesis was made financially possible by John, as without his help in the early days I would have given up. Secondly, he has always believed in me and my ability to complete this study, even when I have tried to persuade him otherwise. John never stopped believing in me even when my dyslexia overwhelmed me. Thirdly John has put up with me, listened to my academic dilemmas, proof read my work and cajoled me. It has been challenging and rewarding journey. Without him this thesis would not have seen the light of day.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who took part in this research, for their time, their honesty and for trusting me enough to share their narratives.

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# **Gypsy and Traveller Attachment to People and Place: a contradiction in terms?**

## **Chapter One - Introduction and Background**



Photograph 1: Melanie Hamilton-Perry sitting in the doorway of a Varda.

**How do adult family members from the Gypsy and Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place in their childhoods?**

## **Introduction**

The research described in this thesis has been conducted with the aim of gaining an understanding of the extent and nature of attachment to people and place for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Social Policy is examined in relation to the light it sheds on the nature of marginalisation and discrimination. However, this thesis does not aim to offer a detailed analysis of all UK social policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers.

In undertaking this study, the following research questions were posed:

- Research question 1 (RQ1) How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- Research Question 2 (RQ2) How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- Research Question 3 (RQ3) How does the Traveller culture and way of life – affect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?
- Research Question 4 (RQ4) Does the environment or place where families live affect how communities' parent their children?

In order to investigate these research questions, the two dimensions of attachment; 'attachment to people' and 'attachment to place' were explored.

The literature search examined studies looking at the two dimensions of attachment. These are attachment to people, together with the importance of attachment to place and the role that place attachment has in shaping an individual's identity. This raised the question: Is attachment to place as important to an individual's emotional development and well-being, as attachment to people? The two seem to be significant in providing the developing child with a secure base from which to grow.

## **Rationale for this study - Why is Attachment to People and Place for members of the Traveller Communities an important and relevant topic for research?**

There has been a limited amount of interest in Gypsy, Roma and Travellers within academia, although within the past decade, interest in Gypsies and Travellers and the connected social problems (perceived or real), has grown within the fields of Social Work and Social Policy. There are many publications available that examine the issues affecting Gypsies and Travellers such as social policy, marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice, accommodation, education, health and employment.

There is a distinct lack of research, however, looking at Gypsies and Travellers attachment relationships to people and place, and the effect that the loss of the traditional travelling routes has had on their way of life and their emotional well-being. Gypsy and Traveller attachment relationships appear to be an understudied area. This suggests that there is a need to develop a greater understanding of Gypsy and Traveller attachment relationships, both within family groups and with the places that are important to them. This thesis, therefore, aims to add to the available knowledge base, and to provide suggestions for possible future research opportunities, while highlighting the implications for Social Work education and practice.

Attachment to place is not a widely accepted theory in the field of social care due to attachment relationships being deemed as being between a main care provider and an infant (Bowlby, 1988; Howes, 1995). I have noticed that many of my Social Work colleagues are of the opinion that people cannot be attached to place simply because people cannot have a relationship with a place. They base this reasoning on the argument that a place cannot provide physical comfort. Whilst it is true that a place cannot physically embrace a person, I suggest that a person's attachment places can provide feelings of emotional security and emotional safety.

I propose that people can and do have relationships with their personal and



sometimes exclusive environments. Many people spend hours lovingly restoring and decorating their houses, investing time, energy and affection in personalising their special space and making their houses into their homes. In times of stress and disconsolation, it is common for people to return to places that they feel attached to. Closing the front door and drawing the curtains on the outside world can accord people with feelings of comfort and safety. For these, attachment to place is ingrained into them as part of their identity. I argue that people need to feel attached to both people and place in order for them to experience life and function in an emotionally secure way.

Whilst respecting that Gypsies and Travellers are not a homogenous community, made up of many different groups who all have their own cultures, beliefs and values, for the purpose of this thesis all of the various groups will be referred to by the term Gypsies and Travellers unless it is necessary to identify a specific group. A detailed overview of the culture and history of the various Gypsy and Traveller groups that make up the UK Gypsy and Traveller population will be presented in Chapter Four, Part One. This will help the reader to gain an understanding of the diversity within the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

### **Development of the Thesis**

I have been working with families from the Gypsy and Traveller communities in various roles over the past 20 years. My positions have ranged from a Gypsy/Traveller teaching assistant, an advocate with the Ormiston Travellers Initiative and a researcher for NHS Bedfordshire, to my present role as a Senior Child Protection Social Worker and Practice Educator, specialising in working with families from the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

During this time, I have noticed that many Social Work assessments record Gypsy and Traveller children as having 'insecure attachments' to their parents. This indeed may well be the case with some of the Gypsy and Traveller children. When reading the case files, however, it is often apparent that many of professionals who have written these reports, have unfortunately lacked cultural awareness of the Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle and the role

that the extended family plays in traditional family life. This suggests that there is a need for a greater understanding of Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices, family interdependencies and the importance of the wider family when undertaking Statutory Assessments.

### **Previous research**

Whilst undertaking a previous research project for NHS Bedfordshire on the Health Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Bedfordshire, excluding Luton, I noted that Gypsy and Traveller children reported that they loved the freedom and stimulation of travelling, but they acknowledged the difficulties of enforced mobility. The children highlighted that the constant eviction left them feeling unsettled, insecure, and their parents stressed and angry.

The resulting lack of basic utilities was also seen as a problem. The children thought that the eviction process seemed pointless and unnecessary, creating more problems for them than it solved.

The children that took part in the 'Health Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Bedfordshire' study, along with their parents, appeared to have learnt, through experience, that they were unwanted by the settled society. Many of the housed Gypsy and Traveller children spoke about racism from neighbours as well as bullying at school in the form of verbal and physical abuse. Many children reported that their ethnic identity seemed to be unrecognised by the settled community, who refused to accept it as the children's birthright. Many of the children reported that they had experienced having to hide their ethnic identity because they did not feel safe telling others who they were nor about their cultural heritage (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Kiddle, 1999; Warrington, 2006).

These findings raised many questions as a Senior Child Protection Social Worker and PhD Researcher. If Gypsy and Traveller children are reporting that they are made to feel unsettled and insecure due to constant evictions throughout their childhood, then do their parents' narratives of their own childhoods also reflect the same feelings of insecurity and being unwanted by

the settled community?

This raised the following questions: Do the adult Gypsies and Travellers feel the same emotional feelings of insecurity every time that they are moved on? What are the long-term effects of these feelings on adults from the Gypsy and Travelling communities? Can parents be emotionally available as attachment figures for their own children when they are experiencing high stress levels due to their environment and their accommodation status? What is the effect of constant evictions and lack of accommodation status on family relationships? Do family members develop stronger bonds within the family group to counteract these feelings or are family bonds becoming fragmented and weaker?

These questions were incorporated into the four research questions.

- Research question 1 (RQ1) How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- Research Question 2 (RQ2) How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- Research Question 3 (RQ3) How does the Traveller culture and way of life affect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?
- Research Question 4 (RQ4) Does the environment or place where families live affect how communities parent their children?

While I have discussed some of my previous work with young people in this introduction, it is purely to give the reader an insight into Gypsy and Traveller children's perceptions of the world in which they live. This thesis is guided by strict ethical guidelines and will only be focusing on adult Gypsy and Traveller recollections of their childhood experiences.

### **On a personal level**

On a personal level, I have experience of living a Traveller lifestyle and the prejudice and discrimination that individuals from the Travelling communities face on a daily basis. I chose to live as a New Age Traveller for a period of time with my children. We made the transition from my nice socially acceptable, owned bungalow into an old 1950s Chinese Six, Bedford Coach. The coach had been transformed into a living vehicle with all the comforts of a home.

I brought a piece of land, to park my bus on for when we were not travelling. I extended my family's living space by buying two large mobile homes, which I linked together with a walk way. I applied for planning permission and I requested mains services. My planning application was rejected and the mains services providers told me that, without planning permission to live on the land, together with the lack of a postcode, the main service providers would not install basic services. I tried to buy a TV licence, but as I did not have a postcode or a registered address, therefore I was unable to buy one. This did not stop the TV licencing body from taking me to court for my lack of TV licence a few months later.

I quickly noticed that even though my children still attended the same school everyday and were happy, clean, well cared for and well behaved, people's attitudes towards them seemed to change. My children became ostracised and were bullied in school for being seen as Gypsy/ Traveller children. We returned into a home of bricks and mortar when it became apparent that my lifestyle choice was having a negative effect on my children. All my work with the Travelling Communities has been a direct result of my children's experiences. No child should be made to feel worthless or rejected by society, just because of where they live and/ or their family's culture and minority ethnic status.

Whilst writing the final draft of this thesis, I have discovered that my paternal birth great grandmother was a Romani Gypsy. She married a Gorgio and settled into housing. My birth father reports that he believes that his Gypsy

blood has been the reason why he has always had itchy feet and could never settle for very long anywhere. He has lived in boats as well as houses of bricks and mortar.

### **Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter One is the introductory chapter of this thesis where the primary and supplementary research questions are outlined and the context of the research explored, namely 'how do adult family members from the Gypsy and Traveller communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place in their childhoods'?

The rationale behind this study is explored and the discussion presented as to why 'attachment to people and place for individuals from the Gypsy and Traveller communities' is a valid topic for investigation. The literature search, however, highlighted that there is a lack of literature relating to Gypsies' and Travellers' attachment to both people and place. This appears to be an under researched area, possibly because Gypsies and Travellers are a hard to reach minority group. This thesis aims to provide an original contribution to the slowly growing literature and published research knowledge base relating to Gypsies and Travellers.

Chapter Two provides a critical discussion of British Social Policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers and demonstrates the effect that prejudice, and discrimination has on Gypsies' and Travellers' life. Homelessness, in the form of unauthorised encampments, can make local residents unhappy and attract negative media attention which then feeds public protest about any intended new site provision and reduces the likelihood of sites being built. Negative media attention nurtures and legitimises discrimination, and this can lead to social exclusion and eventual retaliation from the Gypsies and Travellers. It may result in anti-social behavior because the Gypsies and Travellers feel angry, frustrated and fearful of the settled population. Alternatively, they can exploit flaws in the planning system which leads to further public unrest. Either way, the cycle of discrimination is perpetuated (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Hawes & Perez, 1995; Morris & Clements, 2002).

Chapter Three links closely into Chapter Two and provides the conceptual framework for this thesis. The two dimensions of attachment, attachment to people and attachment to place, will be explored and discussed. This will include a brief overview of the four main attachment types and will lead into a discussion about the methods for assessing children's and adults' attachment behaviours. The difficulties defining attachment to place will also be demonstrated.

Chapter Four, will present a discussion focusing on the main concepts of this study as identified during the literature search, which is central to the research process, and as such, I drew on evidence from a very wide range of sources, involving searches of databases, journals and websites. Known literature has been explored and the references from all sources have been followed up. Agency documentation and localised studies have been included where appropriate.

The discussion has been divided into three themed sections.

The first section will look at the main body of literature relating to Gypsies' and Travellers culture and history.

The second section presents a critical discussion about the dominance of Western bias in attachment theory. Six examples of childrearing practices from non-Western cultures will be explored, highlighting the similarities and causal links to Gypsy and Traveller childrearing practices. A brief overview of Gypsy and Traveller child rearing practices will conclude this part of the chapter.

The final section of the discussion will present an examination of the concept of attachment to place and will evaluate the effects that attachment, or indeed a lack of attachment to place, have for individuals and communities. The analysis will highlight the desirability for attachment theorists to broaden their concern to include significant relationships with places.

Chapter Five will outline the methodological approach taken for this empirical study, exploring Gypsies' and Travellers' attachment to people and place. The details of the development of the research aims, the analytical framework and the method will be discussed along with an outline of the research paradigm, the methodology and the significant epistemological assumptions of this thesis. This will be followed by a discussion of the overall research design of the project, including the sampling methods used and the development of the interview questions. Finally, the ethical and moral considerations of this research, the difficulties encountered and how they were overcome will complete this chapter.

In November 2014, I undertook Reflective Functioning Training to carry out Adult Attachment Interviews at the Anna Freud Centre. I adapted this assessment tool to fit the requirements of my research. I will provide a detailed account of the issues faced and the adaptations made, within Chapter Five.

Chapter Six will present the findings from the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the guided conversation interviews. The main themes identified will be presented for each participant. The participants' main themes will then be discussed and linked to the four research questions, exploring the extent and nature of attachment to people and place for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. The findings will be linked to the key areas identified in Chapters Two - Five.

In Chapter Seven connections between the literature examined in the previous chapters and the findings of this thesis will be presented and examined in relation to the research aims.

In the final chapter of this thesis, the findings presented in the two previous chapters will be examined in relation to what the results of this study might mean for the Gypsy and Traveller communities within the UK. This will be followed by some reflections on the research process and an exploration of the limitations of this research, together with suggestions for further research.

Finally, this will link into a discussion about the potential implications for Social Work education and practice.

The eight chapters will be followed by the bibliography and any appendices.



## Chapter Two - Policy overview

Photograph 2: Dale Farm before the mass eviction in 2011



(Lawson, 2009).

Photograph 3: Dale Farm after the mass eviction in 2011



(South East Essex Action Group Alliance, 2016)

### Introduction

This chapter will provide the reader with a critical discussion of British Social Policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers and will demonstrate the effect that prejudice and discrimination has on Gypsies' and Travellers' life. An overview of the persecution of the Gypsy within the UK together with a period of uneasy tolerance will be presented to provide the context for the major changes in UK

legislation relating to Gypsies and Travellers. The chapter will conclude with the case study of the mass eviction of Dale Farm in 2011. This chapter does not aim to provide a detailed analysis of UK social policy, therefore please see appendices 2 for the Social Policy timeline.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are some of the most deprived, socially excluded, marginalised and discriminated against groups within the UK (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Cemlyn, 1995, 2000a+b; 2008; Clark & Greenfields, 2006; Richardson, 2006).

In English law, ethnic minority status is defined by the so-called Mandala criteria. An ethnic group must have a common shared history, language, customs and practices that can be traced back centuries (NATT+ 2012e; Commission for Racial Equality, 2006a). The Law in the UK prohibits discrimination against Gypsies and Travellers as well as inciting racial hatred towards them. Doing so carries a maximum prison sentence of seven years under the 1986 Public Order Act. This deterrent, however, did not stop the Firlie Bonfire Society, East Sussex, when in 2003 it burned a caravan carrying a fake number plate that read P1KEY, with a Gypsy Family painted on the side. While there were 12 arrests, the Crown Prosecution Service ruled that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute (bbc.co.uk, 2005; Carter, 2003).

Research evidences that Gypsies, Roma and Travellers' life expectancy is 10-12 years shorter than the average of those from settled communities (Parry et al 2007). The average age of death is 64 years old. Gypsies and Travellers experience higher rates of heart disease and infant mortality. Gypsy and Irish Traveller women are 20 times more likely to experience the death of a child than women from settled communities (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Parry et al 2007). Gypsy and Traveller communities have difficulties accessing services across health, accommodation, education, employment, water, sanitation and benefits, resulting in poverty, homelessness, social exclusion and marginalisation (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Cemlyn, 1995, 2000 & 2006; Clark & Greenfields, 2006; Parry et al 2007; The Traveller Movement, 2017).

Research also highlights that some Gypsies and Travellers can become angry, frustrated and fearful of the settled population, due to the constant evictions and discrimination. Gypsy and Traveller culture is deeply rooted in community and traditions, family focus and respect. These values, however, can be adversely affected by discrimination, social exclusion and lack of appropriate accommodation. This, in turn, can create issues and behaviours that cause difficulties in accessing services, feeding the cycle of knowledge beliefs and attitudes in a negative way (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010). Traveller children's non-attendance at school, anti-social behaviour, non-engagement with society and services, retaliation and refusal to take advice, can lead to increased public unrest. The cycle of discrimination is, therefore, perpetuated (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Derrington & Kendall, 2004).

The conceptualisation of outcast/underclass populations was a theoretical perspective that was popular during the Thatcher years of the 1980s. It was used as a theoretical tool to shape Conservative social policy and legislation relating to Gypsies and Travellers. It enabled the Conservative Government of the time to incite moral panic by 'othering' and labelling individuals and certain groups as 'folk devils' (Giddens, 1991). 'Othering' appears to be based on hostility and feelings of perceived danger (Kandylak & Kallinikaki, 2018). By labelling an individual or group as the 'other' the person or group becomes excluded from the normal hierarchies and structures of normal life and they can end up becoming oppressed, socially excluded and discriminated against. Kandylak & Kallinikaki's (2018) research investigating the disadvantaged 'Muslim Roma' neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the big cities in the region of Thrace in Greece, highlighted that in 2018 these groups remained to be seen as 'potential enemies within' or as 'others'.

The Government focus was not only directed at Gypsies and Travellers, the focus was also on all groups that failed to conform to the required norm (Giddens, 1991; Herrnstein & Murry 1994; Mayall, 2004; Worthington, 2005). Labour government policies which have been aimed at improving the life experience of all children such as Every Child Matters (2004) introduced five national outcomes for all children. The overarching title Every Child Matters,

aimed to be a positive, significant and comprehensive flagship policy, which required all public-sector organisations working with children to come together not only to protect them, but also to ensure that every child had the chance to fulfil their potential (Jones, 2013). Arguably, Gypsy and Traveller children did not appear to be included in this agenda.

Table 1: Every Child Matters (2004) Five National Outcomes.

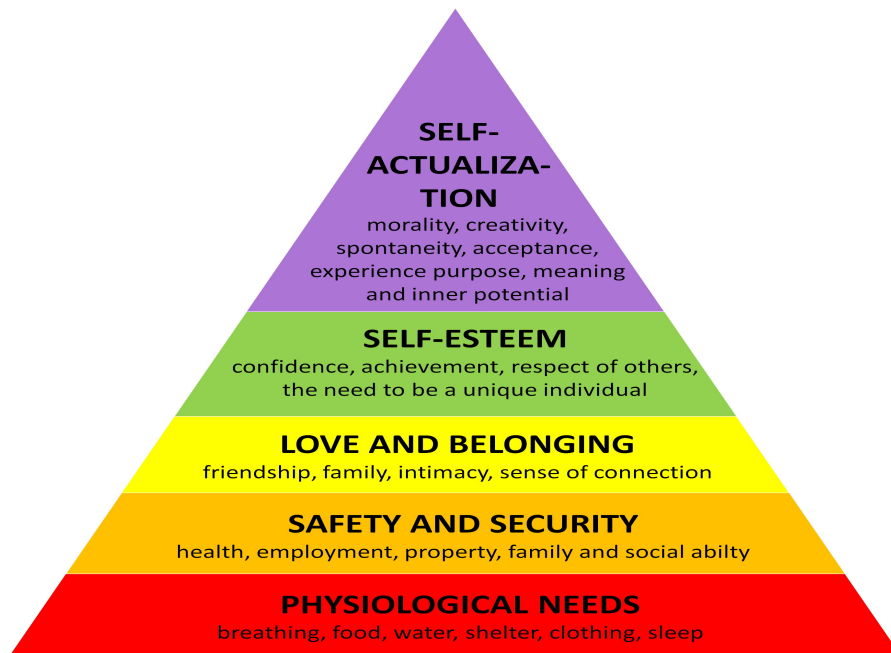
Being Healthy:	Enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle.
Stay Safe:	Being protected from harm and neglect.
Enjoying and Achieving:	Getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood.
Making a Positive Contribution:	Being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour.
Economic Well-being:	Not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life

(Adapted from HM Treasury 2003)

The Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government distanced itself from the Labour government-driven, Every Child Matters agenda and instead, focused on 'Helping Children Achieve More'. Jones (2013) identifies that helping children to achieve more was only one of the five outcomes of Every Child Matters and removed the need for children to enjoy good physical and mental health, to be protected from harm and neglect, not to be prevented by economic disadvantage, as they achieved more. Again, Gypsy and Traveller children were not included.

If Gypsy and Traveller children are viewed through the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943; 1974) figure 1, it seems that their basic needs for nutrition, water, sleep, clothing and air are met. It seems that for children whose parents do not have a pitch on a site, needs for safety and security, however, are not always met due to the constant evictions.

Figure 1: Maslow's, Hierarchy of needs



(blockedtobrilliant.com, 2018).

### **The persecution of the Gypsy people**

The last recorded execution of a Gypsy in Britain took place in Suffolk in 1650 (Murdock & Johnson, 2004 & 2007; Patrin, 2000; Richardson, 2006; Staines, 2006; NATT+, 2012). While Travellers are no longer hanged for their ethnic identity, many still choose to hide their identities to protect themselves and their families from the prejudice and discrimination of the settled communities (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

The persecution of Gypsy people has not been restricted to the United Kingdom. Throughout 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, repressive Laws were passed to control the 'Gypsy problem'. It can be argued that repressive, assimilative legislation continues to be passed today.

In 1933 the National Socialist Party won the German elections. One of the Third Reich's goals was to find a solution for the "Gypsy Problem". Not only was this aimed at fighting alleged Gypsy criminal behaviour, but it was also calculated to inhibit the natural growth of the Roma and Sinti population

through compulsory sterilization on the basis of the “*Law on the Prevention [of the birth] of offspring with Hereditary Diseases (Gesetz Zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses)*” July 1933. Roma and Sinti made up 94% of all of the forced sterilizations under the National Socialist regime.

From 1937 the Institute for Research on Racial Hygiene and Population Biology in Berlin, an arm of the Reich Health Department, took over managing the “Gypsy problem”. Anthropologist and specialist in neurological disorders Robert Ritter carried out years of racial-biological research on Gypsies. His goal was to seek out racially pure Gypsies so that Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler could settle them in reservations where they could undergo further scientific study. Mixed race Gypsies were exterminated as they were not deemed suitable for scientific research.

In September 1945, previous acts were followed by the passage of the Nuremberg laws “*on the Protection of German Blood and German Honour (das Gesetz Zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre)*” and “*Reich Citizenship (des Reichsbürgergesetz)*”. This legislation discriminated against the Roma and Sinti, limited their civil rights and excluded them from political, professional and cultural life. The legislation basically linked the Roma and Sinti with the Jews and labelled them as being of alien blood in Europe (Talewicz-Kwiatkowska 2011:13-12).

The Nazi Holocaust provides a clear example of how the articulation of this ancient hatred of nomads became translated into a national policy of racial hygiene. Gypsies together with the Jewish population were the target of the genocide policies under the Third Reich. Half a million Gypsies lost their lives, precisely because they were Gypsies (Kapralski et al, 2011; Kenrik & Puxon, 2009; Murdock & Johnson, 2004:8; & 2007:9).

### **Uneasy tolerance within Britain**

While discrimination and prejudice towards Gypsies and Travellers intensified in Europe, they were being uneasily tolerated in the UK. The outbreak of the Second World War increased the need for intensive labour within the UK and

Gypsies and Travellers, with their well-developed practical skills, were in great demand. The men were forcibly enlisted to work in mining industries or to fight in the British Army. Gypsy and Traveller women were encouraged to work on a semi-permanent basis on the land or undertaking factory and munitions work (Smith, 2004: cited by Clark & Greenfields, 2006:63).

During the immediate post war era, this uneasy tolerance towards Gypsies and Travellers continued for a short period of time. The people were welcomed within the majority of communities as they possessed the practical skills to rebuild Britain's severely damaged infrastructure. While it was not uncommon for Gypsies and Travellers to marry Gorgios during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is believed that during the post war period, intermarriage increased (Smith & Greenfields, 2013). Many Gypsies and Travellers bought or rented relatively affordable pieces of land to set up home bases while some, in areas of long standing family connections, moved into houses.

For the first time in British Gypsy and Traveller history, families were able to put down roots and settle. Many families set up businesses in recycling activities such as scrap dealing. This, in turn, enabled the children to access education and healthcare. Although the 1908 Children's Act and the 1944 Education Act made education compulsory for Gypsy and Traveller children for six months of the year, many however, did not access schooling because of their families' constant mobility (Clark & Greenfields, 2006:65; Patrin, 2000).

By the late 1950s, this uneasy tolerance was coming to an end. Gradually as Great Britain's economic recovery appeared to be growing again and more stable, Gypsies and Travellers became no longer welcome in many areas as their man power was no longer required (Greenfields & Clark, 2006). The Road Traffic Acts and the decline in traditional agricultural methods made life very challenging for Gypsies and Travellers and many were encouraged to move into housing. Government policies of site clearance caused waste-land to be sold off for housing developments. This resulted in Gypsies and Travellers having to struggle for their basic human and civil rights of having

sustainable, culturally appropriate accommodation and self-determination (Clark & Greenfields, 2006).

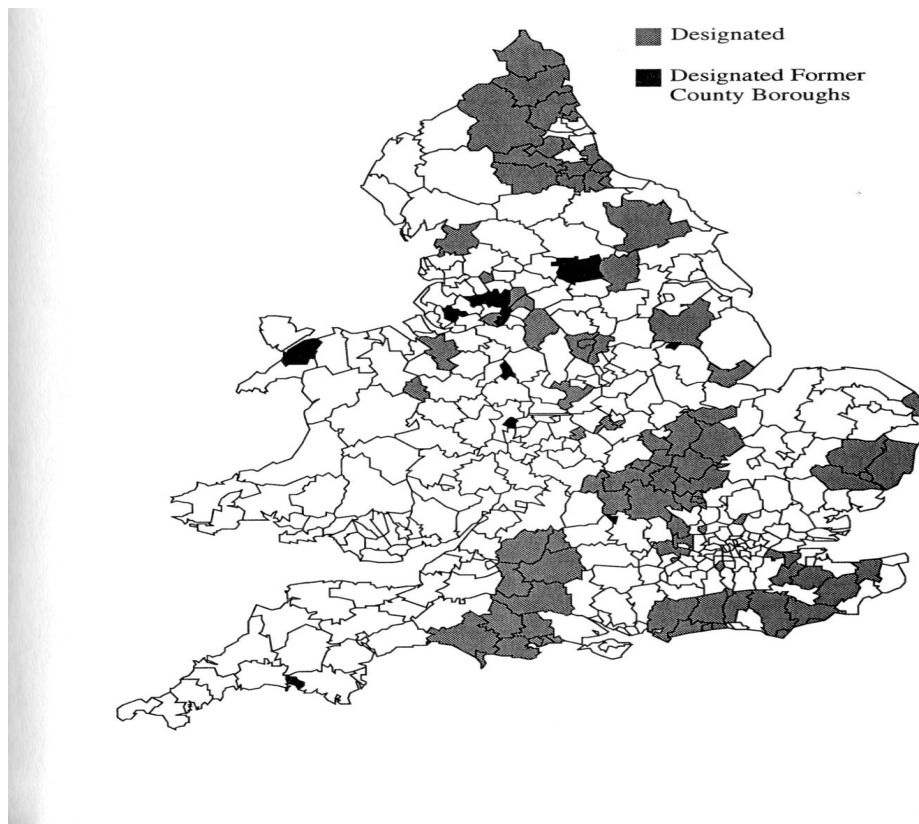
It can be reasonably argued that since the 1960s, none of the UK policies relating to site planning have been introduced for the benefit of the Travelling communities. They have, instead, been designed to control and assimilate this itinerant population (Clarke & Greenfields, 2006; Hawes & Perez, 1996; Johnson & Willers, 2004; Okely, 1983; Smith and Greenfields, 2013).

The introduction of the 1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act was predominantly aimed at limiting the numbers of non-Gypsies and Travellers moving into caravans despite the post war housing shortage. The Act was responsible for the closure of a number of traditional transit and permanent sites. It also prohibited Gypsies and Travellers from making encampments on common land. The reason behind the site closures was that the Act required site owners to obtain a site license. This meant that site owners and farmers (who had allowed Gypsies and Travellers to stay on their land) had to prove 'established use' of the land as a caravan site. Gaining a license depended upon written evidence from the local community in supporting the development of a site within the local area. This often proved problematic.

The 1968 Caravan Sites Act aimed at providing a network of public sites. It imposed a mandatory duty on local authorities to assess the local need and provide these facilities. The Act, however, granted local authorities with designation once they had met the Government's site provision requirements. The Act made it illegal for Travellers to stop on any unauthorised encampments within a designated area. This in turn, made following the traditional travelling circuits through some counties impossible. The map below shows how whole areas became inaccessible to Gypsy and Traveller families as it became difficult and, in some cases, impossible to travel through such large areas with nowhere to make camp.



Figure. 2: Designated areas of England and Wales, under section 12 of the Caravan Sites Act 1968, February 1988



(Hawes & Perez, 1996:27).

### **Institutional Racism and Marginalisation**

The institutional discrimination against the nomadic population is deeply rooted within UK society, popular culture and literature. References can be found in popular literature, in William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (1599), for example, where Malvolio, the head steward, insults his master by saying;

My masters, are you mad? Or what are you? Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like tinkers at this time of night?..... is there no respect of place, persons, nor time, in you?  
(Shakespeare, 1599: cited by Craig, 1935:351).

Bercovici (1930:255) suggests that Shakespeare undoubtedly knew many Gypsies. At a time when society still believed that Gypsies were Egyptians, Shakespeare modelled his description of Cleopatra on a highly romanticised Gypsy wench.

One possible explanation for governmental reluctance to introduce policies that would provide sustainable Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and facilitate Traveller social inclusion, is that the political parties appear to view Traveller site provision as a 'vote loser' (Clark, 2005).

Bhopal & Myers (2008:145) note that during March and April 2005, unauthorised Travellers sites and the connected issues were a very hot topic for newspaper coverage. The stories were part of a '*virulently hostile campaign against Gypsy sites*'. The Sun newspaper's campaign slogan was '*Stamp on the Camps*'. Other newspapers ran the story, however, none matched The Sun's aggressive stance. Bhopal & Myers (2008) suggest that The Sun's campaign was partly driven by trying to attract more middleclass readers and also due to an on-going disagreement with the then Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was actively promoting policies that would make it easier for Gypsies and Travellers to gain planning permission to build permanent sites. The Sun's campaign was already underway when the date of the next General election was announced. The Conservative press office jumped onto the bandwagon, utilising the political capital from the newspaper's campaign.

Michael Howard's 2005 election campaign attempted to make political capital from 'othering' unwanted groups in society. Howard (2005) stated that certain groups within society such as Travellers and asylum seekers needed controlling and promised to crackdown on them and other 'folk devils' (Cohen 1980). He harnessed the British public's prejudices and attempted to use the perceived Traveller problems as a vote winner.

Howard's 'Get Tough on Travellers', campaign suggested that European Human Rights legislation should not be adhered to when dealing with Travellers, because Gypsies and Travellers used Article 8 of the Human Right Act as one of their main defences in enforcement cases (Clark, 2005; Richardson, 2005). Ultimately, Howard's (2005) anti-Traveller campaign failed to secure his party an election victory. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, under the Labour Government continued to promote policies aimed

at securing Gypsy and Traveller sites in all counties based on the population of Gypsies and Travellers living in the area, however, these policies were unsuccessful as the settled majority fought against new Gypsy and Traveller site provision close to their homes and communities. The Travellers Times reported (2016) *“that less than one in six councils are meeting the Governments target on Traveller site supply in the south east of England”*.

Howard made a highly controversial speech at the Conservative Campaign Headquarters on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005 (appendix 3). Billig et al (2006) argues that Michael Howard’s speech was carefully worded to avoid being accused of racism. By referring to Gypsies and Irish Travellers as simply Travellers, he avoided reference to their ethnicity and, therefore, did not contravene the Race Relations Act 1976 (amended in 2000). The 2000 Act, was incorporated into the Equality Act 2010.

What Howard suggested was the symbolic exclusion of Gypsies and Travellers on the grounds of their culture not reflecting British values of settling in one place. Applying for planning permission suggests that the applicant wants to develop a settled base in one place (Billig et al, 2006). While Howard’s speech was not racist in the traditional sense, it could be construed as being culturally racist. ‘One law for all’ would, in practice, discriminate against some groups (mainly Gypsies and Travellers) because their lifestyle is different to the majority of British society. This would have put Gypsies and Travellers even further outside of the planning system than they already were.

This was not the first time that Michael Howard had focused his attention on Gypsies and Travellers. When he was the Home Secretary for John Major’s Conservative Government, he was responsible for the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJPOA). This Act overturned the 1968 Caravan Sites Act and removed the obligation on local authorities to provide sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The Act made trespass a criminal offence and strengthened police powers of eviction.

The Labour Opposition in 1994, as well as many Conservative backbenchers opposed the Act, arguing that it would cause more problems than it would solve. Peter Pike the shadow spokesman on home affairs at the time stated:

“The Government’s proposals to repeal part of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 do not solve any problems but create more...What would be achieved by passing the Bill...to do so would criminalise some Gypsies and increase homelessness; it would cause family breakdown and place added pressure on social and education services. It would certainly not solve any problems. Indeed, it is our view that it would create more problems and improve nothing” (Official Report, 19/10/94: Vol 248, c. 358-9: cited by House of Commons, 2004).

The Act was aimed at dealing with the increasing numbers of New Age Travellers but had a profound effect on all of the Travelling communities (Bowers, 2005; Ford, 2005). Hawes and Perez (1996) argued that the New Age Travellers jeopardised the traditional Travellers’ way of life when their numbers rapidly increased during the 1980s (Hawes & Perez, 1996:7).

O’Nions (1995) in response to the CJPOA suggested:

The government may well hope that in attempting to make the travelling lifestyle impossible and encouraging Gypsies to adopt settled accommodation, they will be able to prevent the growth of the modern traveller movement and substantially reduce the number of existing travellers. Whilst this may have some success in relation to socially constructed groups such as ‘New Age travellers’, against Gypsies the exercise is likely to be futile (O’Nions, 1995).

Pugh (1994) noted that the writer Jeremy Sandford felt strongly about the plight and persecution of Travellers. He campaigned for their rights and encouraged them ‘to park their buses, bangers and battered caravans’ in the grounds of his rural home in north Herefordshire. Pugh quoted Sandford (1994) as saying;

‘In a way they are helping to deal with the problem of homelessness,’ he argues. ‘They are doing what the Tory Government urges people to do - solving their own problems by providing homes for themselves. All right, these may be converted buses, horse boxes or bender tents, but it gets them off the waiting lists for houses. Yet the authorities try to criminalise them by talking about bringing in these new trespass laws. It strikes me as one of the dottier examples of government behaviour.’

There were more than a million people homeless in 1994. For many young people with nowhere to live, life on the road, Mr Sandford suggested, was the embodiment of a dream.

'Most are highly educated and have a sophisticated view of society,' he says. 'Often they are the children of Labour voters, but if they voted at all, it would be for the Green Party. They have learnt to look quizzically at the values of a work life that wouldn't be there for them anyway. The mortgage, the bricks-and-mortar house, pensions and commuting have no place in their philosophy.'

### **Who are Gypsies and Travellers as defined by the Housing Act 2004**

The Housing Act 2004 requires local authorities to include Travellers in the accommodation assessment process (Communities, 2006; ODPM, 2006).

The office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2006), for the purpose of assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and for planning legislation, included a small concession and improvement on the previous definition, defined Gypsies and Travellers as;

"Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such (Kent County Council, 2012; ODPM, 2006).

However, Geoghegan (2014) notes that the coalition Government announced its intentions to amend planning policies for Gypsies and Travellers. This would make it harder for Gypsies and Travellers to gain planning permission to live on their own land. One of the Coalition Government's proposals included a plan to redefine who could be classed as Gypsies and Travellers within planning policy. In this, individuals who settle and no longer travel permanently would no longer be recognised as Gypsies and Travellers. This, in turn, would mean that if members of the Travelling community ceased to travel and applied for a permanent site, their application would, in theory, be treated in the same way as a planning application from a member of the settled community. Elderly or disabled Travellers that stop travelling for health

reasons would be prevented from applying for planning permission for a site. Gypsies and Travellers across Britain could be driven off the sites that they have made their home because of the new planning laws requiring them to prove that they are still itinerant. The new policy will block anyone identifying as a Gypsy or Traveller from staying on permanent caravan sites unless they can prove they have travelled several times that year. The introduction of this policy could cause a large increase in the number of unauthorised roadside camps and force many families including the elderly and those with children settled in local schools on to the road against their will (Dugen & Green, 2015). This would have long term implications on social cohesion and the children and family's attachment relationships with both people and place.

The current policy requires that those who have ceased travelling for reasons of health, education or old age, should be treated the same as those who continue to travel. Marc Willers QC and consultant Dr Simon Ruston state that revisions to definitions of Gypsies' and Travellers' ethnic status could violate the European Convention on Human Rights. Willers argues that *'The key issue that could generate legal challenges would be that of definition'* and the right to private and family life as outlined in Article 8 of the Convention on Human Rights. Willers is reported to have stated that *'the document was "dog-whistle politics" ahead of the 2015 general election'* (Geoghegan, 2014). These proposals are also contrary to Article 5 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Ruston, 2014 cited by Geoghegan, 2014).

Hope (2015) reported that Eric Pickles, the Secretary of Communities and Local Government, stated that the proposed changes would *'introduce more fairness into the planning system so that more people are treated equally'*. Hope also reported that Pickles' reasons behind the proposed changes were due to *'The public want to see fair play in the planning system, with planning applications being decided on the basis of their effect on the environment, not who the applicant is'* (Hope, 2015). In August 2015 the definition changed to remove those who had ceased travelling permanently.

Lord Avebury (2015) argued against the introduction of this policy, stating that;

“For centuries Gypsies and Travellers have travelled the length and breadth of England playing an invaluable role in this country’s socio-economic and cultural development. The closure of the commons, increasing privatisation of land and dramatic economic changes in the last 50 years have resulted in many Gypsies and Travellers ceasing to travel on a regular basis, but the cultural tradition of travelling has lived on in the form of living in caravans on Traveller sites, often with close family relatives”.

“The Government’s new planning policy redefines these groups out of existence by showing no consideration or understanding in the planning system of their cultural tradition of travelling. This redefinition will result in a whole generation of Gypsies and Travellers no longer being qualified to apply to live on a Traveller site. It is also likely to increase the number of unauthorised encampments and put pressure on local housing as many Gypsies and Travellers are forced into other accommodation (Avebury, cited by Dugan & Green 2015)”.

Pickles’ pre-election press release seems to resemble Michael Howard’s highly controversial speech that was made as part of his election campaign at the Conservative Campaign Headquarters on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005.

### **The size of the Gypsy and Traveller population in Britain**

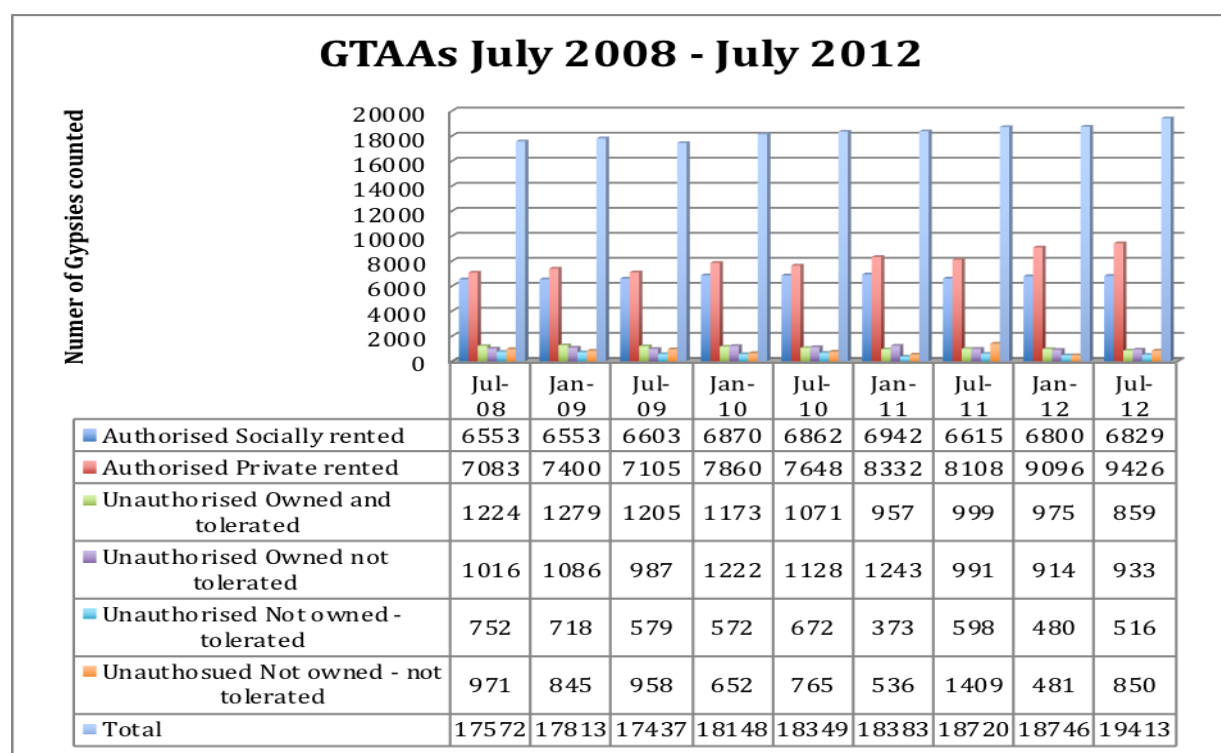
The exact number of Gypsies and Travellers living in the UK is not known. Estimates vary between 82,000 in 1999 to 300,000 in 2006. These figures do not include families living in homes of bricks and mortar (Kenrick & Clark, 1999 cited by Department of Communities & Local Government, 2006; Clark & Greenfields, 2006; Irish Traveller Movement, 2013; Liegeois, 1987; Office of National Statistics 2014). Cromarty (2018) reported that many Gypsies and Travellers now live in settled accommodation and no longer travel, or do not travel all of the time, but nonetheless they consider travelling to be a large part of their identity. *“At the 2011 Census, the majority (76%) of Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and Wales lived in bricks-and-mortar*

accommodation, and 24% lived in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure” (Cromarty, 2018).

Local Authorities are required by the Government to undertake biannual Gypsy and Traveller caravan counts as part of their on-going Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) under the Housing Act 2004 (Greenfields, 2009). Evidence from the GTAAs indicates that the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on unauthorised encampments has been steadily increasing each year.

Brown et al (2014:19-33) estimated that in 2012 Gypsies and Travellers were one of the biggest minority ethnic groups in England and Wales. They reported that ‘there were approximately 200,000 Roma and between 200,000 – 300,000 Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers living in England and Wales. Combined, they estimate that the total Romani Gypsy and Traveller population equated to around 400,000 – 500,000 people’. This estimate does not include Bargees and New Age Travellers.

Figure 3: Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) July 2008 – July 2012.

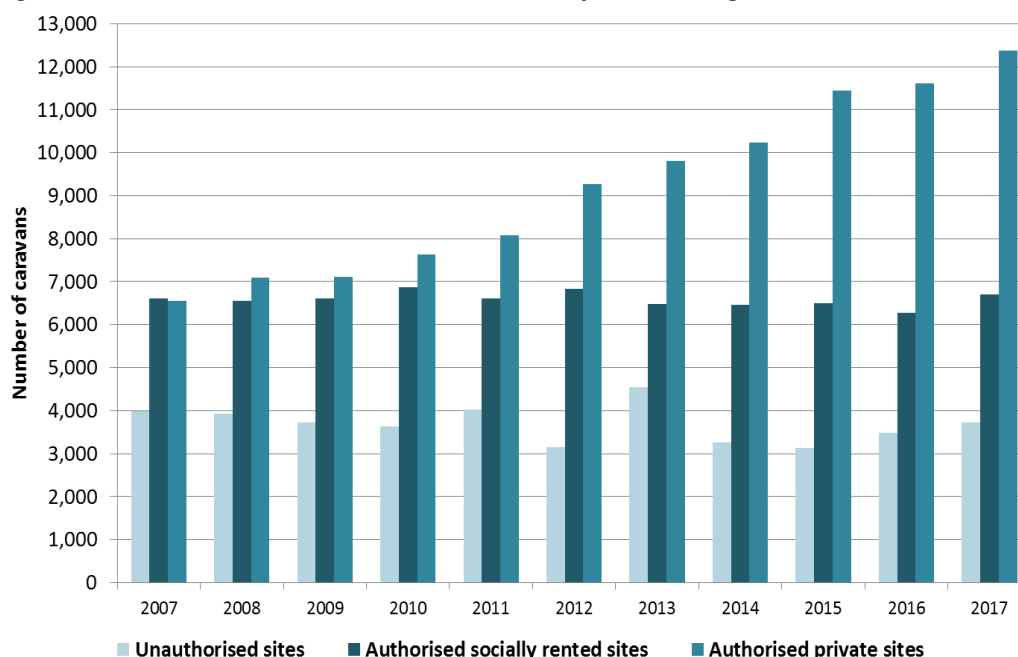


Adapted from (Gov.UK. 2010, 2011 & 2012).



The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Traveller caravan count 2017 indicates that the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers who do not have access to a legal/authorised site appear to have slightly reduced since 2007. However, that still leaves around three and a half thousand Gypsy and Traveller caravans camped on unauthorised sites, resulting in the families who live in them being legally deemed as being homeless under the Housing Act Act 2004.

Figure 4: Count of Traveller Caravans, July 2017 England.



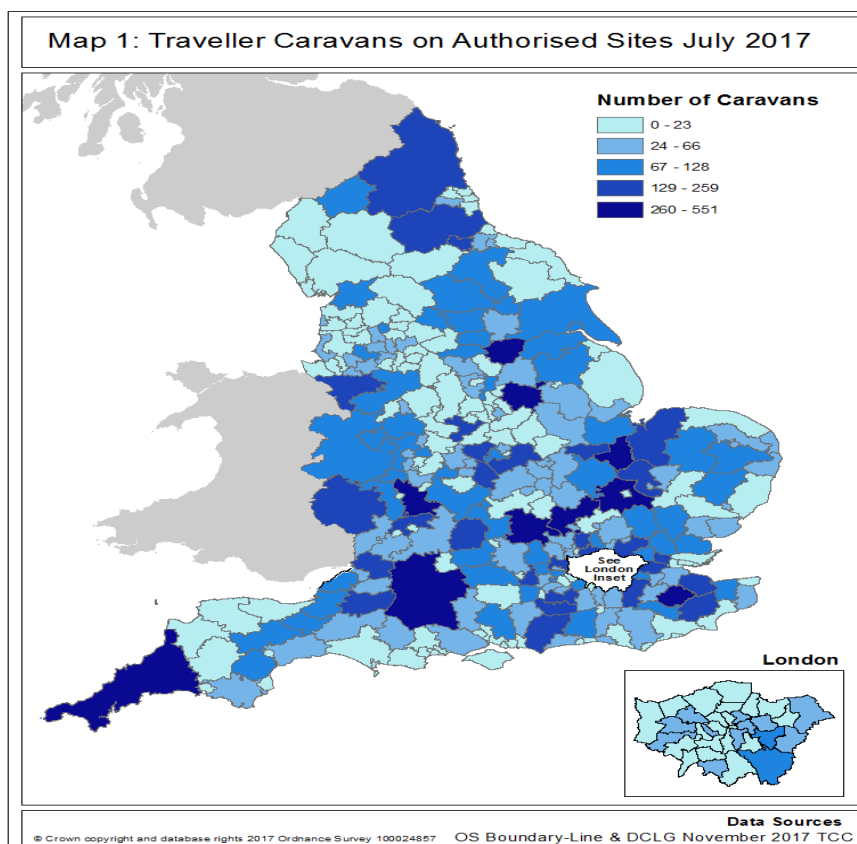
(Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2017).

The count suggested that in July 2017, 84% of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in England were sited on authorised sites, while 16% were situated on unauthorised sites (MHCLG, 2017).

The count also recorded that since the count in July 2016, there had been an increase of 259 caravans on unauthorised encampments on land not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers, while they recorded a decreased number of 19 caravans parked on unauthorised encampments on land owned by the Gypsies and Travellers. This suggests that the Gypsies and Travellers who had been camped on their own land were either evicted between July 2016 and July

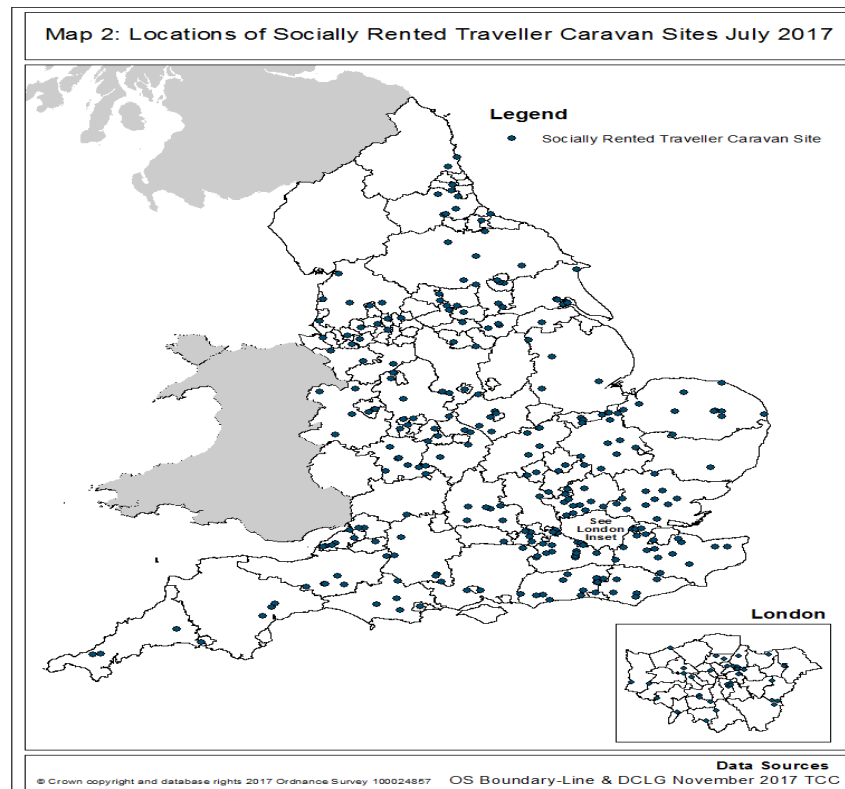
2017, resulting in the increased numbers of Caravans camped on land not owned by the occupants of the caravans, or some may have gained planning permission. The increase in the numbers of caravans could also be due to the formation of new families and children and young people gaining their own caravans.

It needs to be noted that the statistics only pertain to the number of caravans and caravan sites in England and do not take into account Gypsies and Travellers living in housing, New Age Travellers living in converted vehicles or Bargees. It also does not take into account the number of occupants residing in the caravans. The caravan counts are likely to miss many caravans as many families set up camps in hard to reach, or out of the way places. It is also possible that a caravan could be counted more than once if the family move from one Local Authority to another during the time when the caravan counts are taking place. The map below provides an overview of where the largest populations of Gypsies and Travellers are located on authorised sites.



(Map one; MHCLG, 2017)

The following map provides insight as to where the local authority, social housing sites are situated in England.



(Map two; MHCLG, 2017).

This second map indicates that in some areas where high levels of Gypsies and Travellers chose to settle, the Local Authorities are not always meeting the needs of the families in their areas for legal sites, resulting in many Gypsy and Traveller family's attempting to set up their own private sites or being forced to live at the side of the road.

### **Planning Applications**

Gypsies and Travellers are sometimes blamed for their lack of accommodation and their lack of place to live legally within the settled community because of their unwillingness to give up their cultural way of life and settle and live as the majority of society in houses. However it is far more complex than not wanting to settle and participate within the wider society as Richardson and Ryder (2012) point out, Gypsies and Travellers may legally buy a piece of land on which to live and apply for planning permission to allow them to live there. If planning permission is granted, politicians and the media

argue that settled Gypsies and Travellers are no longer real Gypsies and Travellers. This results in the perceived threat of having their cultural and racial identities stripped away from them if Gypsies and Travellers settle in houses or on their own land.

The Coalition Government of 2015 appears to have tried to attempt to redefine who can be deemed to be as Gypsies and Travellers within planning policy. Individuals that settle and no longer travel permanently, or do not travel for at least two months of the year, would no longer be recognised as Gypsies and Travellers within planning policy. Any revision of the definitions of Gypsy and Traveller's ethnic status could be deemed a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights (Hope, 2015).

When Gypsies and Travellers submit a planning application, the most likely outcome will be that the application will fail. They will have to appeal against the decision, and this is when things can become very complex, time consuming and expensive. The cost typically forces many individuals to give up their planning application, resulting in them setting up their home illegally simply because they have nowhere else to go and no financial backing to continue the planning application process (Friends Families and Travellers, 2015).

In January 2015, the High Court ruled that the Government had been discriminating against Gypsies and Travellers. Pickles, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, was found to have breached both English and Welsh law and the European Convention of Human Rights with his controversial policy of recovering Traveller site appeals (Le Bas, 2015).

The Judges concluded that the policy amounted to discrimination against the travelling community and ordered Mr Pickles to stop automatically 'calling in' all planning appeals by Gypsies and Travellers. The judgment involving the cases, of *'two Ethnic Romany Gypsy women, who were seeking planning permission for single pitch sites for themselves and their families in the Green Belt. The presiding judge, Mr Justice Gilbert, found that Mr Pickles' policy had*

*breached both the Equality Act 2010 and Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights'* (Le Bas, 2015). Experts in the field of Gypsy and Traveller law are now suggesting that the judgment means that "the vast majority" of Gypsies and Travellers that had successful appeals recovered and overturned by Mr Pickles' office, may now be able to challenge those decisions in court.

### **British Social Policy and the Mass Eviction of Dale Farm 2011**

In October 2011, the nation observed the mass eviction of nearly 1000 people from the Dale Farm Traveller site in Basildon. The Dale Farm site was originally a six-acre plot of land on Oak Lane in Basildon. Dale Farm cottage was leased to Ray Bocking, a scrap metal dealer in the early 1960s. The land in the northeast corner of the site was used as a scrap yard without planning permission until 2001.

Ray Bocking bought the Dale Farm site, in the early 1970s, when 40 English Romany families were allowed to live beside the illegal scrap yard. This site became known as the Oak Lane site (Tyler, 2013; Quarmby, 2013). The Oak Lane, which was originally occupied by English Romani Gypsies gained planning permission during the 1980s and provides 34 legal pitches.

*'Settled residents that lived nearby remember this period as one of relative harmony and acceptance'* (Cawley, 2016), until Bocking sold the land to Irish Traveller, John Sheridan in 2001. It was around this time that the unplanned development started to grow as John Sheridan sold pitches to other Irish Travellers. Sheridan bought a bungalow on land to the east of the legal Oak Lane site, land which had been illegally used as the scrap yard. Sheridan proceeded to divide the land into 51 plots. The plots were hard cored and tarmacked (Rawstorne, 2016).

The Dale Farm site has had a long and contentious planning history. The council took out enforcement notices ordering that the land be restored to its original state. The Irish Travellers applied for retrospective planning permission. A temporary order was granted in 2003 by the then Secretary of

State, John Prescott, which gave the site residents temporary permission to remain at Dale Farm for two years before the final eviction. The intention was to give the site residents and the local authority time to find a suitable alternative site. However, no progress was made, and Basildon Council received homelessness applications for the 400 people who claimed that eviction from the site would leave them homeless (Barkham, 2011).

The Conservative Party's political rhetoric, together with the tabloid press, orchestrated and incited public consent for the eviction of the families from Dale Farm after many years of legal struggles between the Irish Traveller community and Basildon Borough Council (Tyler, 2013).

This mass eviction made Irish Traveller families' homeless, with nowhere (legal) to move to. Hogg et al (2015) notes that:

'Traveller families who may be homeless because they have nowhere legal to park their caravan or mobile home or can no longer live in their current home. The council has a duty to treat such families as any other homeless families, however, councils have duties to consider the particular needs of a family when dealing with their homelessness situation, which may include a travelling lifestyle'.

Social Workers and multi-agency professionals will benefit from an understanding of the likely impact on these children and their families. Many of the children were born at Dale Farm and had lived their whole lives there with their extended family.

Families lost their homes, their access to the land that they legally owned on which they had invested a considerable amount of income, time and labour, turning unused polluted brown belt land into homes for the children and families (Tyler, 2013; Quarmby, 2013). It needs to be noted that not all of the Irish Travellers were left homeless as many of the families still owned properties in Rathkeale in County Limerick. Many of the families, however, chose not to return to Ireland and like Sheridan moved to other Irish sites such as the notorious Traveller site at Smithy Fen in Cambridgeshire (Rawstorne, 2016).

These families have not and will not receive any compensation for their destroyed homes and plots of land. The council may possibly attempt to claim the land to offset some of the costs of the eviction and redeveloping the former scrapyard into community allotments for the local settled community. However, in these times of austerity with Basildon Council making job cuts to make up the £2.3 million shortfall in funding, this seems unlikely (Tyler 2013). It is also unrealistic to suggest that the local settled community would want to have an allotment, which is so close to the legal Traveller site on Oak Lane.

Quarmby's (2013) text *No Place to Call Home* which provides an overview of the history and the eviction of Dale Farm, paints a bleak picture of life for Gypsies and Travellers and in particular, the ex-residents of Dale Farm, arguing convincingly that the Irish Traveller population, which is as large as the Chinese community in Britain, is the UK's most excluded group. Gypsies and Travellers are at the 'bottom of the pile' (Quarmby, 2013), when it comes to life chances, education, health and housing, with lower life expectancy exacerbated by living on polluted sites, often because they are the only ones available.

Quarmby (2013) notes that local authorities became spooked by the hostility of the majority of local residents so failed to provide enough sites. This led to growing tensions between the settled communities and the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Money available has not been spent. The National Government has weakened regulations to help find a solution for the situation (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Birrell, 2013; Quarmby, 2013).

### **The Financial Cost of the Eviction of Dale Farm to the settled community.**

Tyler (2013:129) notes that 'Basildon Borough Council reported that it had spent nine million pounds evicting approximately eighty-six families, which were composed of roughly 500 individuals. 100 of these were children. Tyler continues that the final figure could have been as much as £18 million, due to David Cameron committing the Conservative-led coalition to provide £4.65 million of public funds from the Home Office, together with £1.2 million from

the Department for Communities and Local Government. This is not the first time in UK political history that the Conservative Government's policies have negatively impacted on Gypsies and Travellers (please see appendices 2; Social Policy timeline).

### **The Psychological Cost of the Eviction of Dale Farm on the Travellers**

It is generally deemed that '*The forced eviction of people from their homes is recognized as a violent, disturbing and damaging practice*' (Cernea 2000 cited by Tyler, 2013:128).

Maskese (2011) agrees with Kitzmann et al (2003) that children are the most vulnerable and struggle with their experiences of the effects of trauma, particularly when it is connected to a catastrophic community disaster. Maskese (2011:341) examines and '*expands on the definition of trauma in infancy to include "indirect trauma," implicit emotional and relational events, such as infant exposure to traumatized parents, which occurred in the Project for Mothers, Infants, and Young Children of September 11, 2001*'. Maskese (2011) reports that her research is a result of the traumatic events in the last ten years and the need to define and treat the children affected by the trauma and loss.

While Maskese's (2011) work focuses on mothers and babies who were affected directly or indirectly by the terrorist attacks of 09/11 it also provides a valuable insight into the possible trauma that the families, the young children, the mothers and their perinatal babies may have experienced during the months leading up to, and then during, the forced evictions at Dale Farm when the site was transformed into a battleground.

Although 9/11 and the eviction of Dale Farm are very different events and are viewed and reported from very different perspectives. For the children of Dale Farm, the forced eviction was probably just as traumatic as the event of 09/11 was for the children who were directly or indirectly affected by it.

### **Was the eviction of Dale Farm worth it in the end?**

Meyjes (2017) reports that the residents of Wickford in Essex are fearful that a



larger site is being built at Hovefields in Wickford, only two miles from the Dale Farm site. Travellers have transformed the small authorised site into, as Austin (2017) describes it, “a huge makeshift housing estate without first obtaining all the required planning permission”. The Hovefields site in Cranfield Park Avenue has permission for 9 mobile home pitches and a further seven pitches that have temporary permission until August 2020. There are however, considered to be around 100 caravans in 2017. Austin (2017) and Meyjes (2017) both report that the site continues to grow.

The Basildon Council are being accused of ‘turning a blind eye’ to the illegal development (Austin, 2017; Meyjes, 2017). It is possible that the Basildon council are viewing the rapidly growing Traveller site at Hovefields with hindsight, and have come to the conclusion that the Irish Travellers have no intention of leaving the area, so are reluctant to start another lengthy and expensive eviction process when history suggests that the Irish Travellers will stay on the Hovefield site for as long as possible and then once evicted will find another piece of land to develop into another illegal site within the same local area. It could be considerably cheaper for the local authority to develop several smaller sites, which would hopefully cause fewer problems.

## **Conclusion**

All of the literature reviewed in this section has shared common threads.

Firstly, Travellers are institutionally discriminated against and marginalised. Secondly, something needs to be done to improve the social inclusion and ‘equality of opportunity’ for these minority ethnic groups. Thirdly, there is an urgent need for more site provision to reduce the conflict between Travellers and the settled communities. Lastly, the institutional discrimination towards Travellers by the majority of British society is the biggest obstacle to overcome in order to achieve the social inclusion and integration of these minority ethnic groups.

Gypsies’ and Travellers’ traditional employment opportunities, especially along their well-established travelling routes and stopping places, have largely

disappeared over the past decade. This has caused an increase in the social problems such as lack of employment and the lack of legal parking places. Gypsy Traveller families traditionally live and travel in large family groups and place great value on family and kinship. They elect to live in extended family groupings, allowing other female members to provide the care of the children while their mothers earn money to provide for the children. Intermarriage between family groups is common, resulting in a tightly-knit social group of members with a strong sense of community identity and mutual self-help (Niner, 2003:27).

The increased numbers of Travellers and the decrease of public sites have contributed to a very severe shortage of official sites. This, in turn, has led to the related problems of unauthorised encampments and conflict with the settled communities. The implementations of policies that will provide a sustainable solution to Traveller accommodation issues are long overdue.

The discourses of integration, assimilation and control appear to be the backbone of UK Gypsy and Traveller policies. Anti-Traveller assimilationist policies have been unsuccessful in forcing some of the nomadic population to 'abandon their culture and traditions' (O'Nions, 1995) and have only succeeded in forcing Travellers further into the margins of society. These policies, however, can be called into question when considering that Britain has a major housing shortage, where even individuals from the settled community cannot secure permanent accommodation. Berry (2003) highlights that people cannot be forced to assimilate into the majority culture.

I propose that Government policies that enable Gypsies and Travellers to secure their own sites would encourage more Gypsies and Travellers to settle which in turn would in time, bring the Travelling communities closer to the majority of society.

The next Chapter provides the conceptual framework for this study.

## Chapter Three – Conceptual Framework -



Photograph 4; An unauthorised New Age Traveller family camp (Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

### **Introduction.**

The conceptual framework for the study will be outlined within this chapter to provide the reader with an understanding of the main concepts that will be explored in this thesis.

### **The Two Dimensions of Attachment – Attachment to People and Attachment to Place.**

#### **What is meant by Attachment to People?**

Human attachment is a concept extensively written about within the field of social sciences. While the concept of human attachment is often critiqued and debated, attachment theories are widely accepted as an important phenomenon in human development.

Le Vine (2014) notes that during the nineteenth century, the treatment of children within the UK and US radically changed. This was due to the social construction of children and childhood being transformed. '*Children were seen*

*as innocent and loveable creatures'* (Le Vine, 2014:50) who needed loving care from their mothers and protection from the harsh conditions. From the 1880s moral outrage about the neglect and abandonment of children was portrayed in literature and newspapers.

After World War II, Stendler (1950) reported that there was a 'revolution' amongst the young parents who were brought up during the 1920s and 1930s. Childhood during 1920s and 1930s had been dominated by the cultural beliefs of the time of cleanliness, discipline, strict scheduling together with very little emotional warmth. A new burden was placed on parents to allow their children freedom from excessive discipline, while advocating parental empathy.

Dushinsky et al (2014) note that Bowlby was among the first Anglophone psychoanalysts to make use of the term attachment. The word attachment was *'the English word used by the Stracheys in translating Freud's genitive Anlehnungs, deployed in the Three Essays on Sexuality to refer to a kind of love which emerged on the back of (literally, 'leaning-on') the need of the infant for his or her caregiver for their self-preservation'*. Bowlby (1958) uses the term attachment to describe a disposition, which promotes proximity-seeking behaviour in infants when they are hurt, alarmed or separated from their familiar caregiver (Duschinsky et al, 2014).

Bowlby's (1951) emphasis on mother-love was part of a larger ideological turn that highlighted the need for emotional security for young children and the risk that their parents' behaviours could have on the infant's mental health.

Maslow (1968) also deemed that love, security and trust are essential to enable a child to grow into a healthy person. According to Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1973), attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space. For Bowlby (1969:303), *'The primary attachment figure becomes the one that takes the greatest care of, and is most responsive to, the child during the period of greatest sensitivity to bond formation'*.

Bowlby (1958) proposed that attachment is adaptive as it enhances the infant's chance of survival. Influenced by ethology, Bowlby (1969) also believed that the tendency for primate infants to develop attachments to a familiar care provider was the result of evolutionary pressures, since attachment behaviour would facilitate the infant's survival in the face of dangers such as predation, exposure to the elements or attacks from conspecifics. The theory provides an explanation of how the parent/child or main carer/child relationship emerges and influences subsequent development.

Attachment theory has become one of the most important conceptual schemes for understanding the early socio-emotional development of children (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999; Crittenden & Claussen, 2000). Responsive relationships are biologically essential for healthy development. The absence of a responsive relationship presents the child with a serious threat to his/her emotional wellbeing, particularly during the earliest years (National Scientific Council for the Developing Child, 2012). Therefore, human attachment is fundamentally important for the social, emotional and physical development of the child. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) draws heavily on the concept of development both as a substantive right (Article 6) and as a standard against which to protect children from harmful experiences, Article 32 (Woodhead, 2005).

Bowlby (1958) challenged traditional thinking about a child's bond with his/her mother and the disruption caused to the bond if the child and mother were separated. Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation', innovative methodology not only made it possible to empirically test some of Bowlby's ideas, but also, at the same time, permitted the development and expansion of the theory (Bretherton 1992). Ainsworth (1979) suggested that a child's attachment figure provides a secure base from which he/she can explore the world around it. In addition, Ainsworth formulated the concept of maternal sensitivity to a young child's signals. She highlighted the importance that responding to a child's needs sensitively has on the development of infant-mother attachment patterns. Babies are born totally dependent on their care

providers. For most mothers pregnancy and childbirth, feeding and caring for their baby appears to prime the mother's brain to respond to her infant's facial cues by engaging specific neuroendocrine systems. Infancy is a time of rapid neural development. Repetitive, attuned, social experiences such as watching faces and mirroring facial expressions are, therefore, transformed into neural connections and pathways that become the foundations for social behaviour (Fonagy, 2014; Rutherford, 2014; Strathearn, 2014).

Whilst most adults will respond to a child's needs with sensitive, responsive, reliable availability, some adults are unable or unwilling to do so. When a child's basic needs are not met or are met inconsistently, the young child's early experiences will affect the development of his/her 'internal working model'. This affects his/her understanding of relationship with others, reflecting internalised cognitive and affective schemata, incorporating both positive and negative thoughts about his/herself and significant others, such as the main care provider. The child may develop a distorted view of his/herself as unlovable and unworthy of affection (Shemmings & Shemmings, 2011).

### **Attachment Types**

Bowlby (1958) suggested that the infant would develop an attachment to at least one familiar care provider. This attachment would develop regardless of the sensitivity of the response from the familiar care provider, as long as there was one available. When the care provider responds to the infant's alarm in a sensitive manner, the infant will anticipate a sensitive responsive from their care provider when they are distressed. The infant will not feel anxious in seeking out protection or support. However, Bowlby noted that the infant's disposition to seek the familiar caregiver when experiencing distress will be activated even when this caregiver is unreliable or rebuffs the child's proximity-seeking behaviours (Duschinsky et al, 2014). This theory has led to four main classifications of attachment being identified.

### **Secure Attachment**

Infants develop a secure attachment to their care provider when a caregiver is

available, sensitive and responsive to their care needs. The care provider is typically accepting and co-operative, which promotes trust and confidence.

Securely attached children feel confident that their needs will be met by their attachment figure. They use this attachment figure as a safe base to explore their environment and look to their attachment figure in times of distress. Securely attached infants are easily soothed by their attachment figure when they are upset.

Taking these strengths into childhood, they become able to think about and manage their thoughts, feelings and behaviour in order to become competent and successful in activities and relationships outside the family (McLeod, 2008; Schofield & Beek, 2014).

### **Avoidant Attachment**

Infants develop avoidant attachment with their caregiver when the caregiver finds it difficult to respond sensitively to the infant's needs. The infants find their demands are rejected and their feelings become minimised. When the caregiver offers attention, the infant responds in an intrusive and insensitive way.

Children with avoidant attachment styles tend to evade the attention of their parents and caregivers. They are very independent of the attachment figure, both physically and emotionally, and do not seek contact with their attachment figure when they are hurt or distressed. While the caregiver will continue to provide the infant with practical care and protection, the infant and child learns to shut down their feelings in order to avoid upsetting the caregiver, which can provoke rejection or intrusion. For the child, it is safer and more comfortable to be self-reliant as this makes it more likely that the caregiver will stay in reasonably close physical proximity. The child is not avoiding a relationship, but simply avoiding showing feelings in order to maintain some kind of relationship.

This avoidance often becomes especially pronounced after a period of absence. These children might not reject attention from a parent, but neither do they seek out comfort or contact. Children with an avoidant attachment show no preference between a parent and a complete stranger (McLeod, 2008; Schofield & Beek, 2014).

### **Ambivalent Attachment**

Infants develop ambivalent attachments to their caregiver when the caregiver responds to the infant's demands in a sporadic, unpredictable and at times insensitive fashion. The infant finds it difficult to achieve proximity in a reliable way. The infant finds that care and protection is sometimes available, but the caregiving is uncertain and ineffective. In an attempt to get his/her needs met, the infant may simply make constant demands to attract and keep the attention of the caregiver. It may become rather helpless in the absence of a predictably successful strategy. The infant tends to develop into a needy, angry, clingy child who is distrustful and resistant. In later adolescence and adulthood, this pattern is referred to as *preoccupied and enmeshed* (Schofield & Beek, 2014).

### **Disorganized attachment**

For Main & Hesse (1990), infants develop a disorganised attachment with their caregiver when their caregiver is rejecting, unpredictable and frightening or frightened. The infant is caught in a dilemma of 'fear without solution' (Main and Hesse 1990). He/she becomes terrified of the one person that should make them feel safe and provide them with what should be their secure base. Their safe haven becomes a source of terror (Schofield & Beek, 2014).

Shemmings & Shemmings (2014:17) describe such circumstances as, '*their attachment behaviour fails temporarily because they are at one and the same time frightened by an anxiety-provoking situation and by the appearance of a caregiver*' (Shemmings & Shemmings 2014:17). Nevertheless, there are other reasons (see Shemmings 2016) why a child may show these behaviours including being frightened 'for' the carer (as distinct from 'of' them), having a condition such as autism, over-exposure to the Strange Situation itself, and



there is also a possibility that there are genetic factors that might play a part too.

The caregivers abdicate the caregiving role, experiencing themselves as being out of control. They can become hostile or helpless to protect the child. The infant's fundamental need to approach the caregiver for care and protection results in fear and an increased rather than a decreased anxiety. The absence of a possible strategy to achieve comfortable proximity in infancy leads to confused and disorganised behaviours. Schofield & Beek, (2014) note that:

‘Over time the pre-school child starts to develop controlling behaviours to enable them to feel some degree of predictability and safety. These controlling behaviours usually include role-reversal in which a child acts towards others like a parent might towards a child e.g. punitively aggressive, compulsively caregiving or compulsively self-reliant i.e. not accepting care. However, feelings of anxiety and fear remain unresolved and reappear in sometimes chaotic and destructive forms at times of stress. In later adolescence and adulthood, this pattern is referred to as unresolved.’

## **Assessing Attachment to People**

### **Strange Situation**

Shemmings & Shemmings (2014) describe the Strange Situation Procedure as a ‘classic experiment’, designed by Bowlby and Ainsworth, in which a child between the age of 12 and 18 months enters an unknown room and plays with his/her parent/carer. The parent/carer then leaves the child alone in the room for a short time. A stranger then enters the room, while the parent/carer is present, leaving after a short period. On another occasion, when the stranger enters the room the parent/carer leaves the child alone in the room with the stranger. The parent/carer then re-enters the room. The child’s responses to these strange situations are observed at all times and their behaviour is coded. This experiment is believed to provide an insight into the child’s attachment relationship with his/her parent/carer.

Le Vine (2014) proposes that Ainsworth’s research was not based in scientific legitimacy. By the 1980s, the Strange Situation procedure was being used as a screening tool in clinical assessments of child psychopathology. Le Vine

(2014:56) argues that the *'unfortunate 'sequelae' of attachment research could have been prevented by taking the findings from cross-cultural studies more seriously'*. He notes that Ainsworth et al (1978) concluded that the 'Strange Situation' was constructed for the routine environments of American infants and had not been necessary in their Ugandan study, yet the model became established as a universal tool for assessing infant's 'security'. Ainsworth et al (1978) also noted that in other non-western cultures, results varied dramatically from those in the USA and Uganda.

### **Adult Attachment Interviews**

The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) is a complex interviewing process using a narrative approach to elicit working models of the participants' attachment. Carol George, Nancy Kaplan and Mary Main developed adult Attachment Interviews (George, Kaplan & Main, 1985).

During an Adult Attachment Interview, the interviewees are asked to choose five adjectives to describe their relationship with their mother/father and to share memories that illustrate the emotions surrounding the chosen words. Interviewees are asked to speculate about why their parents behaved as they did and to describe any changes over time, in the quality of the relationships with their parents. These interviews are recorded and then transcribed. The transcripts are then coded and a primary attachment category is assigned (Shemmings & Shemmings 2014).

### **Child Attachment Interviews**

The Child Attachment Interview (CAI), was devised in 2003 by Mary Target, Peter Fonagy and Yael Schmueli-Goetz . It is very similar to the AAI. The questions posed follow a similar pattern to the AAI, except that children are asked to think of three words instead of five to describe their relationship to their parent (Shemmings & Shemmings 2014:25).

### **Story Stem Assessment Profile**

The Anna Freud Centre describes the process of undertaking The Story Stem Assessment Profile as;

The children respond to a set of narrative story stems where they are given the beginning of a 'story' highlighting everyday scenarios with an inherent dilemma. Children are then asked to 'show and tell me' what happens next? (Alston & Bowles, 2003).

Using a selection of dolls, animals and furniture, the children are asked to 'show and tell' the assessor what happens next. The Story Stem assessment profile provides an assessment tool, which can be used during direct work sessions with a child. Story Stem sessions enable qualified professionals to assess the child's expectations and perceptions of family roles. The child's continuation of the Story Stems also provides insight into the child's attachment relationships within the family, and their experience of being parented without asking the child's direct questions therefore reducing the child's anxiety and possible conflict (Hodges and Hillman, 2004).

### **Attachment theory and Government Policies.**

The theory of attachment has grown in importance within the political arena. Duschinsky et al (2014) highlight that Contratto (2002; 29, 34), *'has characterised discourses on infant attachment since Bowlby as 'profoundly conservative', bent upon producing 'familiar mother-blaming scenarios'*. Duschinsky et al (2014) note that it appears that since the Allen and Duncan Smith review (2009), attachment theory has become a *'particular salience in British social policy, with attachment security framed as simultaneously the developmental scaffold for the socioeconomic security of the nation and as an agreement against the need for social security and welfare support provided by the state'*.

Neoliberal politics requires the family to be socioeconomically independent, to produce subjects who are autonomous entrepreneurs and responsible consumers (Nadesan, 2002; Turner, 2008). Duschinsky et al (2014) suggest that socioeconomic risks are associated with higher rates of insecure attachment in general and disorganised attachment in particular. Statistical analyses have not found a direct relationship between the socioeconomic status of the family and the patterns of attachment shown by infants within the family. Raikes & Thompson (2005) however, used structural equation modelling to suggest that socioeconomic resources impact on the

development of secure attachments through two linked but distinct processes. Firstly, the lack of socioeconomic resources can disturb the capacity of the infant's care provider for emotion-regulation and emotional warmth. Secondly, the lack of resources increases the possibility of chaos, conflict and distress in the general emotional climate of the family home. Solomon and George (1999) theorise that the capacity of the care provider to regulate themselves and their infant is undermined by the experience of chaos and helplessness, which may result from the interaction of multiple social and economic problems.

### **Critiques of Attachment Theory**

Bowlby's work has been heavily critiqued as his theories mainly concentrate on the role of the mother as the attachment figure. Bowlby seemed to overlook the role the father and other family members such as grandparents, aunts and older siblings. Schaffer (1996) describes a child's relationships with his/her siblings as horizontal relationships, while relationships with his/her parents and other significant adults are classed as vertical relationships. The importance of an infant's relationship with other family members will be linked to the exploration of a small selection of the cross-cultural attachment studies in the next chapter.

Hazan and Shaver (1994) suggested that for them, one of the primary limitations of attachment theory was that it had only really been studied in the context of young children. Studies of children are often instrumental in the field of developmental psychology and are thought to address the development of the entire human organism, including the stage of adulthood.

Hazan and Shaver (1994) illustrated the link between attachment theory and adult relationships. They looked at a number of couples, examining the nature of the attachments between them and then observed how those couples reacted to various stressors and stimuli. They deduced that a strong attachment is still quite important for the adults in their study. Hazen and Shaver (1994) noted that:

In cases where the adults had a weak attachment, there were feelings of inadequacy and a lack of intimacy on the part of both parties. When

attachments were too strong, there were issues with co-dependency. The relationships functioned best when both parties managed to balance intimacy with independence. Much as is the case with developing children, the ideal situation seemed to be an attachment that functioned as a secure base from which to reach out and gain experience in the world.

Van-ijendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz (2008) highlight that attachment theories can also be critiqued due to the accusation of 'cultural blindness'. Some researchers have suggested that Ainsworth's three patterns of infant attachment may only apply to certain populations such as American middle-class families and that attachment theory is, therefore, only narrowly applicable to children and families from similar cultures and backgrounds. Gambe et al (1992:30) have argued that because of this, attachment theory may "*contribute to inappropriate and racist assessments and inappropriate interventions*". Yeo (2003) argues that most Social Work assessments undertaken on the Australian indigenous families are based on the dominant Australian community's perception of what constitutes competent parenting. Yeo (2003) raises the question as to whether assessments that do not evaluate the cultural background of the children, make psychologically and ethically sound decisions about whether a child has formed a secure attachment to its main care provider. Historically, many Aboriginal infants and children have been removed from their Aboriginal carers based on evidence that is culturally appropriate for Western families but culturally inappropriate for the indigenous families.

This is not the only cultural criticism of attachment theories. Research suggests that many non-Western societies can provide compelling counter-examples of child-rearing practices that enable the infants to develop into emotionally healthy adults. Ainsworth (1967) noted that in Uganda, the idea of a child being intimately attached to one caregiver is seen as somewhat alien as child-rearing duties were more evenly distributed among a broader group of people, often extended family members. Ainsworth (1967) suggested that this produces 'well-adjusted' members of society. Therefore in some societies, it seems that some other mechanisms act in place of the one-on-one, carer/child attachments behaviours that are seen to be so necessary for

Western children (Ainsworth, 1967; Partis, 2000; psychologistworld.com, 2015). Van Ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz (2008) suggest that Ainsworth's Uganda study was too small and exploratory and was not representative of other African cultures.

### **Attachment to Place**

As already outlined, attachment theorists emphasise the importance of emotional bonds with significant individuals, normally the mother or main care provider (Giuliani, 2003). I intend to propose, the desirability for attachment theorists to broaden their concern to include significant relationships with places.

Bowlby (1973) considered the attachment to a parent or the main care provider to be part of a larger set of systems that have the effect of maintaining a stable relationship with the familiar environment. This suggests that for Bowlby (1973), while attachment to the main care-provider is primary in developing a secure base, the infants' bond with their environment or attachment to place, is also needed. This enables the infant to develop complex and cognitive structures or representations of the world and of people, including themselves, their attachment figures and their attachment to place, to guide their interpretations of the world and their actions (Giuliani, 2003).

Environmental Psychologists have recognised the parallels between attachment theory and the development of place attachment. At times, however, attachment theory fails to recognise place attachment's role in the development of a secure base. Instead, it classifies it as a background for attachment relationships (Lewicka, 2011; Morgan, 2010).

Morgan (2010) highlights that;

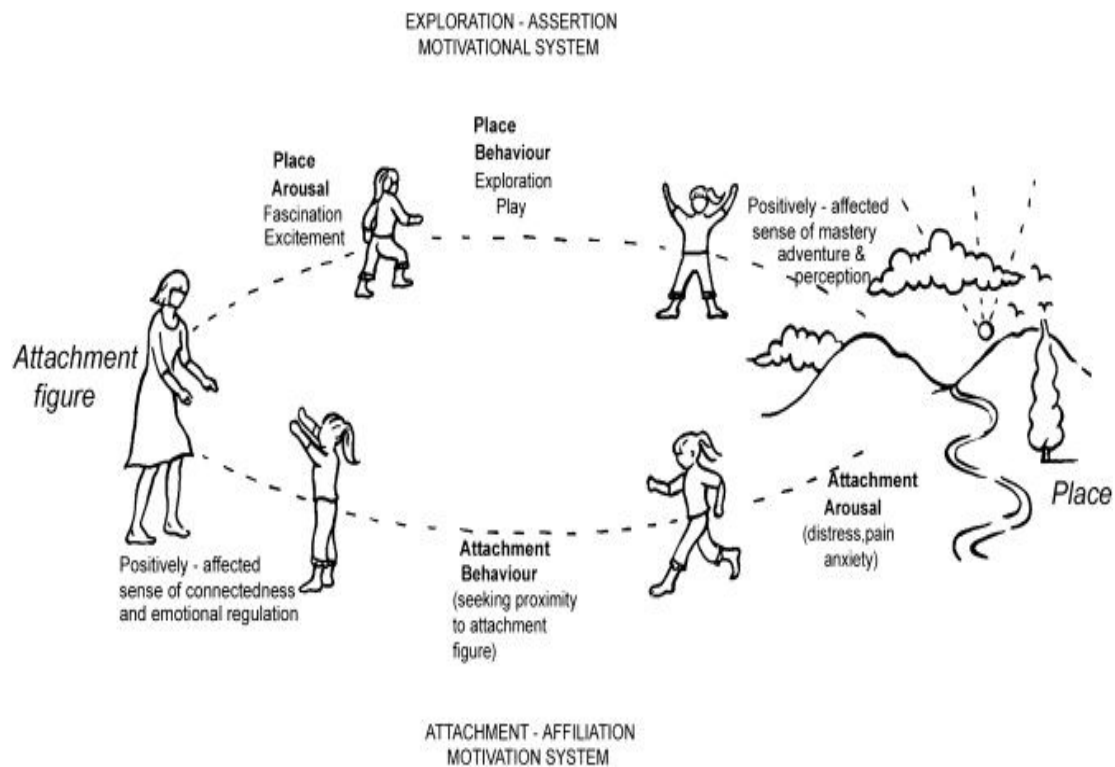
The last thirty years have witnessed enormous advances in the field of developmental psychology and neurobiology. Attachment theory now provides a detailed, systematic account of the biological, psychological and social processes that shape human development and has achieved the status of scientific orthodoxy. By contrast, place theorists offer no systematic explanation of how the complex relationship

between place, identity, affect and cognition develops throughout childhood. Place theory has failed to capitalise on progress in developmental science. Lack of dialogue between developmental psychology and environmental psychology's place theory is apparent from the very limited referencing across these fields in scientific journals. The few attempts to build a coherent developmental theory of place attachment (Chawla, 1992; Hart, 1979; Moore, 1986) draw on theories that predate the recent advances in developmental science (Morgan, 2010:13-14).

Florek (2011) and Morgan (2010) both suggest that despite the absence of a well-established developmental theory and detailed understanding of the neurological changes to the brain that accompany the development of attachment to place, most researchers agree that some form of place attachment occurs for each person at some point in his or her lifetime. Florek (2011) and Morgan (2010) identify childhood homes as being the most prevalent object of place attachment.

Morgan (2010) presents an integrated model of human and place attachment and presents the interactional pattern emerging from the integration of the attachment system and the exploration assertion motivational system. The child explores his/her environment from the safety of an attachment figure and secure base. As the child explores the environment, he/she experiences both physical and emotional stimuli. If the stimulus makes the child fearful and anxious, he/she returns to the safety of the attachment figure. Once comforted, the child continues exploring the environment. This suggests that for a child to develop place attachment, the place needs to be part of the child's secure base.

Figure 5: Morgan, (2010) integrated model of human attachment and place attachment.



### What is meant by attachment to place?

Place attachment relates to the bonding that occurs between individuals and their meaningful environments (Giuliani, 2003; Low & Altman, 1992).

However, place attachment is a complex phenomenon due to its application to many perspectives and the plenitude of definitions that have accumulated (Scannell & Gifford 2010).

Cresswell (2004) outlines that despite there being a general enthusiasm for the study of place attachment within the field of Human Geography and environmental psychology, there is not a single generally accepted understanding of what the word 'place' means. The meaning of the concept of place also changes across time, culture and language, due to the complexities of human experiences and emotions, lifestyle choices and social economic status (Tuan, 1977). The literature seems to suggest that the most widely agreed definition of the concept of place is given to spaces which are quite small in scale, although not too small, and especially spaces which people feel connected and attached to, such as homes, neighbourhoods,

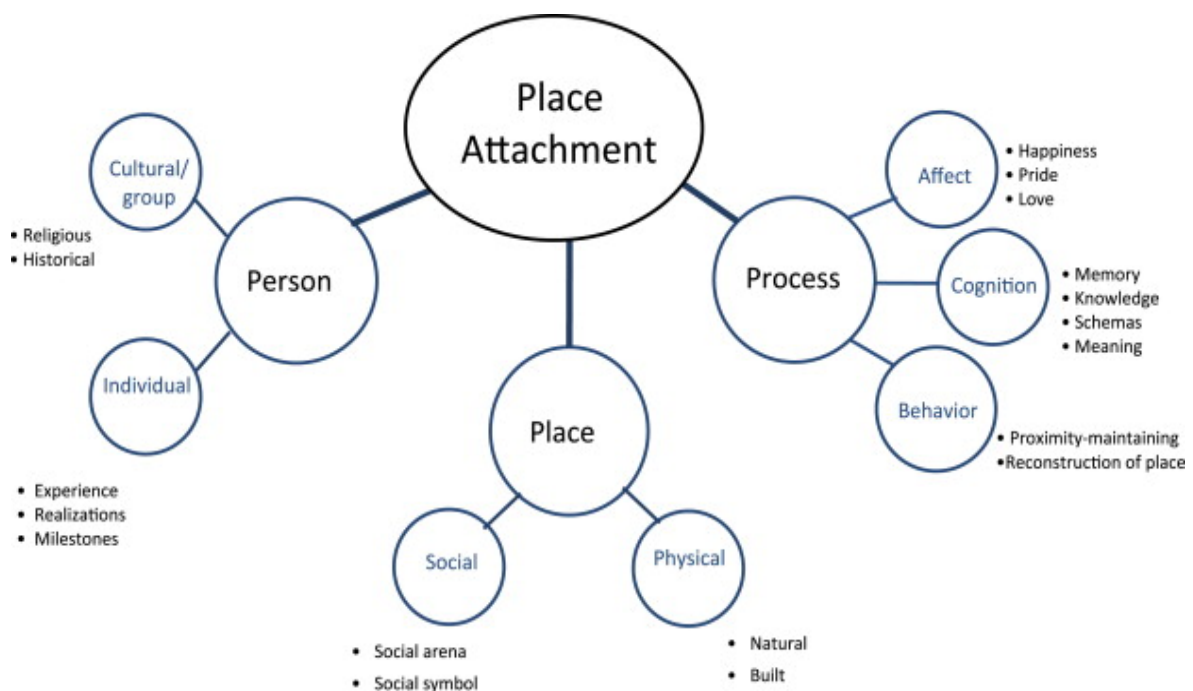


villages, town and cities (Cresswell, 2004).

Scannell & Gifford (2010) examined the various definitions and commonalities across the different permutations of the concept of place attachment and reviewed, explored and synthesised the published literature into a conceptual framework, which they termed the Tripartite Model of Place Attachment. They defined the variables of place attachment as Person, Process and Place (see Figure 5). The Tripartite model of place attachment suggests that the Person relates to the personal and communal experience that an individual has of a Place. The Process, however, relates to the cognitive, the behavioural and the affect that the place provides for the individual (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Scannell and Gifford (2010) suggest that place attachment is multi-dimensional and cannot be simply explained through a cause and effect relationship. It has to incorporate a strong emotional bond to a place. The Tripartite model of place attachment brings together the various strands of thought and provides an accessible model to evaluate place attachment.

Figure 6: Scannell & Gifford (2010) Tripartite Model of Place attachment.



While the experience of place is considered to be personally unique amongst individuals, the development of an attachment to place is a process that may

also be observed within couples, groups, communities, towns, cities, and countries (Bell et al, 1996). Our personal identity, community identity and national identity are all linked firmly to our sense of self and our position in the world (Tuan, 1996). On the group level, attachment is comprised of the symbolic meanings of a place that are shared among members of the community (Low, 1992). Giuliani (2003) notes that place attachment can be described as a community process in which groups become attached to areas where they can share their cultural practices. This enables a community to preserve its culture. Cultural beliefs, therefore, link members to a place through shared historical experiences, values and symbols.

For Cresswell (2004), place attachment is also connected to the way that an individual describes their home as their place. This suggests ownership and a connection between the person and the building or location, and indicates a notion of belonging, safety and privacy. On a more individual level, Hayward (1978) proposes that the concept of home as an attachment place is closely connected to, and also incorporates, the cultural, social, socio-demographic and psychological dimensions of childhood, the childhood home, the family and social relationships that include both private and public space and the resulting personalisation of the living space.

For Marcus (1992), people's individual 'environmental autobiographies' suggest that for many adults, their most powerful memories revolve around places. Most adults can fondly recall significant places of their childhood. Typical examples are the house in which they grew up, their grandparent's homes, or even the secret places of childhood and adolescence where they played and had adventures, places where they safely explored their environment, made dens in the local woods or their garden. Marcus (1992) concludes that these earliest places remain powerful images into adulthood. It seems that place attachment to the main extent is established through the developmental processes of childhood (Morgan, 2010). These favourite and vivid memories of childhood suggest that attachment to places is important to the development of self and security.

There is a gradually increasing awareness of the importance of place attachment in a child's emotional development. Jack (2013) demonstrates that in the world of Children and Families Social Work, the mainstream practice has focused on the individual's behaviour and interpersonal relationships within a family, with minimal attention paid to the influence of environmental factors, apart from home conditions'. There is a tendency in Social Work to miss and even ignore the role that place attachment plays in human development. This does not appear to be the case as previously mentioned with other disciplines. For many, it is one of their central concerns.

Jack (2015) proposes that *'from a young age, children develop feelings about their surroundings, with specific attachments forming towards people and places that are associated with a sense of security and other positive experiences'*. Jack does not dispute that a child's focus of his/her attachments to people will be their parents or main carers. In their early years, however, Jack highlights that the child's home is likely to be the main source of his/her initial attachment to place. It is the intimate combination of attachments to significant people and places which provide the child with the 'secure base' that enables healthy development, while cultivating a strong sense of identity, security and belonging.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the purpose of this chapter has been to set out the conceptual frameworks of this study. This has provided the outline of two dimensions of attachment theory both to people and place.

Attachment theory has been explored including a discussion about the importance of responsive attachment relationships not only to ensure an infant's physical survival, but also how important this phenomenon is, and biologically essential for a child's social, emotional and physical development.

The four main classifications of attachment have been identified and discussed, together with an over view of the methods of assessing attachment relationships.

The importance of attachment theory in the political arena and the relationship between the lack of socioeconomic resources and a parent's capacity to be emotionally available to their infant has been highlighted.

This has been followed by a brief discussion about the cultural criticisms of attachment theory when viewed through the lens of the shared care model of rearing children as seen in some non-western societies, the cross-cultural studies in Chapter Four will explore this in more detail.

The chapter continued with an overview of the contested theory of attachment to place and presented two models of human attachment, firstly to people and place and secondly to place.

The importance of place attachment in the development of our personal identity, community identity and national identity was explored briefly and will be returned to in the next chapter, where it will be discussed in more detail.

There is a slowly growing interest in place attachment in the field of social care and the role that attachment to both people and place has in providing an infant and young child with its secure base.

The literature search, however, highlighted that there is a lack of literature relating to Gypsies' and Travellers' attachment to both people and place. This appears to be an under researched area, possibly because Gypsies and Travellers are a hard to reach minority group.

Cemlyn et al (2009:vi) suggest that;

'There is an unquantified but substantial negative psychological impact on children who experience repeated brutal evictions, family tensions associated with insecure lifestyles, and an unending stream of overt and extreme hostility from the wider population'.

Therefore, this research aims to begin to fill the gap in the under researched area of Gypsy and Traveller attachment to people and place.

The conceptual framework presented within this chapter will provide the reader with an understanding of the main concepts that will be explored in the next chapter.

## Chapter Four – The main concepts of this study



Photograph 5: The garden of a Traveller on an unauthorised New Age site (Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

### Introduction

This chapter has been divided into three parts. The first part will focus on the main body of literature relating to Gypsies and Travellers. It will demonstrate historical facts and the disputed origins of the first known Gypsies, outlining the complexity of defining and labelling the cultural diversity of the various Gypsy and Traveller communities and groups.

This is followed by the second part which presents a further exploration of Attachment Theory and the importance of developing a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1969). This will include a critical discussion of the dominance of the Western bias in attachment theory. As there is not any literature looking at Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices and attachment relationships, a small selection of cross-cultural studies that evidence non-western methods of child rearing will be discussed as they provide to nearest comparison the Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices.

The third part of the literature review will present an examination of the importance of significant relationships with places.

## **PART I - Gypsies and Travellers**

Before we can answer the research questions, we need to gain an in-depth understanding of who the Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in the UK are?

The literature searched has evidenced that the conceptualisation of the identities of Gypsies and Travellers is complex, and at times, disputed. Richardson & Ryder (2012) note that the social construction of Gypsy and Traveller identity can create antagonistic communities even though Gypsy and Traveller identity is constantly changing. Romani born Brian Belton, Senior Lecturer at the YMCA George Williams College, London and prolific writer, proposes that the perceived identity that mainstream society gives to Gypsies and Travellers does not always sit comfortably with members from these communities. Belton (2010) argues that only Gypsies and Travellers have the knowledge of self and identity, however other people may conceive it to be. The identity of Gypsies and Travellers is often an imposed view informed by the settled population built on myths and stereotypes (Belton, 2005a & 2005b; NATT+ 2011; Hancock, 2012). The process of labelling, categorisation and representation for Mayall (2004) lies at the heart of majority-minority relations shaped by Government legislation and especially, the way that the media portrays individuals from the Travelling Communities.

Fowler (1991:6) proposes that '*The linguistic construction of social reality is a powerful tool in creating categories and sorting them into 'conflictual opposites'*', that can portray Gypsies and Travellers as the enemy of the majority settled communities (Richardson, 2006). The media's conceptualisation of the Travelling Communities swings between criminalising these minority ethnic groups, to ridiculing them and even profiteering such as from television programmes for example 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding'. Adverse media representation nurtures and legitimises discrimination, reinforces negative responses because of the connection between racial stereotyping and discriminatory treatment. How mainstream society labels,

categorises and represents minority groups has considerable bearing on their position within society. Furthermore, how a minority group is categorised affects inter-group relations, civil rights and legal status, together with issues of racism and discrimination, which can lead to social exclusion (Mayall 2004). Belton (2005) argues that some people choose to be socially excluded from mainstream society. He suggests that the process of spiritual exclusion and inclusion are constant factors in Gypsy and Traveller lives. Their self-identification distinguishes them from the majority norm of society, excluding them from the settled communities. This self-identification includes them in the Travelling communities while at the same time, excludes non-Gypsies from Travellers communities. The Gypsies and Travellers are in affect excluding the majority of society's included population (Belton, 2005). Barry (2002) disagrees, saying that that self-exclusion is never truly voluntary, because when Travellers attempt to integrate into communities, they are normally rebuffed.

### **Gypsies and Travellers' disputed identity**

Romani born writers, campaigners and academics are now challenging some of the literature written by Gorgios regarding their culture and identity. Belton (2005 & 2010) has examined the complexities of Gypsy and Traveller identity. He critiques the current paradigm of Traveller identity, arguing that the proposed markers of Traveller ethnicity in published literature offer fragile indicators in terms of identity categorisation. He states that the 'ethnic homogeneity' that has arisen out of a range of heterogeneous travelling groups is suspect (Belton, 2005a, 2005c). Belton (2005) also challenges the social construction of the term 'Gypsy'. Liegeois (1986) notes that the term Gypsy is not even a Gypsy nor a Traveller word. Belton (2005) argues that the position of Gypsies and Travellers has mainly arisen out of social conditions and interaction rather than political, biological or ideological determinants. He suggests that the 'Ethnic Traveller' is socially generated as a cultural, ethnic and racial categorisation.

Belton (2005) offers a rational explanation for the development of the Gypsy identity. He contends that since the Middle Ages, Gypsies have intermingled,



married and settled within the populations of the countries through which they have travelled, resulting in the people who are loosely labelled as Gypsies being composed of many different ethnicities (Belton, 2005c). Belton's (2005c) conceptualisation of Gypsy identity challenges the notion of 'pure blood Gypsies', and instead, highlights that the Gypsy and Traveller population is a rich mixture of multi-racial, multi-ethnic, cross-cultural society. Lapage (1997) also disputes the notion of 'pure blood Gypsy'. She suggests that as the genocidal persecution of the sixteenth century began to subside, the surviving Gypsies would have been 'mixing culturally, linguistically and genetically with local host populations. The notion of 'pure blood Gypsies' is further challenged by Hancock (2012) who notes that a millennium after leaving India as an already mixed population, there would be no genetically pristine Romani people or non-Romani people anywhere in the world.

Ethnic groups share particular attitudes and behaviours as well as a common distinct cultural history and language. The British Romanichals and the many Roma groups throughout Europe have a shared historical identity, which is based upon their shared Indian origins and culture. For Mayall (2004), the terms 'ethnic' and 'cultural', while having a similar emphasis on cultural distinctiveness and linguistic roots, move away from the fixed notion of permanent differences. Instead, he focuses on a transactional identity based on common origins, experience, culture and lifestyles allowing diversity and difference within the group.

### **Gypsy and Traveller ethnicity**

There are many ways in which ethnicity may be established. These include language, living a nomadic way of life and crucially, self-identification. Defining a person as a Gypsy or Traveller is a matter of self-ascription and does not exclude those who are living in houses. Ethnic identity is not lost when members of the communities settle, but it continues and adapts to the new circumstances. Gypsy and Traveller identity is fluid, complex and constantly changing to adapt to how Gypsies and Travellers view themselves within their changing environment (Belton, 2010).

The two largest groups of Gypsy Travellers within the UK are the Romani Gypsies and the Irish Travellers.

### **Romanichal, English Gypsies, Romani Gypsies**

The largest group of Gypsy Travellers in England are the Romani Gypsies, who are also sometimes referred to as Romanichal, English Gypsies or Traditional Romani Gypsies. They have been in England since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and have been recognised as a racial group since 1988 (Murdoch & Johnson, 2004).

There has been much debate about the origin of the Romani people. The Indian versus indigenous origin debate suggests that the Indian hypothesis is based largely on linguistic analysis and scientific theories while the indigenous theory developed from a more social-economic approach (Mayall, 2004). Belton (2005a) argued that the Romani people's origins should be understood as being a heterogeneous population which developed as an amalgamation of the social and economic phenomena which arises from the social, economic and political environment in which they lived.

Many commentators state that these earlier arrivals were thought to have come from Egypt, which resulted in them being called Egyptians. The word Gypsy was thought to derive from the word Egyptian which over time change to 'Gyptians' and then to Gypsies (Dodds, 1966; Murdoch & Johnson, 2004 & 2007; Okely, 1983). It has been suggested that they were possibly fleeing from religious persecution, as many claimed to be Christian pilgrims. These early Gypsy Travellers were dark skinned and often wore turbans. The 'race' dimension was clearly evident in the popular mythology of the time, their dark skin colour and strange dress led to fears that the 'Black Heathen' were Muslim spies, which provided the first focus for racial discrimination (Murdoch & Johnson, 2004).

It has also been suggested that the first people thought to be known as Gypsies, were believed to be the first Asian immigrants to Europe around 1000AD. It is thought that they migrated from India and arrived in Britain in

three main waves. The first wave arrived between four and five centuries ago, the second wave is reported to have arrived at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and this was followed by a third wave in the 1960s (Murdoch & Johnson, 2004; 2007).

Hancock (2002) writes that the first academic hypothesis regarding the origins of the Romani people was based on the Romani's connection to India and their economic reliance on menial poorly paid work, making and selling their wares or on entertaining members of the settled communities. Hancock (2002) argues that Romani culture can be viewed from the caste system of Hindu society and that they can be seen as members of the Shudra cast, which is deemed as the lowest social level in India. The Hindu caste system divides Hindu society into four castes (Varnas) with hundreds of sub-castes or social tiers (Jatis). The holy men (Brahmins) are at the top, followed by the warriors (Kshatriyas). The merchants and producers (Vaisyas) represent the third level with the Shudra at the bottom. Below this level and outside this structure are the out-cast populations.

The Romani language originates from Sanskrit and is still spoken by some Romani families today. Sanskrit is thought to be one of the main root languages of humanity.

Many Romani words have become part of the language of British youth culture, for example, Chav (lad/boy), Wonga (money), Gaff (place of residence), Kushti (good) (Belton, 2005; Hayward, 2003). The commonest word in the Romanichal dialect is '*gadze*'. The term '*gadze*' relates to an individual who is not of Romani birth. There are various spellings for the word for a non-Romani, '*Gorgio*', '*gawjo*', '*gawja*' '*Gauje*', '*Gaujo*' (Belton, 2005; Hayward 2003; Okely, 1982; Staines, 2006). Throughout this Thesis I will use the spelling Gorgio.

Romani have many beliefs and taboos about pollution connected with things '*Mochardi*' (unclean). The conceptualisation of '*Mochardi*' does not mean dirty, it means unclean in the ceremonial sense. The majority of taboos are

connected with women, death and food. Vesey-FitzGerald (1973:45) notes that historically *'at one time there can be no doubt that English Gypsy women, even in normal health and circumstances, were regarded as unclean by their men; not unclean in the dirty sense, but as a source of pollution, as dangerous to health and strength of man'*. While many families no longer believe this, traces of it still linger in some communities, *'and a woman not in full health is still in many families the subject of taboo'* (Vesey-FitzGerald (1973:45).

Women are seen as 'Mochardi' when menstruating or after childbirth. Menstruation has many special customs. Some communities prohibit women at the time of menstruation from crossing a running stream. Some communities believe that a menstruating woman cannot cook or even touch food that is intended for a man. Birth also has special customs. Traditionally, pregnant women nearing the time of the birth would be classed as 'Mochardi'. Pregnant women, who are not intending to have their baby in hospital, will give birth in a tent or small trailer so that the main living space is not defiled by the birth. The tent or small trailer is burnt after the birth. Historically, women and their new babies were kept apart from the men until the infant had been baptised (Mayall, 1988; Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Okely, 1983; Vesey-FitzGerald, 1973).

'Rules' pertaining to personal hygiene and hygiene within the home are closely bound up with morality, which is similar to that found amongst orthodox Jewish households. Greenfields (2006) notes that while the younger generations are still aware of the taboos and customs, many have adapted the traditional notions of 'Mochardi' in line with modern living arrangements. The knowledge of customs surrounding 'Mochardi' acts as a form of cultural boundary, which provides a guide about what or who is included into or rejected by Traveller society. To this day, many Romani keep separate crockery for any visiting 'Gorgios' because they are viewed as being 'Mochardi' (Clark & Greenfields, 2006; Vesey-FitzGerald, 1973; Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

Dogs and cats are seen as 'Mochardi', horses, however, are not. This is due to dogs' and cats' habits of licking their genitals as well as eating refuse and excrement. Dogs and cats are not allowed to enter trailers or to lick people. If a dog or a cat ate from the same plate as a person, the plate would be thrown away.

## **Roma**

The Roma are relatives of English Romani Gypsies and are thought to share a common origin in India. Whereas the English Romani Gypsies migrated into the UK from 1000AD, the Roma settled in most countries across Europe, often favouring the Eastern European Countries. The European Union accepted the term Roma to describe all European Gypsies, however, the Roma are not a homogenous group, and there are many different tribes and groups, which seem to have territorial / geographical associations (Matras, 2014; NATT+ 2012d).

The first distinct groups of Eastern European Roma Gypsies are thought to have arrived in the UK as refugees from around the time of the First and Second World Wars. It is suggested that 500,000 Roma people were killed in Europe by the Nazi regime during the Second World War (Kenrick & Puxon, 2009; Smolinska-Poffley, 2012). Matras (2014:184) explains that many thousands of the Roma men and women survivors of the Nazi regime and concentration camps had suffered physical damage as well as psychological damage due to being *'forcibly sterilized by the Nazis and were unable to start families of their own'*.

Roma families started to become more noticeable in the UK after the fall of Communism and the collapse of the Berlin Wall, which removed travel restrictions between East and West Europe (BBC News, 2009a; Dragomir, 2007 citing Hancock, 2007). During the 1990s, many Roma came to the UK as asylum seekers from the persecution that they faced in Eastern European countries, such as Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Since 2004 and 2007, when EU accessions expanded to include economic migrants from East European Countries, many Roma families have migrated into the UK.

Roma migrants have received a great deal of negative media coverage due to some groups of Roma migrants being involved in organised crime and child trafficking (BBC, 2009).

### **Irish Travellers**

Irish Travellers are sometimes referred to as 'Minceir' or 'Pavees'. Their traditional language is Shelta, which is spoken in different dialects including Cant, Gamin/Gammon. Irish Travellers were recognised as a minority ethnic group in England and Wales in 2000 therefore they are protected under the former Race Relations Act. Irish Travellers have been recorded travelling in Ireland as a distinct social group since the 1880s.

The exact origin of Irish Travellers also appears to be disputed, with several theories being proposed. Some writers suggest that Irish Travellers are the descendants of itinerant craftsmen and metal workers known as Tinkers, or from wandering musicians and storytellers (NATT+2012g). Other writers state that there is a common assumption that Irish Travellers originated as the 'dispossessed' of the great famine in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Murdoch & Johnson, 2004). It has been suggested that this led to them being seen as 'failed settled people' rather than as a distinct ethnic group (MacLaughlin, 1995 cited by Murdoch & Johnson, 2004). There have also been suggestions put forward, that Irish Travellers may be the descendants of the disposed from the war with Cromwell in the seventeenth century. While it is true that many people took to the roads at these times, there are however, records of a nomadic population in Ireland since the pre-Celtic times, during the fifth century AD. (irishtraveller.org.uk, 2012).

During the 1960s, the domestic policies in Eire lead to the migration of many Irish Travellers into the UK. During the UK's period of rapid industrial growth and transport expansion in the second half of the twentieth century, many Irish men came over to work on the motorways and later as labourers for local councils or as scrap-metal dealers (NATT+, 2012G).

Irish Travellers have many similar traditions and customs to Romani/English Gypsies, particularly surrounding cleanliness and hygiene. Irish Travellers also place great value on family and kinship, preferring to live in extended family groupings. Elders within the community are seen as the heart of the Irish Traveller culture and they are treated with great care and respect. Horse ownership and horsemanship play an important role in Irish Traveller culture. Irish Travellers traditionally do not mix with Romani Gypsies, although the two groups will join together at important fairs such as Appleby Fair and Stow Fair, to buy and sell horses. This has resulted in many marriages between individuals from both groups (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Niner, 2003; Jones 2012).

Irish Travellers, together with Scottish Travellers, are often referred to as 'Tinkers', even though the term has become synonymous with every unpopular and stigmatised aspect of any Traveller group (Dodds, 1966; Cemlyn, 2008; Okely, 1983). The majority of Irish Travellers appear to be particularly deprived, excluded and discriminated against, even within the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Home and Greenfield's (2006) research for the Cambridge sub-region Traveller Needs Assessment identified that there is;

“A lot of hostility towards the Irish Travellers. This because some groups of Irish Travellers displaced the settled and accepted Romani families that had lived peacefully alongside the settled community on their site in the rural village of Cottenham for many years” (Home and Greenfields, 2006).

Irish Travellers appear to receive a lot of media attention, partly due to the coverage of the long running legal planning disputes at Traveller Sites in Cottenham in Cambridgeshire and Dale Farm in Essex, together with, popular television programmes such as 'Big Fat Gypsy Wedding'.

### **Scottish Gypsy Travellers**

The Scottish Travellers (Nachins) are recognised as an individual ethnic group, which has its own cultural history and origins (Murdoch & Johnson,

2004). This group is reported to have similar origins to the suggested origins of some of the Irish Traveller groups. Scotland also has records of travelling metal workers from as early as the twelfth century. It is also thought that during the upheaval due to the wars and the land clearances in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, dispossessed people took to a nomadic way of life in Scotland. The customs and beliefs of Scottish Gypsy Travellers with regards to hygiene, cleanliness and morality tend to be similar to those of English Gypsies and Irish Travellers (NATT+, 2012h).

### **Welsh Travellers**

Welsh Travellers (Kale) are also recognised as an individual ethnic group with its own origins and histories (Murdoch & Johnson, 2004). Welsh Travellers are thought to be descendants of the Woods family as well as other families who migrated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from the South West of England. They are thought to have lived their nomadic lives separate from the Welsh community for several generations. The Woods family were known to be highly skilled wood carvers, wagon builders, horse dealers and fishermen. They were also reported to be excellent musicians. Abraham Wood is credited with introducing the fiddle into Wales. Welsh Travellers were and still are seen as skilled harpists and fiddlers. Most Welsh Travellers now live in houses, however they have tended to retain their traditions (NATT+, 2012f).

### **Didicoi/ Didicoy/ Didikois**

Labelling some members of the Travelling communities as Didicoi means different things to different groups, depending on their social standing. For pure Romani, this term is reported to mean 'half blood, or posh rat' as it is used to describe people who are deemed as not being pure Romani, either due to having a mixed heritage background of Romani and Gorgio or 'someone of very little Romani Blood' or no Romani blood, who has been accepted into the Gypsy/Traveller community as a member of the family. The term Didicoi appears to have a totally different meaning for Gorgios. It seems that the term Didicoi, in the same way as the term Tinker, has become



synonymous with the stigmatised and unpopular stereotypical ideas about all of the Gypsy and Traveller groups. Didicoi is seen as a derogatory term for social drop outs who engage in criminal activities (Dodds, 1966; Hayward, 2003; Romany Jib, 2012; Okely, 1992). Historically the term Didicoi referred to 'a tribe of low caste people in India' (Hayward, 2003).

### **Showmen**

Showmen are self-employed Travellers, who travel the country with funfairs. 'Show' or 'fairground people' have a distinctive culture and lifestyle that stretches back many centuries. Fairs in Britain have a long history and were part of pagan customs when seasonal gatherings were held for trade and festivity. For the majority of fairs held today in the UK, ancestries can be traced back to royal charters, which were granted in the medieval period. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is reported that between 1500 and 5,000 villages and towns were granted Royal Charters to hold fairs. Once a fair had been granted a Royal Charter, it was seen to be under the jurisdiction of the Crown and became a way of raising revenues for the Crown. These fairs and markets not only attracted merchants, but also itinerant entertainers, jugglers, musicians and tumblers, possibly the ancestors of today's show and fairground people (NATT+2012b; The Showman's guide of Great Britain, 2012).

Most Showman belong to the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain. They are required to follow a code of practice which covers the control and running of fairs and guidance on site provision and legislation. The Showman's Guild was formed in 1889 to oppose the Moveable Dwellings Bills that was intended to regulate Gypsy, Roma and Traveller life. The introduction of this Bill was unsuccessful.

The introduction of the Showman's Guild resulted in Showmen becoming a distinct group from other Gypsies and Travellers (Matthews, 2010; Patrin, 2000). Membership of the Guild provides Showmen with exemption from the site licensing requirements of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development

Act 1960 when they are travelling for the purpose of their business or where they only occupy their winter sites for some period between the beginning of October to the end of March (Dept for Communities & Local Government 1991).

### **Circus People**

Circus people are Travelling entertainers. Circuses tend to be owned and administered by a single family, the circus proprietor, who hires a range of acts, often from abroad, to make up the repertoire for the yearly circuit. Many circus entertainers are not from circus backgrounds.

Travelling patterns may vary from static seasonal circuses to small circuses that move every couple of days. Many circuses have an annual pattern of travel, which precludes attendance at a base school, while static seasonal circus children are likely to attend a local school during the season (NATT+2012c).

Records evidence that athletes and animals have performed together to provide entertainment for the public since the days of ancient Rome, in amphitheatres such as the 'Circus Maximus'. The Latin word 'circus' means 'circle' in English. The Roman form of entertainment is reported to be the precursor of the racetrack and not the origin of the circus (Jando, 2012).

The 'modern' circus is believed to have originated in Britain in 1768 when a cavalryman, Sergeant-Major Philip Astley, turned entertainer. He is recorded to have roped off a field in London to perform tricks on the horses that he had trained. His skill as a horseman intrigued London's public and his show quickly became popular. Astley introduced a circus ring of 42 feet in diameter, which was dictated by the galloping circle for a horse. He roofed over the ring and added clowning, tumbling and juggling between the equestrian acts and the modern circus was born. Astley established 18 other circuses in European countries.

Travelling circuses are thought to have originated in America after the war of 1812 and they soon became popular in other parts of the world.

In recent years public attitudes to performing animals have changed and many circuses now do not have any animals in their shows. Circuses have developed into theatrical shows which mix the arts of the circus and the street, and feature original music, light effects and costumes (Jando, 2012; NATT+2012c).

### **Bargees – Water Gypsies**

Bargees are a distinct group of Gypsy Travellers that live and work on barges on the waterways throughout Europe. The term is more commonly used in the Netherlands where freight is still carried by barges on the canals. Currently, there are relatively few families still living and working on the network of British inland waterways (Francis, 2010). There are many theories as to where the canal boatmen or Bargees came from. Some people suggest that the boatmen were Gypsies who took to the water however this does not appear to be the case as there are no records to support such claims. It seems that the development of the canal network during the eighteenth century provided local boatmen with the opportunity of well-paid jobs working on barges transporting goods. The decline of the canal industry in the twentieth century led to the loss of this work and lifestyle. Many narrow boats and barges, however, have been converted into alternative living spaces that can be moored reasonably affordably close to towns and cities (NATT+ 2012a).

Boat dwellers, water Gypsies (Bargees) are not regulated by the same planning policies and laws as land dwelling Gypsies and Travellers (Murdoch & Johnson, 2004:19).

### **New Age Travellers/New Travellers**

The New Age Travellers or New Travellers are not recognised as a distinct ethnic group and were originally a small group of hippy Travellers who travelled between the free festivals that sprang up throughout the 1960s and

1970s, who were part of an alternative lifestyle which was part new social movement and part youth subculture (Hetherington, 2000). Many New Travellers lived in converted coaches, lorries and vans, while some chose to live in 'benders'. These large tent-like structures followed the same design as the traditional Gypsy 'bender tent' and are made from hazel rods pushed into the ground and covered over with tarpaulin or sailcloth (BBC-Kent-Romany, 2006). Their numbers swelled during the 1980s and early 1990s partly as a response to the individualistic nature of the Conservative Government's policies, which were in turn, a partial response to the global recession and the conditions imposed by the International Monetary Funds (IMF) loan to Britain to help kick start the failing economy.

These policies led to the privatisation of national industries and resulted in factory closures, mass unemployment and led to the de-industrialisation, decline and residualisation of many manufacturing areas (Jones, 2004; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002: online; Hills et al, 2002). Fitzpatrick et al (2000) argue that it is widely believed that cuts in social security benefits for young people under 25 led to the rapid increase in youth homelessness in the late 1980s (Fitzpatrick et al 2000, cited by Fitzpatrick & Jones 2005). Many of the New Travellers that emerged during this time did not share some of the earlier peaceful hippy ideals of the older New Age Travellers (Hetherington, 2000) and were angry young people who were forced onto the road due to unemployment and homelessness against a background of the economic climate of the era.

### **Gypsies and Travellers and Children's services**

Cemlyn (2008) considers the relationship between Human Rights, British Social Work and Gypsies and Travellers. She notes that '*for Gypsies and Traveller, rights are multi-faceted*' (Cemlyn, 2008:166). Cemlyn (2008) reminds us of the key perspectives in progressive or emancipatory Social Work, which include anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice (Thompson 2001). It is concerning that these core Social Work values appear at times to be forgotten when Social Workers and other service providers are working with Gypsy and Traveller families.

Ife (2001) argues that when Social Workers are assessing the needs of children, their needs should be participatively defined, and that the family's rights should be implemented through meeting their needs. When Social Workers assess the needs of Gypsy and Traveller children during a needs assessment for a family on an unauthorised site, it normally focuses on Child Protection or care issues within the family. These assessments do not routinely consider the Gypsies and Travellers' cultural perspectives, their daily experiences and the risks from having nowhere safe to live with no basic facilities nor do they consider the trauma and the emotional distress of forced evictions (Garrett, 2003).

Cemlyn (2008) found that some housed Gypsies and Travellers were subject to unnecessary assessments due to malicious referrals being made to Children Services reporting alleged neglect. These referrals can appear to reflect the racist harassment that many housed Gypsies and Travellers experience.

The numbers of studies assessing the services that Gypsies and Travellers receive from Social Services are relatively limited. Social Work is also generally a very low priority for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities in the context of broader issues (Cemlyn, 2008).

There is historically a distinct lack of trust between Gypsies and Travellers and public bodies; specifically, children's services. Cemlyn (2008:161) highlights that Gypsies and Travellers tend to '*actively avoid contact, often out of a historically informed fear of losing their children into care*' (Cemlyn, 2008; Smith & Greenfields, 2013).

Many Social Workers are equally apprehensive about visiting Gypsies and Travellers on Traveller sites. This apprehension can result in the needs of some Gypsy and Traveller children not being identified and therefore missed. When there is contact with transient families, Social Workers sometimes fail to recognise the family's minority ethnic status, leading to the inattention of cultural and race equality issues (Allen & Riding, 2018).

More recent studies and reports such as Allen & Riding (2018) reinforce Cemlyn (2008) and Bennett & Hamilton-Perry (2010) findings relating to the neglect of Gypsies and Travellers' needs and culture, and the negative attitudes that are sometimes held by some professionals towards nomadic groups leading to discriminatory practice and at times damaging decisions being made. Clark and Greenfields, (2006:149) evaluated that *'New Age Travellers' experiences of Social Workers and the Court systems relating to post-separation parenting confirm that pathologising and sedentarist attitudes can be displayed towards all Traveller groups'*.

Cemlyn (2008:165) noted that there is *'A paradigm shift is needed away from sedentarist frameworks so that Gypsy Travellers' experience is heard and understood in its structural context and their needs / rights inform practice'*. Government policies, some Social Workers, police and other professionals' personal perceptions and prejudices and stereotypical beliefs, together with *'the undue importance given to performance indicators and targets'* (Cemlyn, 2008; Munro, 2011:6), can increase the obstacles for Gypsies and Travellers to access services. Human Rights and Equality legislation is designed to counterbalance some of the difficulties. However, Cemlyn (2008) suggests that at the micro level of practice, a Human Rights perspective could assist Social Workers in challenging the boundaries of oppressive criteria and assumptions.

Allen & Riding's (2018) report indicates that some Child Protection professionals working with Gypsy and Traveller children in England are generally ill-equipped and under pressure due to the lack of cultural awareness training and high caseloads. They argue that in most cases, Social Workers are not supported to develop the professional competence needed to effectively safeguard Gypsy and Traveller children. Allen & Riding (2018) suggest that although Child Protection professionals do not deliberately set out to work in a discriminatory way, they believe that the lack of cultural awareness training, the lack of opportunity to critically reflect before practice, the lack of resources at times, together with the lack of community-based resources and, can lead to fragility in professional capability and poor

decision-making. Allen and Riding (2018) note that in extreme instances, some practice is reported to be verging on being oppressive, which in turn increases Gypsies and Travellers' reluctance to seek support from services. Minimal cultural training or the promotion of culturally relevant services would improve engagement and would improve the outcomes for the children (Cemlyn, 2008; Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

Cultural training will be returned to, in the discussion in chapter eight.

Allen & Riding (2018) refer to Harrington's (2015) recent Serious Case Review in England, which highlighted the lack of methodological diversity within the field of Child Protection research with Romani and Traveller children. The review reported that some Child Protection professionals, including those in the position to manage, supervise and scrutinise the quality of Social Workers' decisions can overlook unhelpful value judgments, including comments like 'it's in their culture', because they too are sometimes making decisions that are determined by a tacit knowledge base.

The review also noted that agencies were too ready to accept the fact that the family were Travellers and as such, would be hard to work with and, therefore, this could restrict the level of their interventions. Social Workers, for example, assessed the family without even visiting the family's home on the site or speaking with the children. This made the assessment valueless, as direct work with children is the main way to find out what life is like for the child.

Although the Child Protection system should ensure that the welfare of all children including Romani and Traveller children is paramount, emerging concerns suggest that the decisions being made, and the actions being taken, do not always achieve this central duty.

Harrington (2015) recorded during the Serious Case Review in England, that when visiting a family on a Traveller site to undertake a Child Protection Investigation, the Social Workers '*felt increasingly threatened but unsupported by the police officers in attendance*' (Harrington, 2015:17). The residents of the site are reported to have congregated around the family's trailer and became increasingly hostile towards the police and the Social Workers. The

report highlights that when one of the Social Workers asked the police to exercise their powers of police protection to remove the children to a place of safety, the police officer did not agree that the children were at risk of significant harm. It seems that the police had developed unacceptably low expectations of the care these children were going to receive because the children were seen to be Travellers. Harrington (2015) notes that after negotiations with management and the family, it was agreed that the children would remain on the site in the care of a female family member. The family member later contacted the police when she discovered that the children had been experiencing sexual abuse.

The review highlighted that there had been a lack of clear planning before the joint visit by the Social Workers and the police had taken place. Both the police and the Social Worker had felt intimidated which made them consequently ineffective.

It seems that the Social Workers and the police were anxious about their own safety, which can be seen as unsurprising considering the evidence seen by the review of the intimidation of staff by some members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. It was believed that some Social Workers gave too much weight to issues of cultural difference using this to explain and accept evidence of abuse and neglect (Harrington, 2014).

Allen & Riding (2018) suggest that rather than taking the time to find new and creative ways to work with the Romani Gypsies and Irish Traveller families on their caseloads, some Child Protection Social Workers allowed themselves to become oppressed by the rigid policy frameworks. They also suggest that Social Workers often appear reticent to challenge their own presuppositions and assumptions toward the conceptual Gypsy and Traveller.

Allen & Riding (2018) argue that this is the reason why some Social Workers fail to recognise and understand how their own automatic prejudice emerges and how feeling oppressed by rigid policy frameworks ensures that these prejudices endure.



Whilst all Child Protection professionals in England are required to critically recognise the impact which their own variable belief systems can have on their practice with hard to reach groups, some professionals who took part in Allen & Riding's (2018) study reported that they not only felt unsupported in their work, they did not feel that they were provided with the opportunity or time to reflect on their personal value base nor on their practice.

Bennett & Hamilton-Perry (2010) suggest that Gypsies and Travellers value respect and that this viewpoint includes not interfering in another community member's private life. It is not seen as acceptable to come between partners. This can limit the practical help and support that can be given to an individual experiencing domestic abuse; this includes asking for professional help. Gypsies and Travellers generally will not personally intervene, even when they are aware that domestic abuse is taking place within a family. They are not happy to be seen to involve the police, even when they are concerned for the children's safety because it is seen as being disrespectful.

Disciplining a wife/female partner/child is still seen as normal in some travelling groups, however as the level of education increases the level of acceptance decreases.

Penketh (2000) argues that as with other minority groups Gypsy and Traveller families may experience Children's Services intervention to be extremely controlling and not of a very supportive nature. Families struggle to understand written reports and letters which can lead to low levels of engagement. Bennett & Hamilton-Perry (2010) found that if professionals took the time to read reports and letters to families, checking that the families understood what was being said to them, the level of engagement increased. Sending basic text messages on the day of an appointment also reduced the number of missed appointments.

## **Conclusion**

Gypsy and Traveller identity and ethnicity is complex and often disputed. Gypsies and Travellers are not a homogeneous group. The diversity of the various Gypsy and Traveller groups has its origins in their occupational

identity, as well as in any other distinctions of culture. While many of the different Gypsy and Traveller groups are wary of each other they all share a common heritage of exclusion and the notion of always being the “outsider,” or the “other” (Marsh, 2003).

## **PART II - Cross Cultural Attachment Studies**

As previously noted there is a distinct lack of literature exploring Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices and the resulting attachment relationships. The cross-cultural studies have been included to provide an overview of parenting practices and attachment relationships that do not conform to the Western ideology of child rearing and attachment theory. These studies appear to be the only published research which presents similarities to the Gypsy and Traveller shared care model of child care, where family members with a vested interest in the well-being of the children, work together to ensure that the children are safe and secure, together with the resulting attachment relationships to family care providers.

Neckowa et al (2007:65-74) note that *‘by examining cultures that do not follow Western child rearing practices, an opportunity emerges to explore the naturally occurring differences in parenting and socio-emotional environments of children that can clarify the implications of these differences for attachment behaviours’*. The cross-cultural approach to studying attachment allows us to explore whether any given relationship is valid universally or if it is valid only in the Western world. It ensures that we do not assume too much about the infant, mother/main caregiver relationships. This in turn enables us to develop an understanding of how the environment (place) and cultural beliefs shape parenting practices in non-Western cultures (Munroe & Munroe, 1975:1).

There are disadvantages to using a cross-cultural approach due to the large number of traditional societies around the world and the lack of detailed studies. Even where intensive research has been undertaken, there is some difficulty measuring the variables accurately and a lack of experimental control during the field studies. Van Ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz (2008) demonstrate that while cross-cultural studies on attachment have been relatively small

scale, they are in-depth observational studies that have often combined a longitudinal component, which gives them high validity. Bearing this in mind, six examples of childrearing practices from non-Western cultures will be explored, highlighting the similarities and causal links to Gypsy and Traveller childrearing practices.

In all the studies examined, the key theme is how the common basic human need for a secure base and a sense of belonging are expressed in different ways amongst different cultures.

### **Attachment from the Aboriginal perspective**

Yeo (2003) questions the value of using attachment assessments processes that are culturally appropriate for Western families, but culturally inappropriate for assessing Aboriginal children, in relation to bonding and attachment. The theoretical considerations on attachment theory apply mainly to white middle-class European parents from the twentieth century (Berry, 1992; Flanagan, 1999; Yeo, 2003). Yeo argues that most assessments on the Australian indigenous families are based on the dominant Australian community's perception of what constitutes competent parenting. They do not consider the Aboriginal history and culture.

Yeo (2003:297) notes that '*there is no one Aboriginal child-rearing practice, and similarly, there is no one Anglo-Australian child-rearing method*'. There is diversity in all-cultural groups including the Aboriginal culture. Each clan may have their own variation of child rearing practices.

Aboriginal culture is spiritual, ecological, consensual and communal. The Aboriginal culture is collectivist, where they are more likely to think of themselves in terms of their affiliation with other people and their community. This social identity is derived from being a member of a particular group with whom they share a common way of life or by fulfilling a particular social role in relation to designated others. Generally, Aboriginal children grow up in a close relationship with their community and various mothers will frequently breastfeed the infants. Therefore, these 'knee babies' will also seek several other women for nurturance, which may be misconstrued as indiscriminate attachment. In the Aboriginal communities, there is no concept of 'aunts', but rather mothers. Children are cared for by different women interchangeably and often will be brought up by women who are not

their natural mothers (Yeo, 2003:297).

Aboriginal infants are kept close to their care providers and they are weaned between 3 and 5 years old. Aboriginal caregivers anticipate their infants' comfort needs and take steps to ensure they are met. Yeo (2003) explains that in the Anglo-Australian context, the care providers would be more responsive to the physical distress signals, and would respond to crying infants, rather than anticipating their discomfort and meeting the infant's needs before the child cries. Through this process, Aboriginal culture inculcates social and emotional closeness to multiple caregivers and the community at large.

Yeo (2003) discusses the Western bias in attachment theories and examines the conceptualisation of the secure base. It reflects the Western emphasis on exploration and the belief that exploration leads to the infant developing into a socially and emotionally healthy individual.

Studies such as the Hausa study (1977), however, have shown that exploratory behaviour is adaptive. The extent that primacy of the link between attachment and exploration occurs varies across cultures (Munroe & Munroe, 1975). In all cultures, parents respond to the behaviour of their children in ways that reflect their beliefs about what is socially appropriate parenting, child development and socialisation (Munroe & Munroe, 1975; Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz, 2008; Yeo, 2003). Rothbaum et al, (2000) argues that while in the West exploration, autonomy and efficacy are valued in children, collectivistic cultures like Japan encourage reliance on others, social harmony and group accomplishments. They value and nurture interdependence in their children.

### **The Japanese case – Amae, dependence and attachment**

The Japanese study can be considered as a serious challenge to attachment theory's universality, normativity and sensitivity hypotheses. The strange situation has been criticised for being an invalid assessment tool of attachments in Japanese infants, as Japanese infants are used to being in

continuous close proximity of their mothers (Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz 2008).

The concept of attachments may also not be relevant in Japanese culture due to the concept of Amae playing a prominent central and possibly a more suitable role in describing Japanese family life, relationships and societal implications (Emda, 1992). Shiota (2009) reports that Doi (1989:350) describes Amae as a universal response to being cared for by a trusted other and defined the concept as a Japanese emotion term, '*a sense of helplessness and the desire to be loved*' in which one is able to '*depend or presume upon another's benevolence*'. According to Doi (1989), the prototypical experience of Amae is an infant's love for his/her mother. This definition, and the prototype of the infant's feelings toward the mother, suggests a link to the Western theory of attachment. However, Doi (1989) argues that 'Amae' has an advantage over attachment theory because it implies a psychological dependence.

### **The Gusii study (1986)**

The Gusii live in extended family homesteads that are made up of the homestead head and his wives, his unmarried children and his married sons and their wives and children. The whole extended family works together to grow maize and grain and to care for the family's limited animals.

Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz (2008) have taken Kermorian & Leiderman's (1986) study of child-rearing practices of the Gusii people of Kenya and explored how they differ from child rearing practices of Western Industrialised Countries. Firstly, Gusii mothers share their child-rearing tasks and responsibilities with other caregivers to a greater extent than in many other non-western cultures. Older siblings take care of the infants during a large part of the day while the mother works in the fields. All children are given tasks and errands from a very young age (Le Vine & Le Vine, 1963). Secondly, the division of tasks between the infant's mother and the other caregivers is very strict. The mother takes responsibility for most of the

physical care and the infant's health. The sibling's care duties focus around social and playful activities.

This division of care duties enabled Kermoian & Leiderman (1986) to test whether different attachment relationships would develop between the infant and his/her mother, and the infant and their other care providers. They tested the children's attachments, by undertaking the 'Strange Situation Procedure'. Kermoian & Leiderman (1986) deduced that the division of caregiving duties ensured that the infant formed its primary attachment with his/her mother, due to her providing all the physical care. The infant formed attachments to the child caregivers due to their role in the infant's cognitive development, by stimulating social and play activities.

Unweaned Gusii infants sleep with their mother until the point at which she next gives birth. Then, the young child, typically aged between 1 and 2.5 years old, is displaced as the baby of the family. The child will then share the bed of one of their siblings. The mother/child relationship is relatively informal, mainly focusing on feeding and personal care. The grandparents play an important role, providing the children with emotional warmth and meeting their care needs, as they grow older. Girls are normally sent to live with their paternal grandmothers when they are between 5 and 6 years old. This is thought to be due to their parents' 'sexual embarrassment' and the need to protect the girls from adult sexual knowledge. Boys are sent to sleep in the children's house that forms part of the homestead, when they are between 7 and 8 years old (Munroe & Munroe, 1975; Le Vine & Le Vine, 1963).

Kermoian & Leiderman (1986) noted that in Gusii culture, it is the norm for Gusii infants and children greet their mother and caregivers with a handshake. This was observed when undertaking the Strange Situation. During the reunions, the Gusii infants anticipated the handshake in the same way that infants from western cultures anticipate receiving a cuddle. Kermoian & Leiderman (1986) concluded that infants develop person-specific attachment behaviours when they experience 'polymatric' parenting, similar to those observed in 'monomatric' Western societies. Kermoian & Leiderman (1986)

proposed that the pervasive influence of the infant-mother attachment relationship in Western cultures might be due to the absence of task-division and role differentiation in most Western families.

### **The Hausa study (1977)**

Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz (2008) also presented a discussion about the Hausa study. The Hausa populate a large market town in Nigeria. Like the Gusii, the Hausa are a 'polymatric' culture although the distribution of childcare tasks is less strict.

The Hausa are a Muslim culture and as such, the men are allowed to marry up to four wives. This results in an average of three adult caregivers sharing the childcare tasks with the mother. The biological mother will take almost complete responsibility for the physical care of her infant, such as bathing and feeding. The Hausa wives live in separate huts in a small walled compound with a shared cooking and work area at its centre. This shared area is deemed to pose a continuous risk to the infants. Therefore, when the infants are not asleep, they maintain constant physical contact or close proximity with one of the care providers. The infant is not allowed to explore the wider environment alone due to the continuous hazards and dangers. They can, however, explore their immediate environment in visual and manipulative ways while still in the close proximity to an attachment figure. Hausa caregivers were deemed as being indulgent and sensitive to the infant's needs, even though their care was restrictive (Marvin et al, 1977).

For Marvin et al (1977), all of the Hausa infants in their study displayed attachment behaviour to more than one of the care providers. The infants were primarily attached to one attachment figure, not always the biological mother, more often the care provider that held the baby the most. Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz (2008) deduce that the Hausa study supports the universal hypothesis that attachment serves to protect infants from dangers in the environment as well as ensuring that their social and emotional needs are met. The Hausa study evidenced the existence of multiple attachments in a multiple care provider society.

The case studies discussed above are grounded in collectivist societies. Japanese society expects mothers to provide sole care for their infants when they are very young. The Aboriginals, the Gusii and the Hausa women, however, work together to ensure that an infant born into their community has the best chance of survival by sharing the caring duties.

The next two case studies present an overview from two societies with moderate social deprivation, either in infancy or early childhood, that appear to produce adults with affective difficulties. The shared care of infants is minimal and infant mortality is high. Child rearing practices could be seen as indifferent and neglectful by Western beliefs.

### **The Alorese – of the former Dutch East Indies**

Munroe & Munroe (1975) present a discussion of Du Bois' (1944) work evaluating child-rearing practices of the people of Alorese. Alorese women are the principal food producers, cultivating and harvesting vegetables. The women work in the fields until the time to give birth.

They return to working in the fields after only 10 to 14 days. The mother breast-feeds her newborn infant in the morning before she goes to work in the fields. She then leaves the child behind in the village for up to nine hours a day in the care of a sibling or an adult relative. The infant may be given pre-masticated food from the caretaker, or alternatively, may occasionally be breast-fed by an available adult female. Daytime feeding is normally unsatisfactory for the infant, as it does not have a reliable food source. Also, the infant struggles to digest the pre-masticated food, causing vomiting.

Alorese infants are observed to be so hungry that they attempt to nurse at the breast of their immature siblings or their fathers. On their mother's return to the village, she will immediately nurse the infant and spend the evening cuddling and giving him/her attention after preparing a family meal. However, the comfort and care that the child receives in the evening does not appear to satisfy or overcome the infant's frustration and unassuaged hunger of the day.



As the infant gets older and starts to walk, life becomes even more difficult. By the time that the child can get around alone, at the age of around 1–1.5 years of age, the minimal shared care ends. Nobody assumes responsibility for feeding throughout the day. The young child can now be left without food for up to 12 hours a day. Not only does it have to wait for the mother's return at the end of the day, but the child also has to wait for the mother to prepare a family meal. Infants are dependent on what the older children are willing to give when he/she begs for food. By 5 or 6 years old, the child expected to forage for his/herself.

Munroe & Munroe (1975) note that Du Bois (1941) suggests that the effects manifesting from this inconsistent and irregular care, develop dramatically and quickly. Children between the ages of 2 and 5 years express a need for care and attention through violent rages. Du Bois (1941) reported that the children's rages are so consistent, widespread, and last for such a long duration among young children who are not getting their needs met. Du Bois (1941) notes that the children's rages are met with reactions that are just as unpredictable and inconsistent as other caretaking behaviour'. The mother may, on occasions, ignore the child while at other times, she will be irritated and hit the child. Another day, the mother may soothe the child, only to slip away once the child is calm.

Du Bois (1944) proposed that the ethnographic data from her research suggested that the Alorese people experience shallowness in interpersonal relationships. Distrust and suspicion are reflected in continual deception, lies and chicanery. There is a strong element of passivity and the tendency to give up if problems arise. The Alorese are also quick to display emotional outbursts, tempers, anger and rages when they were required to undertake tasks around the home such as essential home repairs. Their marriages are brittle with high divorce rates. One of Du Bois (1944) case studies, an adult male, showed no evidence of having made any strong attachments to anyone during his life. Du Bois (1944) noted that the Alorese appeared to be lacking in individual personal contact, while they lived beside one another they did not live with each other on an emotional level. For Du Bois (1944) a fundamental

question was do the Alorese have friendships and relationships and if so, how deeply rooted are they?

Seymour (2013) evaluates Du Bois's (1941, 1944) research and notes that the Alorese are an interesting case study for examining multiple child care provision and the resulting attachment relationships, due to the unusually dispersed form of cooperative child care and the fact that the multiple childcare abruptly ends when the infant develops the ability to walk. The Alorese children not only experienced variable nurturance from others, but also witnessed the emotional and angry outbursts of adults, which often led to families splitting and shifting household arrangements.

Seymour (2013) notes that when Du Bois (1941, 1944) was undertaking his research in the late 1930s, Alorese was not a very nurturing culture. It had recently emerged from a period of 'Chronic warfare' and the culture emphasized independence, competition resulting in the population developing interpersonal distrust.

The Alorese adults' behaviours seemed to support the findings from Western psychological and behavioural research that argues that babies are born with the biological drive to seek proximity to a protective adult, normally the mother. The secure base that the mother or main care provider gives to the infant, allows the child to develop trusting caring relationships with others. It seems that the tribulations that the Alorese experienced in infancy were a determining factor in the adult's responses to daily life. The child rearing practices of the Alorese do not provide the infants with a secure base from which their needs were met. From the age of 10 to 14 days old, Alorese infants experience their mother's rejection when she returns to work in the fields. The child experiences further rejection when he/she starts to walk, as the minimal shared care is no longer provided. As the Alorese children develop into young adults, they experience on-going social impoverishment and rejection. Early experiences of separation or neglectful or abusive parenting will cause children to remain anxious and to distrust close relationships. People, who expect rejection, have low self-esteem and their

sense of the world is as a hostile place (Du Bois, 1944; Munroe & Munroe, 1975; Schofield & Beek, 2011).

### **Alto do Cruzeiro – Northeast Brazil.**

Alto do Cruzeiro is the oldest, largest and poorest of the shantytowns in Northeast Brazil. It has been a magnet for rural workers and squatters who manage to eke out a meagre living working for the sugar plantations or carrying out domestic work earning as little as a dollar a day. Life expectancy of people living in the shantytowns is forty years of age. The average woman of the Alto experiences 9.5 pregnancies, 3.5 child deaths and 1.5 still births. 70% of the child deaths occur within the first six months, 82% die in their first year.

The residents of Alto do Cruzeiro lived in a community that was dominated by political upheaval, poverty, corruption and violence. Alto was an individualistic society made up of a transient population with very little social structure.

Scheper-Hughes (1993) presents an account of the parenting practices that she observed during her time living in Alto do Cruzeiro. She had been involved in this community for over 25 years, firstly, as a volunteer public health and community development worker, with the Peace Corps, from 1964 through to the end of 1966, and then as a researcher.

Scheper-Hughes (1993) notes that she was shocked by the child rearing practices of the mothers from the poorest areas of northeast Brazil. Many babies died from hunger, thirst and neglect. The high mortality rates had become normalised and accepted as part of the '*Normal Violence of everyday life*' (Scheper-Hughes, 1993:17). Infants in the hillside shantytowns are born without the natural protection of being breastfed, of strong family relationships or of living in a collectivistic society, where the mothers work together to ensure their babies survival. Many infants are left at home alone while their mothers work on the sugar plantations. The mothers did not always have the support networks to provide alternative care for the infant. Many infants die

alone while their mothers are at work. Scheper-Hughes (1993) suggests that for the women of Alto, infants, like husbands and boyfriends, are thought of as temporary attachments as they all disappoint the women and can not be relied upon to stay around.

Scheper-Hughes (1993:15) argues that frequent child deaths are a powerful shaper of maternal practice and thinking. Ecological conditions and social arrangements are hostile to an infant's survival as well as the survival of the mother. The high mortality rate of Alto do Cruzeiro and other impoverished third world countries can lead to forms of delayed attachments. The casual or benign neglect weeds out the weaker infants and consequently, gives the stronger siblings a better chance of life. The lack of belief that a child will survive essentially blocks the mother's ability to bond with their baby.

Scheper-Hughes (2013) questioned:

If mothers allowed themselves to be attached to each newborn, how could they ever endure their babies' short lives and deaths and still have the stamina to get pregnant and give birth again and again? And they were conscious of this. It wasn't that Alto mothers did not experience mother love at all. They did and with great intensity. Mother love emerged as their children developed strength and vitality.

This emotional detachment of the mothers towards some of their babies contributes even further to the high mortality rates. The high expectancy of death and the ability to face their children's death with stoicism and equanimity, appears to have produced child rearing practices that categorise some infants as being survivors who are born *'ready to live'*, while others are categorised as being *'born ready to die'*.

The infants expected to be survivors were nurtured whereas the weaker babies, who were believed as being born ready to die, experienced maternal selective neglect and, thus, left to die. Once a child was judged as being a survivor, their mothers would slowly invest their love in their child, resulting in a passionate bond developing. Classical attachment theories predict long-term negative consequences of a mother's failure to bond with her baby at birth. This failure to bond during the first few weeks of the infant's life,

however, does not mean that a child is permanently rejected. Human attachments are more complex and variable than implied. Attachments, therefore, can develop throughout a child's life. Infants of the Alto, who survived into childhood, developed strong attachment bonds with their mothers.

Scheper-Hughes' (1993) notes that during her first visit to Alto do Cruzeiro, she worked with the residents to set up the Alto shantytown association of the Union for the Progress of the Alto do Cruzeiro (UPAC). With funding from the Peace Corps (UPAC) and a small subsidy from the local town council, the community worked together to build and organise a day care centre. The mothers ran the crèche during the day, while in the evenings the building was used as an adult literacy school, a games room and a dance hall. Each mother who formed part of the cooperative worked in the crèche one day a week. Her infants and children, then have a place in the crèche for the rest of the week, allowing her to work. The crèche opened in 1966, with 20 Alto mothers sharing the care of 30 infants and children. The Peace Corps provided food donations for the infants and children and all the babies thrived in the crèche. For a short period of time, the people of Alto had hope for a better future.

External influences, political unrest, and corruption, however, led to the crèche's closure. The food parcels were intercepted and diverted. The military became suspicious of UPAC and forced the cooperative to disband. The day care centre was broken into and damaged. Scheper-Hughes was forced to leave in 1966, due to the volatility of the political unrest. It was not considered safe for her to return to undertake her research until 1982. The crèche was never re-opened due to largely bureaucratic reasons, '*foot dragging, lies, and false compliance*' (Scheper-Hughes, 1993:514). The original title to the crèche lands was pronounced null and void.

Scheper-Hughes (2013) returned to Alto again in 2001, where she found that life had improved for the residents. Birth rates and child death rates had plummeted. Scheper-Hughes (2013) note that records suggest that over the

past decade alone, Brazil's fertility rate has decreased from 2.36 to 1.9 children per family. This birth rate is below the replacement rate and was lower than in the United States during the same period of time.

These case studies discussed have provided an overview of how some non-western cultures have developed child-rearing practices that afford their infant's the best chance of survival. While the studies are dated, they do provide a valuable knowledge base of some non-western parenting practices.

The Gusii and Hausa, as noted, live in small stable community family groups. The mothers and families work together to share the care of their young children, providing them with a secure base and ensuring that they are kept safe until they are deemed old enough to be safe and participate in village life.

While the Altorese also live in small community groups, the social structure and group relationships are fragmented and easily broken. The Altorese only provide limited shared care for their infants. Up until the child is walking, it has to rely on begging for food of the other children.

The residents of Alto do Cruzeiro live in a community that is dominated by political upheaval, poverty, corruption and violence. Alto is an individualistic society made up of a transient population with very little social structure. The residents live in thrown-together huts made of straw, mud and sticks. Lacking these materials, lean-tos are made of tin, cardboard and scrap materials. The 'fragility and dangerousness of the mother-infant relationship was the most immediate and visible index of scarcity and of individuals' unmet needs. Mothers were only able develop emotional bonds with their strongest healthy children who were seen as survivors. The mothers of Alto, when provided with the support and opportunity, set up a cooperative to enable them to work together to meet their children's needs while retaining their poorly paid employment. Their babies started to thrive in the crèche. This suggests that even in harsh fragmented societies, mothers do not want to live in individualistic cultures. They would rather live in societies that work together to care and protect their children.

## **Gypsy and Traveller Attachments**

Gypsies and Travellers' place significant value on family and kinship, preferring to live in extended family groupings. Inter-marriage between family groups is common, leading to a tightly knit social group with the members having a strong sense of community identity and mutual self-help (Niner, 2003). It is a patriarchal culture and clearly delineates male-female (mush-mushi) roles. Men (mush) are deemed as being responsible for supporting their family financially and practically while women are expected to take overall responsibility for the home and for caring for the children. Matters relating to pregnancy, household and hygiene, personal care for elders are seen as the role of woman (mushi) (Hawes & Perez, 1996). Sexual morality is strict (Hawes & Perez, 1996). Children are highly valued and kept on a tight rein. They are taught their parent's trades and to behave in a respectful manner to the elders. Children are expected to obey orders quickly (Niner, 2003). This leads to strict social control (Hawes & Perez, 1996). Farre (2013:73) notes that most Romani who live in a Romani community '*are emotionally whole. From the day, they are born until they pass into old age, they are part of a community in which they are vitally interested*'. Family groups work together to care for the children. Polymatric parenting practices seem to fit closely with Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices, although it needs to be noted that Gypsy and Traveller men normally have only one official wife or partner at a time.

Traveller sites are often dangerous places for small children. This is due either to them also being the workplace for many of the Traveller men or being by a roadside, where the children are vulnerable from passing traffic. Gypsies and Travellers are 20 times more likely to experience the death of a child, than mothers from the settled community (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry 2010). It is not unusual to observe very young Gypsy and Traveller children being carried around campsites by their elder siblings, for the same reasons that the Hausa keep their infants in close proximity to keep them safe.

Mckinley (2011) recounted her life as a female Irish Traveller, providing a detailed account of growing up as the second eldest female child. She expands on issues known within the academic communities; however, she provides a human touch to the knowledge base regarding Irish Traveller culture and traditions. Mckinley's (2011) narrative highlights that Irish Traveller culture is deeply rooted within a patriarchal society, where the male and female gender roles are very separate and defined. She notes that she was sent to live with her grandparents, which is seen as being quite normal within the Irish Traveller culture (Mckinley, 2011) when she was a baby. She was a sickly child who, at around eight months old, was left alone in her playpen because her aunt had just been run over when she was attacked by a Rottweiler dog that almost killed her.

When reading Mckinley's account of her relationship with her grandparents from the attachment theory perspective, her narrative suggests that her grandparents provided her with a secure base from which she formed secure attachments. Her account suggests that her attachments with her parents were less secure. Her narrative suggests that the relationship with her mother could be described by Main's (1990) notion of 'fear without solution'.

At the age of 13, she was looking after her six younger siblings while her eldest sister and her mother cooked and cleaned, ensuring that the family had clean clothes, clean trailer and were well fed. Mckinley's elder brother worked with their father from a young age, collecting scrap and earning the money to feed the family.

## **Conclusion**

Only a small sample of cross-cultural studies has been included in this literature review. Nevertheless, these studies appear to support Bowlby's (1969/1982) Evolutionary Theory of Attachment, which concludes that an infant would be protected against predators and other dangers by staying in close proximity of a protective adult. This results in a child's close emotional bond with his/her main care provider or providers. This attachment supplies



the child with a secure base which enables him/her to grow and develop into a secure adult.

The conceptual similarity of attachment security across different cultures does not mean that the same infant attachment behaviours can be considered to be indicative of secure or insecure attachments. In some cultures, distal attachments behaviours may be more valued than proximal attachment behaviours or vice versa (Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz, 2009). McLeod (2014) notes that Van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) illustrated '*that the differences in attachment within a culture are far greater than those found between cultures*'. Van Ijzendoorn & Kroonenberg (1988) believe that it is wrong to think of everyone in a culture having the same child-rearing practices. Within a culture, there are many sub-cultures which may all have their own way of rearing children due to ethical, racial and religious beliefs. Some may be social class specific. Le Vine (2014:57) questions '*the possibility that attachment, like language, is a product of evolution that is realised differently in diverse human contexts*'.

The vulnerability of infants and their need to be protected from harm influences parenting practices around the world. In communities which are marginalised and where the residents have little or no control over their existence and experience some level of social deprivation, a mother's focus is on her survival. As noted, when the residents of Alto were given the opportunity to work together to help themselves, they developed a cooperative to meet their children's day care needs. Local governments have the power to enable communities to work together to develop their social capital and to meet their own needs or they can introduce legislation and policies that hinder communities developing collectivist initiatives.

The social and economic environment appears to play an important role in the development of child rearing practices. This suggests that place plays an equally important role in the development of an infant's secure base. Place attachment, therefore, supports the development of attachments to the caregivers.

It seems that in some cultures where there is a high infant mortality rate due to environmental issues, 'Polymatric' parenting practices can ensure the infant's best chance of survival. Infants from Polymatric cultures appear to form more than one attachment relationship, however infants still seem to form their primary attachment to their main care provider, who may not necessarily be the infant's biological mother.

The final part of this chapter will evaluate the concept of attachment to place and will explore its importance in the development of an infant's identity and sense of self in the world.

### **PART III - Attachment to Place**

#### **National Territory and National Identity**

Place attachment can be seen to play a fundamental role in the wider field of national territory and national identity. Within traditional European societies, there is a strong emphasis on national territory and on the concept of homeland. Bitter and devastating wars have been fought to defend nation's borders and land (Hancock, 2012).

Miscevic suggests;

The term "nationalism" is generally used to describe two phenomena: (1) the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity and (2), the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve (or sustain) self-determination.

(1) raises questions about the concept of a nation (or national identity), which is often defined in terms of common origin, ethnicity, or cultural ties, and while an individual's membership in a nation is often regarded as involuntary, it is sometimes regarded as voluntary. (2) raises questions about whether self-determination must be understood as involving having full statehood with complete authority over domestic and international affairs, or whether something less is required (Miscevic, 2010).

Brower (1980) defines human territoriality as *'the relationship between an individual or group and a particular physical setting, that is characterised by a feeling of possessiveness that an occupant has towards a particular territory because of its associations with self-image or social identity... and by attempts to control the appearance of the space'* (Brower, 1980:180-2). The

primary function of human territoriality, in addition to the regulation of the social system is interpreted to be the expression of individual and group identity. The identifying function is expressed not so much in the form of occupancy and control behaviours, but also in the personalisation of space which encourages the formation or intensification of affective bonds between occupant and the territory (Brown, 1987).

A static home suggests permanence and stability where neighbours come together to form a local community. This, in turn, forms part of the wider society of the country. Members of the local communities recognise each other and know exactly where they fit into the social structure. When unknown people enter the community, they are seen as outsiders who pose a potential threat to the harmony and structure of the community (Hancock, 2014).

Bancroft (2005: 146) discusses how subjects such as regulation, governance, control and the monitoring of space, together with the development of status, ethnic and particularly the national identities that accompany European modernity, have all contributed towards spatial segregation, and restrictions on the movements of Gypsies and Travellers at a continental level and spatial cleansing at a local level. Bancroft states:

From the perspective of the European nation state Gypsies represent a 'backward' element of society thus symbolizing a counterpart to modernity and the creation of national identity (Bancroft, 2005:149).

The concept of the 'backward' element fits with the conceptualisation of a stranger or outsider. The majority of societies view Gypsies as strangers, and erect boundaries between themselves and the outsiders. Strangers represent closeness and freedom, a refusal to assimilate with the majority of society and a lack of commitment from the settled community. This results in the Gypsy being viewed with wariness and suspicion. Gypsies and Travellers' nomadic lifestyle does not sit comfortably with notions of national identity. Smith & Greenfields (2013) demonstrate that two enduring themes in the official political responses to nomadism have historically centred on the assimilation of Gypsies and Travellers into the general population. The aim of '*the extinction of nomadism*' (Smith & Greenfields, 2013:3) appears to be to

prevent individuals from the settled communities from choosing to adopt a Travelling lifestyle.

### **Gypsies and Travellers as a Global population**

Matras (2014) identifies that the Romanichal/ Romani/ Roma people are a nation like few others because they are deemed to be people without territory, national sovereignty or formal institutions. Hancock (2012) agrees with this point and proposes that the Romani are a diaspora people who are found all over the world. They are a global population with a global identity rather than a national identity. The Romanichal/ Romani population is huge. Hancock (2012) predicts that there are millions of Romani in Europe alone. British Romani, Irish, Scottish and Welsh Gypsies and Travellers cannot be seen as people without territory. Gypsies and Travellers born in the UK can hold British passports and are recognised as British citizens. As such, they should have the same right as all other British citizens, however, this is not always the case. (Mayall, 2004; Hancock 2012).

### **Constant mobility in childhood within the settled communities**

There is a vast amount of research looking at the effect that constant residential movement has on non-Gypsy children during childhood. Swick (1999) found the largest amount of homeless families had children under eight years old. Hogg et al (2015) noted that In June 2014, there were 7% of households with children living in temporary accommodation and in hostels. Hogg et al (2015) suggested that is roughly 3,110 households in total.

Swick (1999) deemed that more than 90% of these homeless families were single female parent families with many of the mothers having experienced neglect and abuse during their own childhood. Hogg et al (2015) found that there was evidence that homelessness and temporary accommodation during pregnancy could be associated with an increased risk of preterm birth, low birth weight, poor mental health in infants and children, and was linked to

developmental delay. All of these factors have been associated with the risk of poor outcomes in later life.

Homeless children can face many barriers that impede their ability to function and develop healthily. The constant mobility of non-Gypsy children that live a chaotic and highly transient lifestyle can have a negative effect upon the development of their sense of physical and psychological security. The constant changes in accommodation and schools disrupts children's friendships and their sense of location and identity (Hogg et al, 2015: Swick, 1999)

Oishi & Schimmack (2010) questioned children from the settled communities to look for a possible relationship between residential mobility and emotional wellbeing. They sampled 7,108 American adults and followed them for 10 years. The research suggested that the more times people moved as children, the more likely they were to report lower life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing at the time they were interviewed. The research also showed that those who moved frequently as children had fewer quality social relationships as adults. They noted that introverts recorded a negative association between the number of residential moves and their emotional wellbeing. These results, however, were not found in individuals who were judged as having an extrovert personality. This association appeared to be explained by the introvert's lack of close social relationships.

Oishi & Schimmack's (2010) research also suggested that people with an introvert personality who had moved frequently as children, were more likely to have died during the 10-year follow-up. Amongst the individuals deemed as extroverts, childhood residential mobility appeared to be unrelated to their mortality risk as adults. These findings, therefore, suggest that residential moves can be a risk factor for introverts and that extroversion can be an interpersonal resource for social relationships and wellbeing in mobile groups such as military personal and their families.

Steele and Sheppard (2003) highlight that even when a move is planned and

wanted, it can induce a variety of strong and sometimes conflicting emotions in adults. When children move to a new house, it is not normally their choice. Their families may move due to employment, family situations, placement into a foster family, the destruction of their home through war, flooding, fire or other unexpected events. Children that move regularly can experience the act of moving as a traumatic experience. The feeling of powerlessness and the resulting feelings of the loss of safety can trigger Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in them (Steele & Sheppard, 2003).

Most adults are not aware of and do not understand a child's feelings about moving because they are often experiencing their own stresses connected to the move. While some children in settled communities that continually move, may experience a negative effect on their emotional wellbeing in later life, it is also important to assess the effect that the lack of mobility might have on children and adults from the settled communities.

### **Lack of mobility within the settled community**

Green & White's (2007) research, which was funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, explores how social networks and attachment to place shaped the training opportunities and work options for the young people that took part in the study. Their work suggests that for some young people, a strong attachment to place can have a negative effect on the young person's life chances and employment opportunities. This is due to the young people being so attached to the home community that they refuse to leave it in search of education or employment.

While their research focused on how young adults attachment to place can affect their education and employment options, it also highlighted how attachment to place and the resulting social networks shaped how young people saw the world. Green and White (2007) reported that for some young people, identity and the place where they grew up can be powerfully connected. Attachment to place appeared to be a very important factor in people's life choices.

Green & White (2007) found that many of the young people within their study reported that they had lived in the same area for their whole life. Their friends and families all lived locally, with some reporting that their extended family members lived in the same street or in adjacent streets. The close family connection to the area resulted in a strong attachment to place. This was found to lead to an “*us versus them*”, *distinction in which the other is devalued*’ (Green & White 2007:48). It was also noted in the areas where the residents had a strong attachment to place, immigrants and Travellers were seen as outsiders and deemed to be responsible for causing trouble (Green & White, 2007). This fits with Brower’s (1980) definition of human territoriality.

Attachment to place or place attachment is integral to individual’s self-definitions and communal aspects of their identity. Being forced to move when one does not want to, threaten the individual’s self-definitions and identity (Spencer, 2004).

### **Constant mobility within the Traveller communities**

Historically, Gypsies and Travellers have followed an itinerant outdoor way of life (Mayall, 2009). Their lifestyle was nomadic; however, they did not follow a random route. Many did not travel large distances, preferring to remain within an area where they knew that they would find seasonal farm work and suitable stopping places (Evans, 2008). Their traditional travelling patterns and stopping places were established many generations ago. The Gypsies and Travellers moved around their traditional routes following the work opportunities that the agricultural seasons and the harvests provided them. They went to festivals and fairs as well as visiting relations, which was and still is of great cultural importance. Most routes were established through the summer seasons, with families passing on the rights to pitches at particular fairs, sometimes from generation to generation (Evans, 2008; Plymouth City Council, 2014; Smith-Bendell, 2009).

The exact route and the lengths of stay in any area were originally dependent on the seasonal work available, the relationship between the Gypsies and the settled community and the availability of stopping places large enough for

family groups. Many family groups would join together to undertake seasonal work such as pea and hop picking. Kent and Surrey's rural economy was dependent on its mobile workforce. Farmers encouraged families that they knew as hard working to remain on their farms until the next crop was ready to be harvested (Evans, 2008). Different family groups traditionally followed their own set travelling circuits.

McCready & McCready (2001) note that their family's usual travelling circuit took in parts of Staffordshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Petulengro's (2011) family group, on the other hand, originated from Norfolk. They tended to travel around Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire during her childhood. As the old stopping places disappeared, Petulengro (2011) and her family settled around Brighton, although often returning to their old camping ground in Skegness.

These traditional travelling routes resulted in family groups developing place attachments to the towns and cities that formed part of their travelling circuits (Mayell, 2009; Smith-Bendell, 2009). For Floreck (2011), having the opportunity to move and travel can sometimes reinforce people's bonds with places. Positive feelings of longing for one's town of origin may become intensified as a result of travelling and being away from one's main base. A person can develop attachments to restricted or vast places with very different characteristics. Place attachment arises among other variables including mobility, shared meanings and social belonging.

Smith Bendell, cited by Mistiaen (2010) illustrates the cultural importance of the stopping places which made up her family's travelling circuits on their old way of life;

"Back then, it was custom for us when someone was ill and dying, to return to all the old stopping places that had meant something to that person. Even though Terry is not a Gypsy, I took him to all the places that were special for us," says Maggie softly. She had taken her father on a similar journey years before. "Near the end we packed up and took him to all the well-known stopping places from my youth, everywhere his heart desired," she writes. "Every day I would fill the



tank with fuel and ask him, 'Where to today, then, Dad?' We covered many miles only to find that most of our-beloved stopping places were fenced off or blocked with stones and fences. This upset him badly. "So much of our way of life is over. Hops are now gathered by machine and peas picked by foreign workers who will work for less. Most of all, the common land has been fenced off or blocked. So many of our historical stopping places have been taken away from us" (Smith-Bendell cited by Mistiaen, 2010).

However, enforced mobility can split families, create safety issues and reduce families' support options. Homelessness or lack of suitable accommodation can also adversely affect health and emotional wellbeing by creating practical access difficulties and competing priorities (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Hogg et al, 2015).

### **Lack of mobility within the Traveller communities – assimilation**

Place attachment includes cognitive interpretations such as the memories that provide certain places with experience and meaning. This includes ancestral ties which provide the individual with a sense of belonging and the safety of feeling like an "insider". This produces the desire to stay in the place or places that provide the individual with these feelings of belonging and being part of the community that identifies with the place (Hay, 1998). For many Gypsies and Travellers these feelings of attachment and security result in the felt need to follow the traditional travelling circuits so that they can reconnect with their attachment places. When the places of attachment are no longer accessible many Gypsies and Travellers' experience feelings of concern and anxiety due to being separated from the places that they are attached to (Low & Altman, 1992).

The exploration of place attachment as an emotional bond has highlighted the distress and grief experienced by individuals when they have been forced to move from the place or places that they feel attached to (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Scannell & Gifford (2010) note that in the immigration and refugee literature, the emphasis is typically on displacement, or 'diaspora', such that attachment is defined by the intensity of longing for places that are lost. The literature on

displacement and diaspora can also be viewed from the Gypsy and Traveller perspective.

Parry et al (2004) note that for the Gypsy and Traveller participants of their 2004 Health Needs assessment study;

‘Nomadism was seen as a central feature of Traveller identity and the inability to maintain a Travelling lifestyle was frequently mourned. Freedom, choice and socialising were seen as the most important benefits of travelling, but also a necessity for men to obtain employment. Travelling was seen as much more of a hardship today, and many have abandoned it for this reason. Since nomadism is associated with freedom, the sense of loss of freedom was described as having a profound effect on the psyche of Gypsy Travellers. There were mixed views on the preference for houses or living on a site as an alternative to travelling. For some the idea of house dwelling was completely alien and also experienced as very isolating (Parry et al, 2004)’.

Many Gypsy and Traveller families have moved into housing when they have been faced with no other alternative, either due to the lack of legal sites vacancies, health issues or the desire for their children to gain an education. The transition into bricks and mortar housing for many has proved difficult, with a high number of tenancies breaking down. Gypsies and Travellers’ collectivistic identity, emotional dependency and group solidarity can increase the difficulties experienced when a Traveller family decides to settle into housing (Smith & Greenfields, 2013). The ‘culture shock’ that many families have experienced is partly due to losing all their familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse of living amongst a close-knit community that spends most of their social day living and working outside. Instead, they have to live in social isolation, dwelling within four walls surrounded by unknown, sometimes hostile, neighbours living in close proximity. This raises anxiety for the newly housed Travellers due to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from their own culture and exposure to new stimuli. It can be disorientating as it disrupts the familiar cultural patterns (Greenfields, 2006; Smith & Greenfields 2013; Parry et al, 2004).

The loss of contact with their close-knit family, together with experiences of racism and discrimination, can lead to failure of many Traveller housing

placements. Many Gypsies and Travellers report deteriorating mental ill health due to feelings of claustrophobia and enclosure that upset their “nerves”. Spiralling debts due to difficulties adjusting to the economic and bureaucratic responsibilities that are part of living in a house, also cause many Gypsy and Traveller families concern. Gypsies and Travellers acknowledge that housing can be associated with greater comfort, hot running water, but it can lead to people feeling ‘like a bird in a cage’ (Smith & Greenfields, 2013:109).

### **Cultural Trauma**

Smith and Greenfields (2013) conceptualisation of cultural trauma and collective resilience adds to the debate about Gypsy and Traveller identity. The perception of what makes an event traumatising is relative, dependent on the individual and the cultural formation of the event in relation to the socio-cultural context of a shared collectively. Smith and Greenfields (2013) note that cultural trauma can be defined by a number of components including traumatic change. This relates to change that is sudden, rapid and beyond the group’s control. Traumatic change is forced on a minority group by the majority group. This forced change is perceived as unexpected, shocking and detrimental to the minority group’s social, economic and emotional wellbeing. Anthropologists and educationalists use the concept of cultural trauma to describe the experiences of families and individuals from First nation/indigenous communities that have been forced to give up the traditional way of life as a result of structural changes within societies and the political pressure to be assimilated into the majority society (Smith & Greenfields, 2013).

Yeo (2003) notes that ‘*the Aboriginal sense of self*’ is deeply rooted in communal life, kinship bonds and each clan’s spiritual connection with its own land. Aboriginal clans hold deeply spiritual links with their lands, their sacred sites and their obligation to carry out religious ceremonies and rituals. Historically, Aborigines have reported that they ‘*feel that they are an integral part of the physical environment*’ (Yeo,2001:48). If their land is taken away from them and they are forced to move away, many report that they lose their self-esteem, self worth and cultural identity. This causes extreme levels of

psychological distress and has resulted in an escalation of social problems (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission 1997, cited by Yeo 2003).

Haskell & Randall (2009) note that the concept of 'disrupted attachments' relates to both historic and contemporary assaults on the Aboriginal people of Canada. Colonial policies appear to have been expressly aimed at severing the link between Canada's first nations and their land, culture, customs, modes of governance and way of life. The Aboriginal peoples of Canada have been subjected to centuries of genocidal state policies. They continue to live in great numbers, in conditions characterised by relative deprivation, as have the Aboriginal people of Australia (Health Canada, 2009).

Haskell and Randall (2009:50) argue that *'the Aboriginal peoples in Canada have experienced histories of colonialism and sharp systematic injustices; the pervasive effects of which continue to echo today'*. The resulting traumatic impact of these disrupted attachments to the land have reverberated through both the communities as well as through the individual lives of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The forced assimilation policies, the loss of the land and the loss of the traditional forms of governance, has resulted in the Canadian Aboriginal people having their identity, culture and language diluted and fractured. For decades, Canadian Aboriginal children have been incarcerated in state-run residential schools, the impact of which has been devastating on many generations.

Alcohol and substance abuse has become endemic within many Aboriginal communities. Haskell and Randall (2009) note that there are also high levels of child sexual abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence reported within Canada's Aboriginal groups. These factors have had, and continue to have, profound effects on the health and wellbeing of Canada's Aboriginals. These social issues are further compounded by a widespread social denial about the emotional trauma that the Aboriginals have experienced due to losing their traditional way of life, and the evasion of a sense of social responsibility for effecting the kind of political, social and economic change required to remedy this situation. The issues facing Canadian Aboriginals can be found in most

first nation communities around the world. They are ostensibly the same issues faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities living in the UK, as government polices try to criminalise their way of life and assimilate them into the settled communities.

The Traveller Movement (2018) proposes that it would not take much to reduce the trauma of forced evictions. *'The negotiated stopping model should be endorsed by the NPCC and the Local Government Association, and applied nationwide* (The Traveller Movement, 2018). The model involves a local authority that has a transient population of Gypsies and Travellers, authorising an encampment on an agreed suitable public land for a limited time period, with certain conditions being set. This would have many positive effects on not only Gypsies and Travellers, but also the wider settled community. For example, this model would reduce the demand on local police forces and enforcement agencies which in turn would improve relations between the police and Gypsy and Traveller communities. Negotiated stopping places are believed to ease local tensions and would also reduce the financial burden of lengthy legal battles to clear unauthorised sites.

### **Historical Events and Place Memory**

Purser (2016) notes that Bowlby undertook extensive research for the World Health Organisation during the 1940s documenting the impact that the war in Europe had on the child refugees and their families. Bowlby (1940) and his colleagues were against the practice of evacuating English children in order to protect them from the German air raids on London and other major cities because of the trauma of being separated from their parents,

Field (1945) noted that Bowlby (1940) raised concerns about the possibility that by protecting children from the Blitz, society was actually causing the evacuees more harm. Field (1945) also highlighted that Anna Freud (1944) was also speaking out about the evacuation of the children, stating that they would experience less emotional damage to have their homes collapse on top of them than they would experience being separated from their mothers.

Purser (2016) argues that the families and children who had been refugees and suffered all its privations, were likely to be exposed to poor socialisation as the quality of their attachment was likely to have been severely impinged upon. The environment and/or life situations shaped and influenced refugee children's development including their attachment patterns.

Purser (2016) argues that refugees who have been severed from their familiar home environment and their attachments and are then expected to survive and function basically on their own in a frightening new world experience a deep sense of emotional distress and loss. They have lost their family, their homeland, their childhood friends, their culture, history and their language. This loss causes emotional trauma due to the person's attachment relationship being fragmented and broken.

Researchers such as Lewicka's (2008) suggest that it is not only refugees, First Nation Aboriginals, Gypsies and Travellers who can experience disrupted relationships with their attachment place. Lewicka's (2008) noted that after World War II, agreements between members of the Anti-Nazi coalition changed the pre-war borders of Central and Eastern Europe. The names of some states disappeared totally from the map. Other states changed their boundaries. One country that was changed significantly was Poland. Its "shift westward" was due to about one-third of its territories being annexed to the Soviet Union, which were then absorbed into the Lithuanian, Belorussian and Ukrainian Soviet republics. In exchange, Poland obtained land which had previously formed part of the German states such as East Prussia, parts of Pomerania and Lower Silesia.

This shift meant massive migrations of Poles, Ukrainians and Germans, who had inhabited their homelands for generations and were evicted from their cities, towns and villages. The emptied cities and towns underwent profound population changes as new residents took over the houses of the former inhabitants. Names of cities and towns changed as well.

This huge political experiment had enormous psychological consequences for the dispossessed populations. Firstly, there was stress due to forced

relocation and having to leave the places which had been their homes for many generations. Records suggest that dispossessed people struggled with feelings about their uncertain future, particularly in the western lands of Poland where there was a prevalent belief that the territorial changes were not final. Secondly, this resulted in large groups of people living in places that held no form of place attachment. Thirdly, individuals failed to invest in their new homes, rejecting their new communities. These feelings could not be diminished by massive propagandist efforts exerted by the post-war communist powers (Lewicka's (2008)).

### **Conclusion**

The literature suggests that attachment to place is fundamentally important for an individual's self-development and their cultural, social and emotional identity. Attachment to places provide individuals with feelings of safety and emotional wellbeing. As noted in this chapter it appears that an individual's level of choice as to where and how they live affects their lived experience of either living a settled lifestyle or living a transient lifestyle.

As highlighted by Steele and Sheppard (2003), when children from the settled community move to a new house, the move is not normally their choice. They move because of an external event, such as employment, parental choice, parental separation and death. Children who move regularly can experience moving as a traumatic experience. For children whose parents are homeless, the constant sofa-surfing moving from one temporary place to another also results in the loss of personal items, making the child feel insecure and vulnerable.

For Gypsy and Traveller children who have travelled since birth, they have the security of having their home (trailer) and family with them as they move from one place to another. The experience of constantly moving is totally different. The Gypsy and Traveller children learn from a very young age which family members will be at each stopping place. The children form attachments to many of the places on their travelling circuit as these places provide the children with a secure base because meeting up with extended family

members at their regular stopping places provides the children with feelings of safety and security. The children know when a move is coming and have time to prepare and pack possessions to take or store (McCready & McCready, 2005; McKinley, 2011; Petulengro, 2011; Smith-Bendell, 2009).

Gypsy and Traveller children's experience of moving changes when the move is not planned and is forced due to the family being evicted from a site with the prospect of nowhere else to go. These forced evictions and moves are extremely traumatic for the Gypsy and Traveller children.

Berry (2003) highlights the fact that people cannot be forced to assimilate into the majority culture. Government policies which enable Gypsies and Travellers to secure their own sites would encourage more Gypsies and Travellers to settle and in time become closer to the majority of society.



## Chapter Five - Research Design, Methodology and Methods



Photograph 6: Horse drawn Varda (Surry Springs Gypsy Cobs Australia, 1973)

### Introduction

In this chapter, the details of the development of the research aims, the analytical framework and the method will now be discussed along with an outline of the research paradigm, the analysis process, the methodology and the significant epistemological assumptions of this thesis. This will be followed by a discussion of the overall research design of the project, including the sampling methods used and the development of the interview questions. Finally, the ethical and moral considerations of this research, the difficulties encountered and how they were overcome will complete this chapter.

To recap from Chapter One, the primary aim of this thesis is to understand 'How adult family members from the Gypsy and Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place?'

The aim is to explore the extent and nature of attachment to people and place for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

As a reminder, in this study, the following research questions are explored:

- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships?
- How do adult Travellers describe the effect of the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life had on their family relationships?
- How does the Traveller culture and way of life affect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?
- Does the environment or place where families live affect how communities' parent their children?

### **The Development of the Research Aims**

To recap from the previous chapters which have provided the background for this thesis, Chapter Two presented an overview of British Social Policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers, while in Chapter Three, the two dimensions of attachment, 'attachment to people' and 'attachment to place' were considered. A discussion of the main concepts of this thesis followed in Chapter Four to provide the reader with an overview of the main considerations identified. The literature reviewed in both of these chapters evidences that there is a lack of research looking at firstly Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices and secondly Gypsy and Traveller attachment relationships to people and place. This study, therefore, aims to begin to fill the gap in the knowledge base and to present suggestions for further research.

### **The Research Paradigm, Methodology and Epistemological Assumptions of the Project**

#### **Research Paradigm**

There are two dimensions to the discussion of the research methodology. The first relates to the design of the study while the second concerns the rationale for the process of data collection and analysis. Both dimensions of the research methodology will be explored below (Evans, 2006).

When considering the research design for this thesis, it was important to choose an appropriate methodological framework to provide the structure for

the work, as well as providing the data collection tools necessary to collect the information that forms the focus of the study. The data collected has been linked together with some of the concepts and theories within the literature that has been reviewed and is discussed in the following chapters.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods not only have a *'different way of knowing about the world, they will each also approach the question differently, and each provide a different answer'* (McLaughlin, 2007:42).

Quantitative data analysis evaluates numerical, statistical and mathematical information that can be categorised, put in order, or measured in various units. It does not provide the tools to gather ethnographic data. Qualitative data, however, is less numerically constrained and looks at the experiences of each of the participants (McLaughlin, 2007).

The quantitative approach follows a structured logical process that tests theories. It is normally conducted as a survey, using questionnaires. Surveys can form a central part of some social research projects as they provide a rapid and relatively inexpensive way of discovering the opinions of the population through the use of a representative sample (May, 1997).

A quantitative method of data collection such as a multi-page questionnaire was rejected as being an inappropriate method for Gypsies and Travellers, partly due to the high proportion of illiteracy within the communities and partly due to Gypsies' and Travellers' negative views about questionnaires and structured interviews. Okely (2008) suggests that this form of data collection can sometimes be envisaged as a form of outsider interrogations of the type associated with and used by interviewing officials such as Social Workers, the Police, Health Care Professionals, Council employees and Enforcement personnel.

As this thesis is interested in the paradigm of Gypsies and Travellers' personal experience and subjectivity, quantitative research methods were, therefore, disregarded.

The qualitative approach follows a less structured process and develops a theory as the research progresses. Qualitative research is characterised by its aims relating to understanding aspects of the participants' social life. Qualitative methods generate words that convey thoughts about personal experiences, rather than numbers, as the medium for analysis (Brikci & Green, 2007). This approach is normally conducted using pre planned structured, semi-structured interviews, focus and or group interviews (May, 1997). May (1997:109) states that, *'interviews yield rich insights into people's experiences, opinions, aspirations, attitudes and feelings'*.

### **Epistemology and Methodology**

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith & Osborn 2007) was selected as the qualitative methodology for this study as it is based upon a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity with an emphasis on the individual's perspective and interpretation. This approach enables the researcher to understand the subjective experience of Gypsies and Travellers. This will enable us to gain an insight into Gypsies and Travellers behaviours and actions in certain situations and the motivations behind these behaviours by reducing accepted assumptions about why people behave in certain ways in certain situations (Lester 1999).

The phenomenological approach involves a detailed examination of the participant's life and world. IPA attempts *'to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an object or event, as opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself. At the same time, IPA also emphasises that the research exercise is a dynamic process with an active role for the researcher in that process'* (Smith & Osborn 2007:53).

IPA aims to gain as far as possible an 'insider perspective'. The depth of understanding gained into the participant's world depends on, and is also complicated by, the researcher's own conceptualisations and assumptions. These conceptions need to be made explicit in order to make sense of the personal world of the participant through a process of interpretative activity.

IPA is consistent with its phenomenological origins as it combines empathic hermeneutics with questioning hermeneutics. Zimmermann (2017) suggests that the word '*hermeneutics comes from the Greek Language. Hermeneuein means "to utter, to explain, to translate" and was first used by thinkers who discussed how divine messages or mental ideas are expressed in human language*'. Hermeneutics as a methodological discipline provides a toolbox for the efficient interpretation of human actions, texts and relevant other material (Mantzavinos, 2016).

IPA is concerned with trying to understand what something is like from the point of view of the participants. This, in turn, requires the researcher to have a degree of self-awareness and the ability to see, hear and understand the participant and themselves. Empathic hermeneutics requires a self-conscious interplay between feelings and cognition and the use of personal memories or imagination to experience an understanding of what something feels like for the participant (Ellen, 1996; Howard, 1982). At the same time, questioning hermeneutics requires the researcher to ask the right questions to enable the participant to provide a rich idiographic account of the phenomenon being studied (Smith, 2010).

IPA analysis can also involve asking critical questions of the texts from participants, for example, what do the participant's words and presentation say about what they have experienced? Therefore it is important to observe if the participant's body language is in-tune with their narratives, while questioning whether there is a sense that something maybe 'going on' for the participants that they themselves are less aware of (or is the participant expressing something that they were not intending to share?) (Smith & Osborn, 2007).

Smith & Osborn (2003:51) describe this as a '*two-stage interpretation process, or a double hermeneutic*'. While the participants are trying to make sense of their world, the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world. '*IPA is therefore intellectually connected to hermeneutics and theories of interpretation*' (Smith & Osborn, 2007:22).

IPA is particularly useful when examining people's personal experience and the context of the phenomenon being investigated. The IPA study approach captures the complexities of people's experiences and the interrelationships with the important people and places in their lives.

### **Critiques of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Methodology**

Although IPA has become a dominant qualitative research methodology in the field of the social sciences due to its flexible and versatile design, it has been widely critiqued. For example, Giorgia (2010) criticised IPA for being riddled with ambiguities as well as lacking standardisation.

Brocki & Wearden (2006) and Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez (2011) argue that IPA is mostly descriptive and not sufficiently interpretative. Smith et al (2009) dispute these criticisms and notes that there is an increasingly large quantity of publications which outline the philosophical, theoretical, and methodological underpinnings of IPA.

As with other phenomenological inquiries that focus on perceptions, IPA can be problematic and limit our understanding. This is because while phenomenological research seeks to understand the lived experiences, it does not evaluate why they occur. Willig (2008) argues that an authentic research inquiry that aims to understand the participants' lived experiences should also explore the conditions that triggered the experiences in the first place, such as the participants' histories, past events and the social economic environment in which they live.

Willig (2008) also highlights that IPA gives unsatisfactory recognition to the integral role of language in the same way as many phenomenological approaches. This raises questions as to whether IPA can accurately capture the experiences and meanings of experiences rather than just the opinions connected with them. Willig (2008) argues that phenomenology as a philosophy is associated with contemplation, allowing the researcher to explore their experiences through phenomenological meditation. Phenomenology as a research methodology approach relies on the verbal

accounts of participants about their experiences, together with the values and beliefs of the researcher. Willig (2008) suggests that this raises a critical question regarding the researcher and the participants' requisite communication skills and their ability to successfully communicate using guided semi-structured conversations/interviews. Willig (2008) also argues that phenomenological research is only suitable for the most eloquent individuals, otherwise the nuances of the experiences could be lost.

Tuffour (2009) indicates that this could also be the case when interviewing people about sensitive or personal issues. This criticism, however, could be seen as elitist, suggesting that individuals would be excluded from IPA studies unless they have the right level of fluency to describe their experiences. Smith et al (2009) dispute this criticism, as they argue that IPA's prerequisite of meaning-making and sense-making takes place in the context of metaphors, discourse, narratives etc, and is always intertwined with language.

While it is understandable that IPA research would be easier for the researcher if their participants all had a high level of fluency, it would limit the phenomena studied, resulting in a lot of rich valuable data being lost. The present research has found that Gypsies and Travellers' communication skills are generally lower than the average for people within the settled communities, however these challenges were overcome by spending more time with each participant, getting to know their speech patterns and paraphrasing their comments back to them, which enabled them to expand on their narratives.

To ensure that this IPA research was conducted effectively, active steps were taken to give voice to the experiences of the participants, followed by idiographic, hermeneutic and contextual analyses to understand the cultural experiences of the participants through the detailed interpretation of their narratives.

### **Validity**

The researcher's own subjective feelings can influence the final write-up of

each of the case studies. This may result in the findings appearing to lack rigour. Yardley's (2000:215–228 & 2008:235–251) framework for validity in qualitative research has guided this study, focusing on *“the four broad principles: Sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance”*. To conduct a research project that is guided by these principles, it was important to ensure that the analysis and interpretation was sensitive to the data, the social context and the relationships between the participants and myself. To do this, consideration was given to the balance of power between the research participants and myself. (The University's research ethics guidelines were adhered to throughout – see below).

The sample size was considered adequate to address the research questions. A detailed account of the methods used and the analytical and interpretive processes is presented to ensure transparency and coherence. The aim of the research has been outlined together with the reasons why this research is important. The possible impact of the results for Social Work Education and Practice will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

Personal subjective opinions were identified and have been avoided and have not intruded into the analysis of what the qualitative data means (McLeod, 2006). McLeod (2006) notes that good interview analysis should always make clear which information is the factual description and which is inference or the opinion of the researcher.

### **Ethical and moral considerations**

This study is guided by the University's research ethics guidelines (Appendix 4). Researchers have responsibilities to their research participants, but also to their colleagues and the people to whom the findings will be presented. Brikci & Green, (2007) suggest that when considering possible ethical concerns, a good starting place is the four principles of Tom Beauchamp and Jim Childress (1983)

1. Autonomy; respect the rights of the individual,



2. Beneficence; doing good,
3. Non-maleficence; not doing harm,
4. Justice; particularly equity. (Beauchamp & Childress, 1983, cited by Brikci & Green, 2007:5).

It was important to carefully consider the context and the aim of the study, together with how sensitive the topic might be. It was also important to be aware that, for some of the participants, being asked about their experiences of being forcefully evicted could raise traumatising memories or make the participants feel uncomfortable or even fearful about any perceived consequences of sharing their narrative.

Asking people to talk about experiences that were frightening, humiliating and painful can cause or increase their anxiety. It may not only create distress during an interview but may leave the person feeling upset and vulnerable afterwards. It was very important, therefore, to monitor the participant for signs of distress and to steer the guided conversation back to a safe topic at the end of each session to ground the participant with neutral thoughts (Brikci & Green, 2007).

There are two additional ethical issues that should be considered in any research project. These are the participants' consent and confidentiality. Firstly, all participants freely consented to take part in this study without being coerced or unfairly pressurised. It was important to obtain the participants' permission because the doctrine of 'informed consent' is a universal requirement for all ethical research (May, 1997). All of participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 5) after the aims and objectives of the study were explained to them (Sarantakos, 2005). Due to the low level of literacy of many the participants, all forms and written information were kept to a minimum. All written information was read and explained in a manner that was clear and 'Gypsy and Traveller-friendly'. Some of the participants signed the consent forms with an 'X' as they were unable to sign their names.

Secondly, the identities of the participants were protected at all times. The transcribed records of the guided conversations/interviews and all personal data were not left lying around in notebooks or stored in unprotected

computer files. Written notes and personal data was stored in a locked filing cabinet and the computer files were encrypted. All names were changed to ensure that the identities would remain confidential (McLeod, 2006), even though a couple of the participants wanted their full names to be used. This was deemed as inappropriate as it is not possible to guarantee that taking part in this study would not cause them difficulties in the future within their communities.

## **Method**

Successfully completing the Reliability Test to undertake Adult Attachment Interviews (AAI) relating to the Reflective Functioning at the Anna Freud Centre enabled this study to undertake reliable AAI interviews with the research participants.

The Adult Attachment Interview (Appendix 6) was adapted to fit the requirements of this thesis and used in the guided conversations/interviews with the participants. The adapted Adult Attachment Interview enabled the participants to explore their lived experience of their attachment relationships to people and place and how these attachment relationships have been affected by their accommodation status.

The guided conversations were transcribed and then analysed using IPA. The transcripts from each of the participant's interviews were carefully read to identify any key themes, these key themes were highlighted and recorded. Then the transcript was read again, with the key themes in mind, this enabled secondary themes and connecting ideas to stand out so that they could be recorded so that the implications of the key themes and the secondary themes could be analysed. The transcripts with all of the analytical notes were then put aside for a few days before being read again. The correlations between the themes were easier to identify after several interpretive readings.

A large white board was used to map all of the key themes, the secondary themes and the connecting concepts. This allowed all the connections to be mapped in an easy to read format, which helped with the analysis process. The key themes identified were then discussed with the participants to

ascertain if my interpretations seemed correct for the participants. This enabled a deeper level of analysis.

The findings are presented in the following chapters. Firstly, the emergent thematic analysis of the guided conversations has been discussed. This is followed with a separate discussion linking the analysis to the existing literature (Smith & Osborn, 2007). However, there is a distinct lack of literature relating to Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices and their attachment relationships to people and place. The literature discussion, therefore, has been based mainly on Gypsy and Traveller social exclusion, prejudice and discrimination, the lack of culturally appropriate accommodation and how these issues affect Gypsies and Travellers attachment relationships to people and place.

### **Data collection**

When using the AAI with adults from the Gypsy and Traveller communities in a pilot study it became apparent that most individuals struggled to find words to describe their emotional relationships with their parents. Finding practical words to describe their relationships, however, appeared to be easier. One woman reported that her mother had worked hard to feed her. After a discussion about her memories of her mother working hard, she was asked if she had felt loved as a child. She stated that they didn't talk about 'love' (Hamilton-Perry, 2014).

People assume that as Travellers speak English then no language barrier exists. This is not strictly true. While a form of English is spoken, it is often with a strong dialect, including different words and meanings. This decreases the likelihood of Gypsies and Travellers making immediate sense of what is being said to them, unless talking within their own community. This, in turn, can result in difficulties in processing verbal information and can result in several sentences being lost, which often leads to misunderstanding. Many Gypsies and Travellers also find it difficult to express themselves because they do not know the correct words. Rather than lose face, they don't even try, especially in front of a person unknown to them (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry,

2010). From the start, therefore, it was important to explain the questions in a culturally appropriate manner.

### **Interviews/ guided conversations**

All interviews can be viewed as guided conversations with a pre-determined purpose (Breakwell, 2000; Kirklees.gov.uk, 2015). The 'guided conversation' interview process was considered to be the most appropriate method for collecting detailed comments from the participants as it allows the participant to talk about the topics relevant to this thesis. Smith & Osborn (2007) note that semi structured interviews/guided conversations can be quite involved and intense as the researcher needs to guide the participant without restricting their narrative of the phenomenon being studied. It is important, therefore, when constructing a good quality semi-structured interview/guided conversation schedule not to produce formats that are too long, overly extensive or detailed as this can constrain responses (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011).

One difficulty and disadvantage of using guided conversations to collect data to examine the research questions was Gypsies' and Travellers' enjoyment of talking but their reluctance to say more than they think is necessary. Many Gypsies and Travellers only answer questions after sharing what they want to talk about. Conversation sessions were quite long and some participants required more than two or three sessions. Hence it was important to try and keep the conversations on track.

There were two main options when it came to recording guided conversations. The first is to take detailed notes from which to transcribe the interviews, while the second is to record the conversation electronically and then transcribe the interviews from the recording (Kirklees.gov.uk, 2015). There are advantages to both. The guided conversations will be electronically recorded if the participants give their consent, as recording the conversations makes the process of transcribing them more accurate and detailed.

Some individuals reported that they did not wish to be recorded. When meeting with such Gypsy and Traveller participants accurate notes were made without predetermined ideas of relevance in a narrative stream. By doing this, no aspects were consciously excluded of the participants' experience of their lives, although themes and threads linked to the research questions were highlighted.

Gypsies and Travellers' speech is often punctuated with swear words to enable them to express their feelings. These have been retained when recording the conversations.

Finally, the research has been mindful of Belton's (2005:147) point that '*the way that Travellers choose to describe themselves to outsiders depends on who is asking the questions, what the context is and what the Travellers stand to gain or lose by the labels*'.

### **Data Analysis - Eidetic reduction and Phenomenological reduction**

Eidetic reduction is tantamount to structural reduction, and phenomenological reduction to existential reduction. Eidetic reduction is used to identify the basic components of the phenomena and helps to reveal the objective structures of what is being researched. This reduction is done with the intention of reducing a phenomenon into key themes, by removing what is perceived, and leaving what is required. Phenomenological reduction is a method for uncovering the internal dynamics of real, concrete themes with which they are coterminous, each in its own ways, but not identical. Cogan (2017) states that '*the phenomenological reduction is at once a description and a prescription of a technique that allows one to voluntarily sustain the awaking force of astonishment so that conceptual cognition can be carried throughout intentional analysis, thus bring the 'knowing' of astonishment into our everyday experience*'. Eidetic reduction and phenomenological reduction identify the essential components of the data that are unique for each participant (Pietkiewicz & Smith 2012). Any recurring themes, phrases and identifying words were highlighted and their meanings explored (Okely, 2008).

## **Recruitment and Sample Selection**

Reid et al (2005:20-23) argue that 'less is more' when undertaking IPA. They state that *'fewer participants examined at a greater depth is always preferable to a broader, shallow and simply descriptive analysis of many individuals, as commonly seen in thematic analysis, grounded theory or poor IPA'*. They suggest focusing on between three and six participants for an undergraduate or master's level and from four to ten participants for professional doctorates. They note that recommendations for PhD studies are less easy to explicate. Smith et al (2009) highlight that the sample size is contextual and must be considered on a study-by-study basis. This study is grounded in IPA idiographic commitment to smaller sample size to ensure a deeper level of analysis with a greater interpretative focus (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011).

Some of the participants contacted the researcher and volunteered to take part in this study. Other participants were accessed via Traveller Education teams and Local Authority Traveller Liaison Officers. The sample size was relatively small, with ten participants chosen to represent a cross-section of both nomadic and settled Traveller families from the various communities. It was important to aim for a cross section of participants due to Gypsy and Traveller communities not being a homogeneous community (Bennet & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

At the start of the guided conversation interview process, it was noticeable that Gypsy and Traveller participants who knew me and had worked with me in my various employment roles within the Travelling communities seemed more relaxed and open during the interview sessions. A couple of participants, who only knew me by name and had never worked with me, were decidedly reserved and difficult to engage with. It seemed that these participants were giving the answers that they thought were wanted rather than honest accounts of their childhood experiences of their attachment relationships to people and place. As we have seen, Gypsies and Travellers are on the whole very private people who do not share private family details with Gorgios.

The guided conversation questions were re-evaluated due to the possibility that they were not easily understood. When a participant who knew me was asked the same questions, however, the narrative was rich and detailed. It was decided therefore that there was no need to adapt the guided conversation questions and to continue with the original ones.

Pragmatically, a small sample was chosen from a small geographic area. Data collected in this way may not be representative of the wider population, but this approach was considered likely to offer useful insights into the previously under-researched question of Gypsies and Travellers attachments to people and place. Hopefully insights from this research will indicate whether it might be replicated over a wider geographic area with a larger sample size (Alston & Bowles, 2002).

### **Participants**

All names have been changed to ensure participants' anonymity. Ten participants were interviewed during several guided conversation/ interview sessions, between May 2015 and May 2017.

Table 2: Participants project names, ethnicity and gender.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Molly	Romani	Female
Doris	Romani	Female
Lucy	Romani	Female
Mandy	Romani	Female
Arthur	Romani/ Gorgio	Man
Jane	New Age	Female
Lee	New Age	Male
Pete	Irish	Male
Mary	Irish	Female
Ronnie	Bargee	Male

### **Difficulties Securing Participants**

While being known and accepted within the Gypsy and Traveller communities, securing participants who have been willing to share their personal life histories proved harder than expected.

The concept of a research project to gain knowledge and understanding about Gypsies' and Travellers' earliest interpersonal relationships was viewed with mistrust by many of the potential participants. Individuals struggled to believe that the information gained would not be used against them at some point in the future. Some people disbelieved the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. The level of mistrust and suspicion about what a Gorgio would do with private personal family knowledge was greater than I had expected.

The Popular Gypsy and Traveller magazine, *The Travellers Times* reported in February 2016 that during January 2016, reports had begun to circulate throughout the UK's Gypsy and Traveller communities that local Government Officials were beginning to collect personal data from Gypsies and Travellers with regards to how and where they conducted their personal and professional lives. Gypsy and Traveller communities expressed concern that the councils wanted to know if, when and where, the Gypsies and Travellers were travelling (Horne 2016). Gypsies and Travellers were reported to fear that the Conservative government will use this information in their drive to illegalise and eradicate Gypsy and Traveller cultures from British Society. (This new initiative follows on from attempts of the Conservative led coalition Governments 2010 – 2015 to change the status and definition of Gypsies and Travellers). This change of status aimed to remove Gypsy and Traveller minority ethnic and cultural status from members of the Travelling communities that settled for any period of time (Horne 2016).

### **Other Difficulties Encountered**

This thesis was, unfortunately, put on hold for a whole year because I gave evidence against two Gypsy men, whom I had known since they were children, in a murder trial. While the police were investigating the high-profile murder of an elderly local Gorgio, I was told to distance myself from the Gypsy and Traveller communities for my own safety. I have slowly rebuilt my relationships with members of the communities since the two men were convicted and sentenced. However, I am mindful of the family networks and connections when visiting less well-known families.



### **Unintended Consequences of this Study**

Many families have noted that there is a lack of Gypsy and Traveller support and advocacy projects. Projects such as the Ormiston Travellers Initiative in Cambridgeshire have closed in recent years due to lack of government and charity funding. Families have also reported that they find it hard to seek help from people who have no idea about Gypsy and Traveller culture and lifestyles.

An unintended consequence of this study, due to the lack of professional support available for families, has been that I became re-involved with supporting participants to gain access to mainstream services. While this has become a time-consuming by-product of the research process, assisting families with support to access services has helped to build trusting relationships. This, in turn, has permitted a deeper understanding of what life is like for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities and the possible impact on individuals' attachment to people and place. It has also provided the opportunity to revisit interviews with the participants to ensure that I have recorded their narratives correctly.

### **Difficulties completing the Genograms**

From the outset of this study, the intention was to collate a concise family history and genograms, for each participant. This was considered to provide the historical, cultural and family connection background for each of the case studies. However, this was not possible with all participants due firstly, to the reluctance to share family details with a Gorgio and secondly, it has been noted when working with Gypsy and Traveller families, that due to the large inter-connected family groupings, there can be some uncertainty about who belongs to which branch of the family/clan/tribe. This was particularly noticeable when families use family names such as John. One genogram showed that the family tree had a paternal grandfather (PGF) called John. John (PGF) had nine children. John (PGF) named one of his sons 'John Boy' and another son 'John Junior'. All of PGFs children had between 6 and 9 children and all of whom named at least one of their sons some form of variation of 'John'. The paternal grandfather's grandchildren and great

grandchildren also named at least one or two of their sons some form of variation of John. Consequently, the genograms collated have not been included in this study.

## **Summary**

In summary, this chapter has presented an overview of the methodology and the method chosen to undertake this study. The rationale for choosing IPA over other qualitative methodologies has also been presented, together with an exploration of each step of the research process.

The literature search highlighted that there is a lack of literature relating to Gypsies' and Travellers' attachments to either people or place. These two phenomena appear to be under researched. This may be due to the fact that Gypsies and Travellers are a hard to reach and on the whole a very private, mistrustful minority group. Cemlyn et al (2009:vi) suggest that;

'There is an unquantified but substantial negative psychological impact on children who experience repeated brutal evictions, family tensions associated with insecure lifestyles, and an unending stream of overt and extreme hostility from the wider population'.

Therefore, this research aims to begin to fill the gap in the under researched area of Gypsy and Traveller attachment relationships to people and place.

The next chapter will present a discussion of the findings from the IPA Analysis. This will be followed in Chapter Seven with a discussion between the findings and existing literature. The key themes from each of the participant's interviews is presented in connection to the literature reviewed and linked to the research questions. The final chapter will present the Reflections on the research process and then discuss some Conclusions from the thesis.

## Chapter six – Guided conversation interview findings



Photograph 7; Romani Gypsy Trailer (gypsytrailer-caravans, 2018)

### Introduction

In this chapter the findings from the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of the guided conversation interviews are discussed. The main themes identified during the process of analysis are presented for each participant. Each participant's themes are then discussed and linked to the four research questions.

- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships? (RQ1)
- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has had on their family relationships? (RQ2)
- How does the Traveller culture and way of life affect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours? (RQ3)
- Does the environment or place where families live affect how communities' parent their children? (RQ4)

## Molly – Female Romani

Forced evictions versus planned moves (RQ1)

Feelings of sadness or despair due to the lose of traditional travelling routes (RQ2)

The importance of place attachment (RQ3)

Strong beliefs in traditional cultural ways and strict gender division (RQ3)

Attachment feelings to the dead (RQ3)

Shared parenting/caring for the elderly (RQ4)

### **Forced evictions versus planned moves (RQ1)**

For Molly, being moved on by the bailiff or police could be frustrating and stressful. Forced evictions seem to have made her family's already hard way of life, even harder. Molly's narrative indicates that forced evictions were a frightening time when her family groups could end up separated and their belongings were often lost.

By contrast, Molly's memories of preparing to move from their winter campsite as soon as spring arrived were by contrast a time of great excitement. The whole family had their roles to play in getting ready to set off on her family's traditional travelling circuits. Molly shared:

*“Once Christmas was past, every morning daddy made a big thing of going outside to taste the air to see if spring had come. Daddy would lick his finger and hold it up, while turning around, yous know, like looking for the first sign of spring. Then he'd lick his finger, stamp his feet and shake his head before going off to do what daddies do. The day daddy nodded his head; we knew that we'd be off in a few days. That's when us children would get excited and into all kinds of trouble as we knew we were setting out again. Mummy and daddy were too busy getting ready to move that they didn't have time to be worrying about what we were up to. Us children looked after each other, so we were always ok”.*

Molly talked about planned moves as happy times, when she and her siblings were allowed a little more freedom as the adults and her older sisters were too busy planning and getting ready to move to, as Molly said, “be on our tails”. The younger children, from Molly’s account, got up to all kinds of cheeky kid mischief. Molly noted that they were never rude or bad; they just played freely without their normal tasks and without getting told off.

### **Feelings of sadness or despair due to the loss of traditional travelling routes (RQ2)**

Molly’s family followed her family’s traditional travelling routes which were handed down through the generations. Molly’s narrative indicates that she saw her family as being a ‘big family’ or ‘highborn’ (Molly’s terms) Gypsy family as they were from good blood. Molly shared that her family’s blood had not been mixed with Gorgio blood. Therefore, they were deemed as being a pure blood family, which gave her family a high status amongst the Gypsy communities. This ensured that her family had access to the best camping grounds and work opportunities.

The Gypsy communities had historically avoided territorial problems by the different family groups sticking to their own travelling routes. For Molly, the lack of campsites has disrupted the Gypsy communities’ natural hierarchy and order, leading to more family feuds and fall-outs, as there are not enough places where Gypsies and Travellers are allowed to stop and set up camp. This has resulted in both ‘highborn’ and ‘lowborn’ families competing for the limited campsites available. Molly’s family continues to try to visit the old traditional campsites.

### **The importance of place attachment (RQ3)**

Molly reports that she has a deep connection to her family’s old campsites. For her, her family’s history is embedded into the earth of each important place. Molly shared:

*“The land holds our history, we don’t read and write you know, so our stories are in the land. You know what I mean? Rocks are placed on the ground as markers, to show us the way. A tree may have a mark craved into the bark to tell other Gypsies that we claim a place for our*

*kin. Another tree may have bits of cloth tied into them to celebrate a birth or a wedding. We need to replace these to keep the memories alive. A stream where we collect water hears all the woman's chatter and knows their secret hopes and dreams. You know, throw a penny into the water and make a wish. When we return to a family campsite, the pennies are often still in the water and we throw in another penny if our wishes were granted as a thank you. Sometimes we got what we wished for and wish we hadn't asked for it and we make another wish to change things.*

For Molly, these superstitions were often linked to family get-togethers, where the spiritual female members of the group, who were deemed as being able to see into the future, would spend time with the women before telling the young girls or women what their future held for them. The place gained an importance in the woman's life and at times of confusion or doubt, the woman would return to this place so that she could gain direction and comfort by sitting peacefully and letting the spirits of the special place un-jumble their confused thoughts, allowing them to think clearly, so that they know what they need to do.

Some Aboriginal groups also hold similar beliefs.

### **Attachment feelings to the dead (RQ3)**

Molly's narrative suggests that she has strong feelings of attachment to her deceased family members and their resting places. She noted that if a member of her tribe died when they were too far away from their winter grounds to take them back, they would be buried in the local churchyard close to where they had died. The grave and Churchyard would then be added to the family's travelling circuit so that the family could visit their loved one regularly.

Molly's family appears to hold strong beliefs that they have to visit their dead to keep them company and to tell them the family's news to keep the family bonds alive. The family tends the grave to ensure that it is well cared for.

Molly indicated that it would bring shame on the family if the grave looked dishevelled. This practice also seems to be a way of keeping the deceased's memory alive. Molly notes that at time of great stress, she has taken her worries to her mother's graveside and has spent the day sitting with her,

sharing her fears. Her strong feelings of attachment to her mother and her comforting memories seem to provide Molly with feelings of safety and security which enables her to gain the emotional strength to cope with life's difficulties.

Molly notes that years ago, when her grand-mummy was a child, Gypsies buried their loved ones in the place that they died. Molly found it amusing when sharing that her grand daddie's daddy was buried on an old traditional camping ground. *"The Gorgios were so frit (frightened) that they would never walk down the drag (lane). They named it Romany Lane. We still camp next to grand daddie's daddy and keep his grave tidy although the Gorgios would never know where the grave was as they are blind to our markings and signs"*.

### **Strong beliefs in traditional cultural ways and strict gender division (RQ3)**

For Molly, it seems that her strict culturally traditional Romani upbringing helps to connect all of the women together in a close female family group. Molly describes her family group as her tribe, with the extended family as her Clan. This suggests that Molly and her family view themselves as culturally separate from mainstream society. *'This social division of a people, especially of a preliterate people, can be defined in the terms of their common descent, their shared ethnic and ancestral culture'* (Collins English Dictionary, 2016). Molly's family tribe work together and are generally self-sufficient, with their own traditions and rules. While they live alongside it, they are not integrated into the culture of the settled community.

Molly's narrative suggests that the females inhabit the private sphere of the tribe's day-to-day life while the men inhabit its public sphere and also the wider settled community. Molly shared that *"Mummy taught me that a woman has the strength to care for the children, her man, the oldies and that our sisters and daughters are part of our strength"*. This suggests the women in Molly's family form a cooperative sub-society in which the children, the elderly and the sick are cared for, ensuring the survival for her tribe. This strong

female bond seems to have enabled the children to develop strong attachments to all of the females within their tribe.

For Molly, childbirth was strictly a female business. It was deemed as a time when she was seen as ceremonially unclean ('mochardi'). Molly's family had strict customs surrounding childbirth. Molly had not been allowed to prepare food during her menstrual period, while pregnant or immediately after giving birth. She could not attend church or even touch a bible until she has been churched.

*"When we have babies, we have to remain away from the men folk until we have been 'churched'. Once a Mummy has been churched she can re-join the rest of the family and can cook for her man again. It is so, so bad to cook for the men until you have been churched, you know it's unlucky".*

Churching is seen as a form of ceremonial purification. Women can be isolated for up to 3 months depending on the family's beliefs. This practice also provides the mother with a period of time to regain her strength and health; this can also be seen as a way of ensuring the mother and child's survival.

In Molly's family, the custom is for the babies to be born in the birthing trailer, which is unusual as trailers are normally burnt after a woman has given birth in it, in order to protect the men folk from getting contaminated by the evil spirits. Molly's family's birthing trailer is stored in a quiet area in her granny's yard, where no man would go.

The females of Molly's tribe travel miles to return to her granny's yard when they are close to their time. The women congregate together to support the expectant mother and to celebrate the birth of a healthy infant. The women in the tribe care for the new mother's children during labour and until she has regained her strength.

Molly spoke sadly about her tribe's beliefs that sometimes Jesus wants a baby before the baby is born due to the baby having a pure spirit. Molly shared that she believes that when a baby is still-born, it has been chosen by



Jesus. If a baby is still-born, the women would clean the baby and wrap him or her in linen, before sitting with the mother and the baby to allow the female members of the tribe to pay their respects. The baby would then be buried in the plot behind the birthing trailer next to where the after-birth was normally buried. The stillborn baby would never be spoken about again, although all of the pregnant women would place flowers on the graves of the still-born babies, as their time drew close. This is done to honour the lost babies and to pray that Jesus would be merciful and not take their unborn child. Molly did not question her tribe's beliefs that Jesus wanted some of the unborn children. Gypsy and Traveller women experience a much higher level of infant mortality than women from the settled community. It is possible that believing that Jesus wanted their unborn babies made the pain of losing their infants easier for the mothers to bear.

It seems that this coming together of the women of the tribe around the time of giving birth strengthens their strong family bond which, in turn, reinforces the women's feelings of emotional attachment to each other and to their traditions. This seems to strengthen the family's core structure and connects all of the branches of the tribe together.

#### **Shared parenting/ caring for the elderly (RQ4)**

For Molly, sharing the care of children with the older children and the other female members of the tribe is the way that her family has always cared for the children. Molly shared that her granny and aunties also looked after her and her siblings when she was a child. Molly shared that living on the roadside can be dangerous for small children:

*“Our mum also taught me about having eyes in the back of your head when living road-side. That's when us women really come together as our family tribe and keep all the babies' safe. Five mummies' can watch the children better than one mammy on her own”.*

Sharing the parenting of the children in the family group with the other women gave the children the greatest chance of survival and of reaching adulthood. This also freed up the younger stronger women of the tribe to work and

provide for the whole tribe, knowing that family members who cared about them were tending their infants.

## **Doris – Female Romani**

Feeling safe in family groups and feelings of fear of the police and being moved on (RQ1)

Traditional travelling circuits for employment (RQ2)

Sadness and resentment, due to the loss of the old ways of life (RQ2)

Traditional gender division of roles, children given responsibilities from an early age to help ensure the survival of the family (RQ3)

Strict moral codes of conduct, shared values and beliefs (RQ3)

Close family, strong family attachments, living and working together (RQ4)

### **Feeling safe in family groups and feelings of fear of the police and being moved on (RQ1)**

Doris noted that she felt safe in places where the family could stop together and her wider family could join them. She gains comfort and pleasure spending time with her extended family, sharing family news and retelling the old family stories. Being in a larger family group has provided Doris with feelings of belonging, of safety and emotional security. Her narrative suggests that she felt that Gorgios left her family alone when they travelled in a large family group. The police also seemed to give them a wide berth when they travelled in a large group. Conversely, when her nuclear family travelled alone, her father struggled to find places to park up where they would be left alone. Doris remembers that she often felt vulnerable. She shared that she remembers:

*“Feeling safe with my family, but I do remember the fear when the police came and moved us on. I remember our mother being tearful and us girls hurrying to pack up our belongings before the police got nasty with our daddy. I don’t miss not knowing where we are going to stop for the night, feeling hungry as our daddy couldn’t find a quite spot to pull onto, so that our mother could make us a meal”.*

### **Traditional travelling circuits for employment (RQ2)**

Doris's narrative about her memories of travelling during her childhood indicated that she had formed attachments to some of the places on her family's traditional travelling circuits. The places where her children were conceived and born together with the place that her son died also hold a special meaning for Doris.

*“When we were pea or hop picking, all my family would meet on the farm, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. There was one farm in Kent that we made a beeline for as it always felt as if we had come home as we pulled onto the farm and set up our camp for the next month. It's a special place. I believe that I got with child during three of our times there. Whenever I get down, I think about this farm and all my happy memories come back. I used to dream of one day living on the farm”.*

For Doris, winter was a time of hardship as a child due to having to attend school and the lack of work that her parents could do: *“We were always on the move except during the winter months when we'd find somewhere to park up until the spring. That's when the children went to school, over winter. Winters were hard times with money and food being short”.* However, the family would have pitched in together and shared what food there was, strengthening and reinforcing their strong family bond.

Doris spoke about having to attend school during the winter months while her family was parked up. Her memories of attending school were not positive due to being bullied by the other children and experiencing prejudice from the teaching staff. Even though Doris had hated going to school, she made her children attend when they were old enough. She and Harry believe that all Gypsy children need an education these days, so they expected their children to stand up for themselves and to be strong and to get on with it.

### **Sadness and resentment, due to the loss of the old ways of life (RQ2)**

Doris and Harry are now living on a council-run Gypsy and Traveller site. They have been on their pitch for the past 20 years since Harry gave up going around the country bare-knuckle fighting. Harry had been recognised as a powerful prize-fighter in his time. One of Harry's sons took his place and continues the family tradition. Doris notes that one of her grandson's hopes

was to take over from her son to ensure that the family retains their status. Status appears to be very important to Doris.

Some of Doris's children and their families also live on the site. While Doris calls the site 'home', she doesn't seem to have the same attachment feelings for their site as she has for the farms in Kent where she felt happy and secure. Doris' narrative constantly returns to her recollections of working on the farms, and she speaks happily about her memories of the farms in Kent that played such an important role in her childhood for her and her family. Doris's memories of the farm in Kent provide her with emotional comfort during times of stress.

*"We worked on the land when there was work to be had, harvesting crops and anything else that was needed. It was hard work, but we aren't afraid of hard work, its how we are brought up. Our parents knew which farms would welcome us if we pulled onto their land. Other families, like my cousins, worked on different farms each year although we would all come together at times on the largest farms (as) we preferred to work for farmers that we knew. I used to look forward to going to the farms in Kent; I felt that I truly belong there. I was happy there".*

They moved onto their pitch on the site because Doris feels that the old ways have nearly died out, *"the settled folk have made sure of that"*. Doris and Harry need to be able to access services now that Harry at the age of 85 is ill and she is 74 years old. Doris seems resentful that there are so few sites. She seems to feel trapped on her pitch: *"Once you get a pitch, you have to stay on it otherwise another family will take it from you. There are so few sites, not enough for all of us. We might as well live in a house at times"*. Doris shared that a good Romani family would not steal her pitch as they would not do that to one of their own. Doris stated *"you have to be careful of the Irish tinkers, they'd take your pitch and steal the clothes off your back while you were still wearing them, if you don't watch them"*. Some of Doris's other comments also indicated that she doesn't trust the Irish Travellers.

For Doris, who remembers the 'old ways', it is probably harder for her to accept that living life on the road has become almost impossible. Most of the campsites where she stayed as a child are no longer accessible. The

traditional seasonal farm work that her parents took each year is no longer available and what farm work there is has been taken over by Eastern Europeans.

### **Traditional gender division of roles, children given responsibilities from an early age to help ensure the survival of the family (RQ3)**

Doris shared that as a child, girls were taught how to cook and clean and care for their siblings while the boys were taught their father's trades and how to provide for their families. Doris noted that girls were "*brought up to enjoy cleaning, to be proud of our homes and our men folk*".

Doris shared:

*"My mum and grannies taught me how to look after my man and how to keep him from straying. (Doris winks and gives a mischievous smile). Me and Harry have been together for 60 years. He always knew where he was well off. I kept his belly full and his bed warm".*

While it is considered culturally inappropriate for women to discuss sexual relationships, mothers also teach their daughters how to be a good wife once she is married. Sex is also seen as a very private matter. When living in such a small confined space as a trailer, children learn at a very young age to ignore their parents if they overhear anything from the bedroom area. As soon as children are old enough they move into their own trailer, which is normally parked next to the main trailer. Placing the children in their own trailer gives the older ones responsibility for the younger ones. This seems to strengthen the children's attachment bonds to each other.

### **Strict moral codes of conduct, shared values and beliefs (RQ3)**

Doris values the traditional strict moral codes of conduct and the shared values and beliefs of Romani Gypsies as they have played an important role in her family's life. Doris shared that she taught her children Gypsy values and told them stories about their way of life, just like her mother had taught her. She is proud that she taught her children right from wrong.

*"I have shared the stories that my mother and grandmother shared with me as a child, with my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren;*

*it's the only way to keep the old stories alive. I want them to be proud of who they are and not hide their culture from Country folk".*

Doris's narrative indicates that she had a powerful bond to her mother and her grandmother. It also suggests that Doris has a strong connection to her culture and heritage. For Doris, keeping the old stories alive by telling them to the next generation ensures that the children know about their shared history and it keeps the old memories alive for the next generation.

#### **Close family, living and working together (RQ4)**

Doris shared how important family was to her when she was growing up. Families worked together to ensure the survival of the family group. As soon as children were old enough they were given tasks which supported the smooth functioning of the family and deepened the family's interdependence.

Doris shared that her family were very close: *"Living roadside can be difficult and dangerous, we learnt from a very early age to look out for each other"*. Doris and her siblings looked after each other to keep each other safe which gave them the best chance of survival. Doris' family supported each other and pulled together to ensure that the children were cared for when her parents were working.

*"I grew up with my family, my parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters. Sometimes we travelled together; sometimes it was just mum and dad and my brothers and sisters. We'd meet up with the wider family at the horse fairs, family celebrations such as weddings and funerals. Sometimes, us children would stay with our granny when our parents were working somewhere that we couldn't go".*

Doris spoke about the fluidity of family life and the wider family shared the care of children, while her parents were working. Doris had a very relaxed approach when speaking about family members coming and going, and the normality of life on the move. Doris's face lit up when talking about staying with her granny, as this was a very happy time for her.

## Lucy – Female Romani

Travelled for employment, family gatherings and horse fairs (RQ2)

Strict division of labour and gender roles (RQ3)

Pride in keeping the trailer and belongings clean and tidy and strict moral codes of acceptable behaviour (RQ3)

The family worked together to ensure the its survival – (RQ 4)

Stopped travelling so that children could gain an education (RQ4)

Prejudice and discrimination forced family out of their home (RQ 2 &4)

### **Travelled for employment, family gatherings and horse fairs (RQ 2)**

Lucy shared that as a child, her family only travelled during the spring and summer months. Lucy's narrative suggests that the family's semi-settled, transient lifestyle provided her with feelings of security. It seems that, for Lucy, her family's movements were linked to the changing seasons. This must have given Lucy and her siblings a childhood that felt predictable which, along with travelling and meeting up with her wider family during the spring and summer months, must have made her childhood feel emotionally safe and secure.

*"Yeah, we used to hook the trailers up and move around to see family, seek work, go to horse fairs, that kinda thing".*

Lucy noted that her family never travelled far from their winter site and would return to it early at times of difficulty and stress. Lucy shared that her family used to travel around East Anglia and the boroughs of London so that her father could find work. Lucy, however, was not willing to share what her father did most of the time. When asked Lucy said:

*"This and that, whatever work was around really, we didn't ask as it were none of our business. He did scrap in the winter months. That was when scrap was worth collecting, now days its hardly worth the diesel to get it to the scrap yard. Copper is about the only metal that has kept a good price".*

Lucy's face lit up when she spoke about her memories of her going with her father when he went out collecting scrap. This suggests that her memories



trigger strong attachment feelings to her father and spending time helping him.

### **Strict division of labour, and gender roles – (RQ 3)**

Lucy's comments suggest that, although throughout her childhood there was a strict gender-based division of labour, women understand the male working world and helped their men out when times were hard to ensure the survival of the family. The women, however, as with many Gypsy and Traveller families, were expected to inhabit the private sphere of domestic life, focusing on caring for the family. The men inhabited the public sphere, the world outside of the family, the world of politics, finance and law to provide for their family (Smyth 2008). Lucy's narrative suggests that her family's gender division of labour had not changed for centuries. This gender division of labour can be described as *'traditional bourgeois gender roles which allocated public life to men and private life to women'* Smyth (2008:27). It seems that, for Lucy, this strict division of labour provided her and the females in her family with a sense of safety and protection.

### **Pride in keeping the trailer and belongings clean and tidy and strict moral codes of acceptable behaviour (RQ3)**

For Lucy, keeping her home clean and tidy is a matter of pride and appears to provide her with feelings of emotional comfort and a connection with her deceased mother.

*"Our mum's beautiful shiny trailer, it was lovely, all cut glass and polished chrome. Mum had white leather seats, covered in plastic to keep them clean. Us kids weren't allowed in it unless mum has just scrubbed us within an inch of our lives and we behaved ourselves. Mum's Crown Derby china took pride of place in the display cupboards along side the china dolls, which belonged to my granny and my granny's granny before her".*

Items and belongings which have been handed down through the generations, indicate that the family's history and status are treasured and honoured. The memories that these belongings trigger provide Lucy with feelings of emotional comfort, together with feelings of belonging and security. Lucy comments indicate she has strong feelings of attachment to her mother

and her ancestors. Caring for her family's Crown Derby China and the china dolls also provides Lucy with a physical link to her memories and feelings of being safe and cared for.

#### **The family work together to ensure the family's survival – (RQ 4)**

Lucy remembers all the females and the children of the family picking fruit and her mother making jam. Lucy's family worked together to ensure its survival, almost returning to a lifestyle of hunter gatherers, collecting fruit and berries from the trees and picking up vegetables that had fallen off the back of farm trailers onto the road, during harvesting. It seems that Lucy's family were always preparing for hard times when money might be tight. During Lucy's childhood, nothing went to waste. The children were always provided for, even if the adults sometimes went without.

This is something that Lucy continues to do with her own children as she states *"when food is short, a chunk of bread with loads of jam helps to fill the belly, and stops the babies crying"*. Lucy makes her own jam and chutneys with fruit from the trees. Arguably, fewer women of her age from the settled communities make their own jams and chutneys these days. Lucy's way of life seems to be keeping skills alive which may be disappearing from mainstream society.

Lucy feels that she has a close relationship with her children. She wants them to have a different childhood to the one that she had. Lucy doesn't believe in hitting her children. She remembers that as a child, any of the adults around her had the right to discipline them if they stepped out of line. Lucy notes that it wasn't just her parents who gave her a slap, or a clip around the ear. Lucy shared:

*"I don't hit my babies, there's no need to hit them, I shout at them and they know that they are in shit. I don't need them to fear me to do as they are told. Don't get me wrong, they are no angels and they do piss me off sometimes when they act stupid, but I shout at them and give them things to do to make up for the things they have done wrong"*.

Lucy notes that she gets the boys to wash the car or cut the grass while her daughter helps her in the kitchen if they need to be sanctioned for their behaviour.

#### **Stopped travelling so that children could gain an education (RQ 4)**

Lucy went against her family's tradition and attempted to settle in a home of bricks and mortar so that her children could gain an education. Lucy's narrative suggests that she understood the importance of her children being able to read and write in today's world.

*"I want my babies to have an education. I can barely read and write, my 10-year-old son reads better than I do. My baby boy is 8, he can't read and write well but he tries, he can do the maths. My baby girl is 7 and she is starting to read and write and I am so proud of her".*

Lucy valued her children's future and wanted them to be able to integrate into the local community so that they could feel that they belonged to both the community of their birth and the wider settled community.

Lucy's happy childhood memories of her mother's spotless trailer, filled with her family's treasures and the feelings of safety and belonging that this gave her, created the desire to make the house into a safe secure family home. Lucy spent a lot of time and energy personalising their house to make it a home, which she kept spotless. The garden was also kept neat and tidy. Lucy took pride in her home and intended to remain in the house and wider community until the children had finished school. Lucy tried to enable her children to develop attachment feelings to their home and to their local community.

It must have been quite hard for Lucy to make the transition from living in trailers in a large family group to making a home for herself and her children alone within the settled community. The prejudice and discrimination that the family faced must have made Lucy feel very isolated and vulnerable.

Lucy shared that she had made many sacrifices to move into the house of bricks and mortar:

*“My husband can’t live in the ‘Ken’ (house), he can’t settle here. You know many Gypsies can’t settle in a house, being surrounded by Gorgios. I had to do my best so that my babies get the chance to do their learning. In today’s world, us Gypsies need to be able to read and write”.*

### **Prejudice and discrimination forced family out of their home (RQ 2 & 4)**

Adjusting to living a settled lifestyle was not the only challenge that Lucy faced. The villagers named the family’s house the *“big blue pikey house”*. Lucy believed that the residents wanted them out of the village. From day one, Lucy and her children faced overt prejudice and discrimination. Lucy shared her feelings of shock and fear about the extent of the racist abuse that she and her children experienced. Lucy became emotional when she described the level of discrimination and shared her narrative about the violent racist attacks on her and her car:

*“The other day my car was destroyed by a group of men in balaclavas, luckily the children were not with me. I had just parked the car when these men appeared. They were shouting, “Fuck off you dirty fucking pikey, we don’t want your sort here”. One man attacked the windscreen with an axe. All the side windows and lights were smashed. I got out the car and fronted them! I am not frightened of them. They are just fucking petty minded Gorgios, they know nothing about us”.*

While Lucy states she wasn’t frightened of the people who attacked her car, she must have found this distressing being a single woman with three children to protect. Lucy must have lived in a state of constant ‘fight or flight’ mode as she worried for her children’s safety. She was vulnerable living in her house away from her family. For Lucy, her attachment to her family provided her with feelings of safety and protection.

Lucy also experienced verbal abuse whenever she left her house. She was regularly shouted at with comments such as *“Fuck off you dirty fucking pikey, we don’t want your sort here. Dirty thieving pikeys”*. Lucy and the children became prisoners in their own home. They became isolated, trapped and frightened. Their home stopped being a secure base; neither did it offer Lucy and her children a safe haven.

The children must have felt disliked and unwanted by the settled community. Most of the community were not responsive to Lucy's children's emotional needs, therefore the children would not have been able to develop predictable attachment relationships to the environment in which they lived. The only place within the community that was generally supportive of the children's needs was the local school. Lucy's children were settled and happy there and had made some friends.

The prejudice and discrimination within the small community became too much for Lucy to cope with and the family were forced to give up their home, leave their school and village and return to living in a trailer, within the wider family group, roadside. Lucy shared that she could not face waking up every day feeling that she and her children were unsafe and at risk from people from the settled communities. Lucy deemed that her children would be safer when there are other family members around; as she said there was "*safety in numbers*" even if they were living roadside.

Feeling safe again within her wider family group enabled Lucy to stop living in a state of heightened anxiety and fear and allowed her to return her focus to caring for her children. For Lucy, it was a difficult choice to leave the house that she had invested her time and emotions on, to make it into a home for her and her children, the home that she had started to form an attachment with to return to the safety of her family and her attachment relationships. In the end Lucy felt that she had no choice and her children's safety and well being had to come first. Whilst her family welcomed Lucy and the children back into the family group, some were slightly hesitant and distant as she was seen as having been contaminated by the Giorgios and their way of life.

Any bonds and attachments that the children had been forming with their home and community within school were disrupted. Without feelings of attachment to their home and community, the children would not have felt that they belonged and they would not have felt safe and secure. The children's disrupted attachments to the village community may affect the children's

desire or capacity to form attachment relationships with settled communities in the future.

Living within the Giorgio community for the short period of time resulted in Lucy's children experiencing feelings of being outsiders when they returned to the family group. This must have felt very confusing for the children, as they had not felt wanted by the settled community and then when they returned to their wider family group they were welcomed but they were seen as different to the other children as a result of their learnt Giorgio ways.

## **Mandy – Female Romani**

Life was easier when she was a child (RQ2)

Unsettled attachment to parents and volatile family relationships (RQ3)

More settled and predictable attachment to paternal grandmother (RQ3)

The importance of place attachment (RQ3)

Desire to settle so her children can gain an education and have a better life (RQ4)

Experiences of harassment and victimization (RQ4)

### **Life was easier when she was a child - (RQ 2)**

Although Mandy spoke about the traumatic events that happened during her childhood, she seems to think that life was generally easier. There had been farm jobs and places where Gypsies could make camp. *“We move around the same areas, from one atching tan (stopping place/ camp) to the next.”*

The lack of sites and work has impacted Mandy’s way of life. Although the Gypsy way of life is slowly changing to a more sedate life-style, the lack of sites does not enable Gypsies and Travellers to semi-settle in family groups with enough space for trailers and vans. Mandy seems saddened but resigned to the loss of the traditional way of life: *“You can’t park up anywhere for long before someone is telling you to go. You get moved on from one place so you have to find another one before it’s time for the chavs (children) to have their main meal or to go to bed for the night. The gavvers (police) and the bailiffs often moved us on”.*

### **Unsettled attachments to parents and volatile family relationships – (RQ3)**

Mandy’s narrative of her childhood experiences of family relationships does not appear to have been very stable. While Mandy speaks about playing with her siblings and the other children on the sites, she also notes that her parents were not always available for her due to them both spending time in prison for ‘*choring*’ (stealing) and changing partners. Growing up in a family

that is dominated by chaotic adult behaviours and relationships is not a lifestyle that is restricted to Gypsy and Traveller families. Many children from the settled communities also experience similar childhoods. Mandy's narrative suggests that she and her siblings felt quite isolated at times from their Gypsy community due to her mother's lifestyle choices. Changing partners is frowned upon in some family groups as marriage is still deemed to be 'forever'. This may have resulted in some of Mandy's wider family ostracising Mandy and her siblings when they were young.

When talking about her relationship with her mother Mandy shared that "*She made many mistakes and married many bad men*". Her narrative suggests that when she was in her mother's care she had not felt nurtured or valued and that her life had felt quite insecure and frightening. Mandy does not seem to have formed a secure attachment relationship with either of her parents. She seems quite angry that her mother "*never telled me right from wrong, that why I had my first son. Mum never protected me or kept me safe*". When Mandy speaks about her childhood she appeared as anxious and angry. For Mandy, having her son when she was so young and 'out of wedlock' would have isolated her further as she would have been seen to have brought dishonour to her wider family.

Even as an adult Mandy continues to feel rejected when she goes to her mother for help. Mandy shared "*Now she is happy, she's got no time for me and my babies. My family are crap and they never help me. I've fallen out with me mum and sister, as I don't get why they won't help me more. They won't even let me bath the chavs or do the chavs washing in their house*".

### **More settled and predictable attachment to paternal grandmother – (RQ 3)**

When Mandy spoke about her grandmother, her narrative suggested that she felt safe and cared for in her grandmother's care. Her grandmother provided her with a secure base while she was staying with her. It seems that Mandy's grandmother gave her the emotional security to believe that she is loveable and that she can bring her children up differently to how she was brought up.



Mandy's more secure attachment to her grandmother seems to have provided her with the emotional security to be emotionally available to her own children.

Mandy misses her grandmother and at times of upset and stress, she tells her 12 children stories about her granny being the 'best granny in the world'. This provides Mandy with emotional comfort while at the same time ensuring that her family history is passed down to her children. Mandy notes that "*with granny in my heart, I can do anything – she makes me strong. God rest her soul*". Mandy is proud that she is a good mother and, she said "*I keep me babies safe and tell them right from wrong. I make them frit (frightened) of upsetting Jesus, so they are good for Jesus. I show them how to be good people. My chavs are my world, if anything happened to them, so help me God, I would go mad*".

### **The importance of place attachment - (RQ 3)**

For Mandy, returning to a place that holds happy memories provides her with emotional comfort. Mandy believes that places hold family histories and family memories that you cannot reach unless you are in the right place. Mandy does not read or write so she has not made written records of her memories. Her extended family also has limited literacy so for Mandy spending time in her attachment places provides her with the link to hers and her family's history. Mandy shared:

*"Each place holds our memories, we don't carry all our memories with us all the time, our heads would be too full and we wouldn't be able to think straight if we took all the memories with us. We leave them where they happened. When we return, the memories are there waiting for us to have again. We have to return to our memories to keep them alive. We share them with family and friends when we are together. This way the memories live on after we die".*

Mandy's attachment places hold her memories and returning to them provides her with emotional security and feelings of well-being. Therefore, for Mandy, when she returns to her places of attachment, her memories return and she feels emotionally safe and secure. Mandy notes that she avoids places where bad things have happened to ensure that the memories fade and die.

### **Desire to settle so her children can gain an education and have a better life (RQ4)**

Mandy's narrative indicates that she is very protective towards her children. Mandy wants her children to have a different life to the one that she has led. Mandy is very strict with her children and she wants them to grow into decent people who belong to the Gypsy and Traveller Communities as well as the settled communities. For Mandy, having an education will enable her children to have a better life. Being evicted disrupts the children's education and causes Mandy stress.

*'I don't want to keep moving. I want a little piece of land or a pitch on a site (not one of those sites where they all do drink and drugs and none of them work or make their chavs go to school). I want to make a settled home for my chavs, so they can get an education and a better life'.*

Mandy notes that she wants to settle down somewhere where she can make a safe home for her children, just like her Granny did for her. Mandy wants somewhere to call home, somewhere where her children can feel safe and know that they belong and won't be evicted. Mandy shared:

*"There is nothing better than cooking a great big stew over an outdoor fire, lines of washing drying in the sunshine, the chavs playing together when they get in from school, telling their tales of the Gorgio chavs. That's what I want. I'd move into a house if it had a garden and wasn't in the middle of a town or housing estate".*

For Mandy, life living roadside is hard; she hasn't got family who will help her so she has to keep her children safe by herself. The older children help Mandy to look after the younger ones. The sibling bond is very strong. It seems that the younger children have predictable attachments with their elder siblings who share the parenting duties with Mandy.

The lack of sites and the housing shortage make it almost impossible for Mandy and families like hers to settle and provide their children with a secure base in which they can grow up safely while developing feelings of belonging and attachment to their wider community, their school, home and family.

#### **Experiences of harassment and victimization (RQ4)**

Mandy has experienced discrimination and harassment from both the settled communities and the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Mandy shared that her family are not deemed as being a pure blood Gypsy family. Her mother's succession of husbands and her father's criminal history, together with the fact that Mandy had her son at 13 years old has, in her opinion, resulted in her family being deemed as quite low status. At some family sites, the residents have refused to allow Mandy's family to pull on, due to fears that they would bring trouble with them. Mandy, therefore sets up her family's camp close to established sites. This makes her vulnerable. She reports that she lives in constant fear for her own and her children's safety. Her daughter's trailer has been broken into at night and their belongings have been stolen. Mandy shared that she is often shouted at and called "pikey scum". Local youths on motorbikes have been known to terrorise the family, riding close to the trailers and being abusive.

Mandy's husband and father of 11 of Mandy's children does not live permanently with the family as he keeps horses which need caring for on his family's land on the outskirts of a large city. Mandy identifies herself as a country girl and shared that cities frighten her. *"I don't want the chavs growing up in a city. It would be too easy for them to get mixed up with the wrong kind of Travellers or Gorgios and get involved in bad stuff"*. Mandy's narrative suggests that she is fearful for her children's moral well-being. This may be as a result of her own experiences during her childhood.

Mandy has been camped on Crown owned land for almost a year now after gaining consent to remain when she was supported to seek legal advice and fought being evicted. While she does not have indefinite rights to remain, she is grateful that her children have had a year of relative stability, enabling them all to attend various education providers.

Mandy is now expecting twins. She notes that she is tired of having babies, she shrugs and states, *"Who am I to argue with the will of Jesus"*.

## **Arthur- Dual heritage Romani/ Gorgio male**

Loss of mobility due to marrying a Gorgio (RQ1)

Strong feelings of attachment to his mother (RQ3)

Feelings of not belonging in either culture, discriminated against by both the Gypsy and the settled communities (RQ3)

Feelings of shame about his heritage and his family background (RQ3)

Intergenerational-shared care (RQ3)

Owning his own space provide feelings of safety and security (RQ4)

### **Loss of mobility when married (RQ1)**

For Arthur, growing up with mixed heritage parents was not easy. He reports that he felt discriminated against by both the Gypsy community and the settled community. His mother was Romani and, in the 1940s and 1950s, 'good Romani girls did not marry Gorgios'. Arthur's parents' marriage must have caused quite a stir. Both extended families probably felt shame, believing that their relation had married below them. The Romani side of the family would have deemed his mother's children as 'Didicoi' (half bloods). Arthur and his siblings' births would have been seen to taint his mother's family's pure bloodline.

Life must have been hard for Arthur's mother when she married a Gorgio and she stopped travelling with her family. She would have been left without the support network of the wider family and would have had to adapt to a settled way of life which would have been very different from what she had known growing up with her family. She may also have felt some shame for marrying outside the Gypsy community.

Arthur shared that he grew up feeling that he didn't belong or fit in anywhere and, as a child, he remembers trying to hide his Romani roots.

*"It was difficult because we were basically rejected by the wider family on both sides because my parents had chosen to be together. The stigma continued after we moved into social housing. If any Gypsy*

*relatives, called in while they were passing, (we lived on the main road, through the town) we, as children, would be verbally and sometimes physically abused by our neighbours and their children because we were "Gippos".*

### **Feelings of not belonging in either culture discriminated against by both the Gypsy and the settled communities (RQ3)**

Being rejected by both communities meant that Arthur was unable to develop social networks and attachment bonds with his home environment. This affected Arthur's sense of emotional security and safety because nowhere felt safe for him. His narrative suggests that he seemed to have learnt to shut down his feelings in order to avoid rejection from both communities so that he could fit in.

Many of Arthur's childhood homes were tied to his father's jobs, and were dependent on his father retaining his employment. Arthur's family's homes were overcrowded and lacked permanency and, therefore, he was unable to develop an attachment to the place that was his home. Arthur describes them as 'the houses in which they stayed', rather than as his childhood homes.

Arthur's father worked three jobs to try to provide for his wife and eleven children. He worked as a fulltime forestry worker, a part-time boiler man and a gamekeeper's assistant, none of which paid well so money was always tight and food was sometimes in short supply. His mother was the homemaker and struggled to feed them all on the wages that his father earned. Arthur shared that *"When times were good we'd have mashed potatoes and Bisto gravy, when times were hard we would eat rice. Rice was cheaper than potatoes in those days"*.

Arthur's developing sense of his identity and his place in the world must have felt insecure and frightening. He was caught between two very distinct cultures, living in insecure accommodation without enough food and clothing to meet his basic needs. The family's poverty must have further impacted on Arthur's developing sense of self. He wasn't able to explore his environment from the safety of an attachment figure and a secure base because both his

parents had too many demands on their time and the family home was insecure.

Arthur's father's time with the family was limited and his relationships with the children were often focused on trying to instill his standards and beliefs, which at times conflicted with his mother's values and culture. This lack of emotional availability seems to have inhibited Arthur's attachment relationship with him. While Arthur respected his father, he did not feel the strong emotional attachment towards him that he had for his mother.

### **Strong feelings of attachment to mother (RQ3)**

Having eleven children meant that his mother did not have a lot of time to give each child individual love and attention. Despite his mother's lack of free time, Arthur notes that he felt that his mother's *"love was unconditional and I know she would have fought to the death to protect me, however, the skills I needed to survive in a Gorgio society were never taught to me. I had no idea about so many basic skills I would need, how banks worked for example"*. The family's poverty also reduced his mother's available time as she couldn't afford pre-prepared food or to take the family's laundry to a laundrette. All of the family's food was homemade and all their clothes were hand-washed. Even though his family struggled financially and at times food was short, Arthur remembers with pride how his mother used to do her best to feed and care for the family.

*"The Romani side of my wider family were aghast at the situation we were living in and when they visited, there would be arguments about it. My father was very proud and would refuse all offers of work or material help while my mother, who was more pragmatic, could see the benefits of accepting the help. I can remember my mother sending my brother and me out to steal copper wire rather than sending us to school, as it was the immediate needs that were paramount. My father never knew, he was a very honest man and he would have been angry with my Mother, my brother and me"*.

Although Arthur's wider Romani family disapproved of his parent's marriage, when they visited they offered to help the family to provide for children.

### **Feelings of shame about his heritage and his family background (RQ3)**

It must have been hard for Arthur growing up in a hostile insecure world. As a young child, he learnt to hide his identity to avoid rejection. This must have caused him a lot of emotional trauma and confusion. Both of his parents were proud of their individual heritage and culture but disapproved of each other's.

Arthur shared that his Father didn't like his Mother's Gypsy ways and tried to teach her to behave like a Gorgio. Arthur notes that it 'just didn't happen' as his Mother was a very strong-willed woman and tried to teach her children the Romani way behind their father's back. Arthur notes that he can laugh about it now, but as a child he always felt torn between his parents' individual views on life.

Arthur felt that he had to deny his heritage in order to avoid rejection. He wasn't avoiding a relationship with either community; he simply avoided showing his feelings when he experienced prejudice and discrimination in order to maintain some kind of social relationship.

### **Intergenerational-shared care (RQ3)**

While Arthur did not travel as a child, from the age of 11 years old he would join his mother's extended family and, as '*part of the gang*', he would be involved with harvesting fruit and produce in the school holidays. Arthur remembers this as a wonderful time when there was no prejudice towards his extended family. The traditional employers respected them for being able to work hard and do a good job. During these summers working with his extended family, members of his mother's family cared him for and ensured that he was safe.

Arthur's mother taught him the importance of looking after family members. As a child, he was taught to respect and care for his elders and to have positive beneficial relationships with them. Children can learn much from their grandparents (and vice versa). For Arthur, his grandchildren are his world. He spends as much time as possible with them. When they are not at school, they spend time with him. Arthur seems to have learnt to accept his dual

heritage as he shared that he tells them the stories and tales that his mother told him as a boy. Sharing his mother's stories helps to keep that family's history alive. Arthur intends to ensure that these stories are never lost and is planning to write his memoirs.

#### **Owning his own space provide feelings of safety and security (RQ4)**

For Arthur, owning his own home and land has given him the feelings of security that were absent from his childhood. He enjoys the security of being settled. A secure base does not only meet Arthur's needs for permanency; he states that he is also determined that his grandchildren will always have a safe place where they can develop their own identity without prejudice or pressure to conform to any culture's expectations.

Arthur shared that for the majority of his life he has kept quiet about his heritage. It was only recently that he realised that it wasn't his heritage that held him back as a child; it was the racial prejudices of the society around him that were the cause. It seems that Arthur now embraces his Romani heritage along side his Gorgio heritage.

Arthur works for a local authority and his Romani heritage, dogs and horses play a big role in his life. Arthur owns a large piece of land where he holds big family gatherings. His Romani and Gorgio families come together, sitting around a large camp fire with lots of food, storytelling, music making, singing and dancing. *"I guess these gatherings are similar to the family gatherings that my mother enjoyed as a child"*.



## **JANE – Female - 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation New Traveller**

Planned moves exciting/ happy times. Forced moves and evictions difficult, stressful and terrifying (RQ1)

Attending school and gaining employment made difficult by constant evictions (RQ1)

Infant mortality and mother's grief making her emotionally unavailable and overwhelming the whole family (RQ2)

Feelings of attachment with the other people who live on the site. Site people become a close family like unit (RQ4)

### **Planned moves exciting happy times. Forced moves and evictions difficult, stressful and terrifying (RQ1)**

Living an outdoor transient life is all that Jane has ever known. Preparing to move from a site provides her with feelings of expectation and security, as she knows where they are going from her happy memories of past visits to the place. This provides Jane with the knowledge that they will be welcomed and cared for. Jane's family engaged in their family rituals in preparation of the move. The whole family worked together 'tattooing down'.

Jane chatted excitedly about 'tattooing down' in preparation of planned moves;

*'When we planned to move, it was always exciting and we would come together as a family 'tattooing down' (wrapping the china in newspaper, boxing our stuff, our books and keep sacks, keeping the dogs on chains so they would not run off and get left behind, securing the chickens in their runs and hutches, preparing to move). Preparing to move used to take days, which were filled with laughter and happiness, whereas evictions were terrifying and stressful. So much stuff get broken during an eviction, there's no time to pack properly'.*

Jane's narrative highlights her excitement at the prospect of going on the road and heading off so that her parents could take up some work as it always meant that they would get to see friends and family. Jane shared that preparing to move used to take days. These days for Jane were filled with laughter and happiness, sharing memories and stories about where they were

going and with whom they would be meeting. These happy memories of her family working together preparing to move trigger powerful emotions in Jane, which seems to provide her with emotional comfort. Jane shared her memories of her brother Jake and Luke tatting down when she was a small child;

*“Jake was tatting down his truck, as quick as he put stuff away I found something else to get out and play with. He got so cross with me that he put me in the big toy box and threatened to put the lid on it if I didn’t stop making a mess. I sat in the toy box all afternoon; watching my family, tat down. Jake and Luke were messing around laughing and being silly; they were so excited as we were going to see mum’s sister and one of mum’s friends who lived in a house. My brothers were best friends with mum’s friend’s boys who were about the same age. Jake kept teasing me about flushing me down their toilet, I must have been very young then as I didn’t know or hadn’t seen a flushing toilet before”.*

It seems that planned moves were something to be looked forward to as the family had their travelling route worked out, stopping at their favourite places to see friends and family. They would stop in places where they know that they will find work and be allowed to stay for a while. Jane made it clear that her family always clears the site when they leave it, so that nothing is left behind, except sometimes some of her mother’s plants and flowers. Jane shared that her mother used to plant flowers and veg at most of the sites where they stopped, so that they would be there when they next visited, or another Traveller family might gain the benefit from them. Getting ready to move reinforced the family’s attachment relationships with each other.

*“We mainly moved around for dad’s work or every time that we were evicted. Summer was always spent in France..... We have some land and a lake in Northern France, dad had these great ideas about building fishing lodges and renting them out as holiday lets. That has been put on hold since Jake died. Its like everything has been put on hold”.*

It is understandable that she feels a little resentful at the way that her family have been treated at times, when both her parents work locally and pay tax, national insurance and for a satellite television provider. Jane’s narrative about her experience of forced evictions suggests that they occurred at a time of considerable emotional stress for the family. Evictions are also a time when their homes and belongings are at risk of being lost or destroyed. Jane’s

family has been forced to break the law in order to protect their homes during evictions. Her parents have tried to live within the law by having MOTs and insurance for their vehicles for their planned moves. When money was tight and they thought that they were parked up for a while, Jane's father worked on the trucks to get them ready for their next MOTs.

*“Have you any idea how difficult it is moving our family's homes at short notice. It wasn't like we had one trailer and one truck. Jake lived in his own truck, which his dad had given to mum when she got pregnant, but he couldn't legally drive it. Luke had his trailer and really couldn't drive. I have my own showman's trailer and I am not allowed to drive. Mum and dad have dad's cargo (live-in lorry) and their huge showman's trailer. At a bad time, only one truck might have an MOT... how the fuck could we move our homes legally at such short notice. Mum would go into meltdown, shouting at everyone. Dad would also become very angry, us kids had to watch ourselves as it was only at eviction time that we'd get a slap round the head for just being in the wrong place. I totally get it, God! It is so hard being forced to move”*

### **Attending school, gaining employment made difficult by constant evictions (RQ1)**

Evictions must have been very frightening for the children. They did not only cause the family stress and hardship; they also stopped the family accessing services. Jane notes that during school term times, her family tried to find places to park up which were close to the schools. Her mother had grown up in a house, had attended university and was determined that her children would gain a good education.

*“It wasn't easy; we always seemed to get evicted from a site at the beginning of each school year. Mum would secure us a school place, buy us the basic uniform and arrange school transport. The Traveller Education Team were helpful and then the bailiffs would serve us with notice to vacate our site within 24 hours. If we were lucky, we'd get 48 hours”.*

Jane must have grown up feeling rejected by the majority of society. The constant evictions, together with the discrimination that Jane and her brothers faced, would have made accessing the education system difficult for the family. It is reasonable to assume that Jane must have worried at times about whether her home would still be parked up where she had left it in the morning. Jane shared that she used to get bullied at school and called names:

*“At school, kids were really horrible calling me and my brothers names like, smelly dirty pikeys. One thing we have never done is smell; we bath as often as they do. Mum and dad get the tin tub out every other day and spent hours heating the water for baths. Now that I am in my own showman’s trailer, I have to heat my own water for baths. Jake used to chop the wood for my wood burner. Mum says that I have to chop my own wood now as I am an adult, dad sneaks wood onto my woodpile most days, bless him, so I often bake him little cakes as a thank you”.*

Jane shared that she has been turned down for many jobs due to being deemed a Traveller. She applied for a part-time Saturday job while she was at college; all she had to do was take orders and take the money. As soon as they knew where Jane was living, however, they turned her down. Jane was told that having a Gypsy girl working there would be bad for business as the locals wouldn’t like it.

### **Infant mortality and mother’s grief making her emotionally unavailable and overwhelming the whole family (RQ2)**

For Jane, her family’s life appears to have been dominated by the loss of two of her male siblings. Junior born stillborn before Jane was born. Jane’s narrative suggests that her mother never got over losing Junior. Her mother’s fear for her children seems to have brought the family closer together.

Jane shared that her mother needed to be close to her older sister when Jane was born. Jane’s aunt works as a midwife in a different county so the whole family moved and parked up close to the hospital where she worked.

When she was born, Jane had two surviving brothers – Jake and Luke. Her eldest brother took on a big role in providing Jane and Luke with care when their mother retreated into herself.

*“Mum took years to be able to put on a brave face to the world. I have been told that it was only when she found out that she was expecting me, that mum regained some hope. Maybe that’s why Jake was so caring and loving towards me. When I was born, Jake and Luke got their mum back”.*

Jane’s parents went on to have another son, Harry, after Jane. Jane explained that her world was destroyed when the family found Jake dead in

his bed one morning. The depth of Jane's shock, sadness and unbearable loss when talking about her big brother's death was painful to observe. Jane explained:

*"Jake died a few years ago now. He went to bed one night and just didn't wake up. He was weeks away from turning 21. He was my world, I looked up to him, yeah we fought but he was always there for his little..... it's been 4 years now and it still hurts just as much now as it did then, I have grown up my last few years without my protector, my supporter, my big brother, that pain never goes away. When I see something funny, I want to share it with him and I can't. Big brothers look after you when you are doing stuff that the parents wouldn't like, he used to make sure that I was safe; it was like having two dads at times. My dad, the grumpy one who'd never let me do anything and then Jake who would tell me not to do stuff and then keep an eye on me when I did it anyway and make me feel better when it went wrong".*

For Jane and her family, it seems that the family relationships fragmented when Jake died. Jane notes that when Jake died, something in Luke seemed to turn off and he couldn't bear to spend any time with his family. At the age of 15, Jane took on the role of being the main carer for her family.

*"Fuck knows how mum faces each day; she has two sons buried in the ground. Junior never took a breath; Jake lived his life to the full until one day he just didn't wake up. Natural causes they said, there is nothing natural about a strong healthy man who didn't smoke or drink, going to bed and never waking up".*

Her father continued to do the practical things around the site, but Jane's narrative suggests that he shut himself off emotionally and stopped being available as an attachment figure for his children. Harry was still very young and relied on Jane, just as Jane had relied on Jake.

*"Me Luke and Harry lost our mum when Jake died. That's why I am doing what Jake did and I am filling the hole that mum's sorrow has left. I am 19 years old, I want to party and shit but I feel that I have to look after the family, dad included. That's what Jake did. Life's a bitch and then you die".*

The role of care provider has shifted. Jane seems to feel that she is responsible for her mother and her family's wellbeing. Jane seems to accept that it is her duty to fill her brother's shoes and take over caring for the family, even though by doing so she is giving up her personal freedom. Jane and her family have a need to be close to Junior and Jake's graves. Jane's mother tends to them at least twice a week, Jane shared that after Jake died her

mother refused to leave his graveside, she would spend days just sitting planting bulbs and flowering plants. Jane noted that her dad has had to physically pick her mum up and force her to return home at times. Jane reports that she also spends time sitting by Jake's grave sharing her thoughts and fears with him.

**Feelings of attachment with the other people who live on the site. Site people become a close family like unit (RQ4)**

Grief seems to have played a huge role in this family. Jane's father probably bottled up his grief and carried on with daily life while Jane's mother seems to have shut down and only functions on a basic level. The stress of constant evictions, together with the almost crippling fear that they would lose another child, seems to have deeply affected Jane's parents' emotional wellbeing and Jane and Harry's experience of being parented. Jane and her sibling have built strong relationships with non-family members to ensure that they have some of the emotional needs met. For Jane, the people who live on site have become attachment figures and she sees them as an extended family. The group of people on site all help and support each other to ensure the survival of all the children and young people. The group 'polices' the site and if 'a wrong um' (Jane's words) moves onto site and unsettles the harmony, then the people pull together to either get the person to behave more appropriately or the whole site will pack up and move on together and leave them behind.

## Lee – Male New Age Traveller

Lived experience of institutional racism, prejudice, discrimination and violence (RQ1)

Secure attachment with his mother and father (RQ3)

Strong family bonds and feeling of responsibility for mother (RQ3)

Feelings of attachment to family home and the memories connected to it (RQ4)

### **Lived experience of institutional racism, prejudice, discrimination and violence (RQ1)**

Lee shared that in 1982 he and his girlfriend ‘turned their back on the rat race’, bought a coach and converted it into a living vehicle. Lee explained that as he was deemed a New Age Traveller, he had no rights under the Race Relations Act. New Age Travellers were not seen as a minority ethnic group; they were classed as squatters and not as part of the travelling communities. This meant that he did not have the right to pull onto a council or local authority site. He noted that they were constantly hassled especially if they pulled into a layby. Even ‘before the kettle had boiled’, the police would be banging on the coach door to evict. This must have been really difficult for the families who had children.

“There’d be police cordons, for fucking miles stopping us from parking up. They’d herd us like fucking animals to the next county and then they’d fuck off and leave us to deal with the next bunch of coppers, trying to move us on”.

Lee feels that the Thatcher conservative government, together with the media, instigated the moral panic about the so-called ‘peace convoy’. Lee stated that *“There was never a peace convoy, bollocks it was the brew crew. Just a bunch of people trying to get from one festival to the next”*. The conservative government introduced the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act which made life even harder for all travelling groups. Lee had a lot to say about the Thatcher government and the policies that it introduced:

“She took our life away, with all the laws, the riot police, she shut the mines down, closed the steelworks and the ship yards. She took away

people's jobs and all our bloody lifestyles, she shut our lifestyle down, stopped us doing bloody anything, going anywhere cos of that handbag carrying bloody cow didn't want us to be free. Destroyed our lives, cos we didn't live in society, but we did, we did stuff, we did odd jobs for people, stuff like that. .... When Thatcher kicked the bloody squatters out of the towns, and their squats, many thought 'let's go about and get busses and live on the road that sort of thing', they'd sat around jacking up and nicking from the local villagers and shit. The ex-squatters or crusties were anarchists they had no respect for what they had around them, while I was on the road I saw them piss in shop freezers so that all the food had to be thrown away, they'd take it out of the bins and sell it on. Local people were horrified by their behaviour. When the squatters came out they fucked it all up basically. The shitheads fucked it up for everyone else".

Lee experienced extreme police brutality during what has become known as the 'Battle of the Beanfield' on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1985. This was a mass eviction of hundreds of New Age Travellers who were on route to Stonehenge from a field that had previously been used to grow beans. The police were recorded to have been very heavy-handed and were observed beating up women and children as they tried to protect their homes. *"Our whole lives were in our coaches, photos of people no longer with us, locks of the kid's hair, that sort of thing. They took everything and fined us for it..... My mate still wakes up screaming, thinking the police are coming through the window"*.

The Battle of the Beanfield became notorious for accusations of a police riot that was reported to have taken place. Those in the Convoy insist that, after a stand-off of several hours, the police removed their identification numbers from their shoulders and attacked the procession of vehicles by entering the field where they were being contained. The police proceeded to methodically smash the vehicles windows, beat people on the head with truncheons. When the police entered the vehicles, they damaged the interiors of their coaches, using sledgehammers. This account of the events was supported by the independent witnesses and was upheld by the subsequent court verdicts (Worthington, 2005).

It must have been terrifying being beaten up by the police. The New Age Travellers must have had their bonds to mainstream society severely tested



and for many these bonds were destroyed. The violence and vandalism strengthened the Travellers' bonds with each other and pushed them to the edges of society. Lee noted with frustration that there was nothing they could do; they just moved on until they found somewhere where a farmer would let them pull on to his field in exchange for work.

This is not the only time when Lee has been the victim of extreme discrimination. Lee shared that once, when he was at a funeral, a local had set fire to his coach killing two of his dogs and injuring a third. Lee noted that several of his friends were also burnt out around this time. Lee explained that when many of the locals donated clothes and items of furniture, he regained his faith in humanity.

Lee remembers another time when people from the settled community helped him. Lee notes that there are a 'lot of good people out there' who want to do what they can to help other people;

“Well once when we were parked up, engineers from the local army base came over and helped us get mobile again so we could fuck off, the police just fucked us and our homes, if our coach was not running and being worked on, and we couldn't move when evicted, they impounded it and trashed it”.

### **Secure attachment with his mother and father (RQ3)**

Lee grew up in the settled community. Lee's narrative of his childhood suggests that it was filled with love and trust. As the youngest child in the family he was the centre of attention. His parents and older sisters surrounded him with love and his emotional needs were always met promptly. The extended families were also pivotal to building a nurturing secure environment from which Lee could explore his world. At time of stress, Lee has sought emotional security and comfort by returning to his family home.

For Lee, his childhood family home remains his secure base from which he goes out into the world, even as an adult. Lee is a first generation New Age Traveller who believed that he wasn't cut out 'to work 9 – 5 in dead end jobs' just to pay for a roof over his head. Lee's secure attachment to his mother and

the family home provided him with the emotional security to choose a transient lifestyle. However, after his bus was fired and his dogs killed, Lee sought the emotional comfort of returning to his mother and the family home.

### **Strong family bonds and feeling of responsibility for mother (RQ3)**

For Lee, the roles of his mother as the care provider and his as needing to be cared for have reversed. Lee now cares for his elderly mother and has returned to his childhood home to look after her as she lives in an isolated rural location. *“When dad died, mum was ok on her own for a while, she’s a tough old bird, and then as she got older, it got harder for her living in the middle of nowhere, miles from the local shops and village. I look out for mum now, like she looked after me when I were a kid”.*

### **Feelings of attachment to family home and the memories connected to it (RQ4)**

Lee gains emotional comfort from his powerful memories from his childhood. For him, the family home and its land are places of love and happiness, of safety and sanctuary. Lee shared *“She loves this place, she filled it with love and happiness. Everywhere you go in the house and on her land, there are reminders of dad. I am happy to stop here, as it’s a good place”.*

Lee finds living in his trailer on his mother’s land peaceful as he has the best of both worlds. He is settled but without the confines of living in a house. He no longer has to face the worries of being evicted or finding a place to park up. Living in an environment which is filled with his happy memories of his childhood and dad, is emotionally comforting for Lee. Being close to his mother stops him worrying about her and enables her to remain in her home. Without Lee’s support, his mother would have needed to move into supported accommodation. Lee feels she would have hated to leave her memories of his dad. Lee shared;

*“You know any place that has powerful memories both good and bad. Places hold your memories, you’re connected to somewhere by the experiences you had there. Going home or being in a place where things happened opens the door to things that you thought you’d forgotten”.*

For Lee, there are good and bad individuals in all groups of people. His philosophy is to avoid the bad people and talk to the good people. Surprisingly, Lee is not angry about the way that he has been treated at times. He accepted people's prejudices and instead of getting angry, he goes out of his way to help people. Lee shared that he believes that Travellers and people from the settled communities need to forget their prejudice and just try and get on with living alongside each other.

Lee feels that he overcame some of the prejudice and stereotypical beliefs that some people from the settled community had about New Age Travellers while living on the road, by working hard and being a decent person. As people got to know Lee he believes that they realised that he just wanted somewhere to call home where he could grow vegetables and keep his animals.

## **Pete – Male Irish Traveller.**

Police harassment and forced evictions (RQ1)

Traditional travelling circuits for employment and horse fairs (RQ2)

Loss of the old way of life. Site life seen as a good compromise (RQ2)

Strong feelings of pride in cultural heritage, strict gender division and moral codes (RQ3)

Deep connection with the dead, spiritual beliefs and cultural traditions (RQ3)

Older siblings caring for younger siblings (RQ4)

### **Police harassment and forced evictions (RQ1)**

Pete's narrative about his experiences of his father trying to find places to park up, where the family might be left alone for a little while to allow his father to work, suggests that life was hard and places to camp were limited. Pete notes that there were very few transit sites and the ones that did exist were not fit for human habitation, so his father always looked for remote places to stop as they had a better chance of being left alone if they were out of the way. Pete's experiences highlight the stress that being evicted placed on his parents. Pete notes that his earliest memories are:

“I suppose it would be the police constantly hassling us, making us move on or Daddy fighting them, and getting taken away in a police van, or mammy crying, I remember her crying a lot, well she had 13 kids to keep an eye on and feed. She was always worried about where we were going to go next. Dad, he was like sod um Maggie, if the worst comes to all that, we'll park up in the Garda's car park, see how the buggers like that”.

Pete's father seemed more resilient than his mother in his defiance and his need to provide for his family. It must have been hard for Pete's mother, never knowing if they would find somewhere to park up long enough to prepare a meal and to do the washing for her thirteen children. Pete remembers that his mother kept the trailers spotless and always managed to have a hot meal waiting for his father at the end of the working day.

### **Traditional travelling circuits for employment and horse fairs (RQ2)**

The families travelling circuits were determined by the location of the horse fairs and his father's planned bare-knuckle fights. The financial rewards from winning fights would have supported the family reasonably well, but it seems that his father was always looking for work to supplement his winnings.

“Daddy went where he could to find a living. We were always moving looking for work. Daddy worked hard, he was a scrap dealer by day and a bare-knuckle fighter by night. He was the best. Everyone wanted to fight Daddy, no one could beat him in a fair fight”.

Pete's father's success as a bare-knuckle fighter gave the family high status within the Irish Traveller community. To retain this elevated status Pete's father had to be the best. Bare-knuckle fighters' careers can be quite short-lived but, for Pete, his father's status as a champion bare-knuckle fighter gave him feelings of security and safety. His father's need to retain his title, however, may have also caused Pete and his siblings to at times experience feelings of insecurity and instability.

While Pete talks openly with pride about his father's fighting career, he highlights that there was a downside to the bare-knuckle fighting and the heavy drinking that went with it. Pete's father lived life hard and, from Pete's narrative, it seems that he never really had much time for him and his siblings. Pete was expected to be strong and to never walk away from a fight. Pete's narrative suggests that his father was not emotionally available for him when he was a small child as he was focused on providing for his family and keeping his status as a champion fighter. Pete's father left the child rearing duties to Pete's mother and remained distant from his children.

### **Loss of the old way of life. Site life seen as a good compromise (RQ2)**

The years of constant evictions and uncertainty of life on the road took its toll on Pete's parents as it has done with many other Traveller families. When Pete's father developed arthritis, possibly a result of the years of prize fighting, they conformed to the settled majority's way of life and moved into a home of bricks and mortar. Pete remembers that his parents wanted the younger children to attend school on a permanent basis and become scholars (able to read and write) to give them more choices in life.

Pete found it difficult to settle in a house, he felt trapped and claustrophobic. Pete missed the predictability of the old transient way of life, the constancy and stability created by planned movement. For Pete as a child, following their travelling circuits provided him with feelings of peace and contentment. He drew comfort from the rituals of finding a campsite, setting up and then planning to move to the next site.

“I hated it when Mummy and Daddy moved into a house I felt trapped and unhappy, although it was good having water on tap. I couldn’t live in a house but now I live on a site in a double chalet, so we have the luxury of having water but the freedom to live as we want to live with our own kind”.

After Pete got married he and his bride, unlike his parents, settled on a Traveller site. Like many other Gypsies and Travellers, he views life on a site as a good compromise. Sited Gypsies and Travellers can keep their cultural traditions alive. They can live in the old ways in trailers or mobile homes or they can hook up a trailer and go to visit family members, knowing that they have somewhere safe and secure to return to.

Once a family was living on the site, it is easier for them to access services such as education and health care, which enables people to integrate into the settled communities.

“Pete’s memories of attending school are not happy ones, he remembers being bullied at school for being a ‘dirty pikey’. Pete states that he hated going to school. Pete’s mother made him go as Pete remembers *“she said that we needed to get our learning. Mummy wanted us to be able to hold our head up high as she said we are as good as those country folk. Sometimes I used to try and talk posh when I started at a new school, so that no one would know that I was a Gypsy”*.

Pete settled on the Traveller site so his children could gain an education without losing their cultural identity. Pete acknowledges that there is no room left in the world for Travellers to live a traditional lifestyle and that Traveller children need to be able to read and write to get on in today’s world.

“The world is changing so fast. There doesn’t seem to be any room left for the Gypsy/ Traveller communities to live a traditional lifestyle. It’s not like it was when I was a kid, there was always work then, even if it

was shitty and no one else would do it. Now all those Polish take all the work and we have to change with the world”.

### **Strong feelings of pride in cultural heritage, strict gender division and moral codes (RQ3)**

Pete spoke with pride about his cultural heritage as an Irish Traveller. He spoke about his father with pride, and his father’s moral belief in working hard and fighting fair. Pete also spoke with pride about his mother’s ability to keep the trailers and all thirteen children fed and clean, wherever they were. It is unlikely that Pete’s mother would have been able to give each of her children much one-to-one time, however Pete’s narrative of his relationship with his mother indicates that he had a stronger attachment relationship with her than he had with his father.

“We were a very close family. I looked up to my daddy he was a proud man. I wanted him to be proud of me so I worked hard to please him and do the best that I could. Daddy taught us to be strong and never to back down from a fight, but to always fight fair. Mummy taught us right from wrong. She’d wallop us if we did wrong. I have over the years found ways to bend the rules and not break them”.

### **Deep connection with the dead, spiritual beliefs and cultural traditions (RQ3)**

For Pete, he has a deep emotional and spiritual connection to religion and to the churchyard (place) where his son is buried. His son’s resting place provides Pete with emotional comfort. He and his wife take great pride and gain emotional comfort in ensuring that their son’s grave is well cared for. Spending time by the grave enables Pete to feel connected with his son.

“Our first-born is buried in the church-yard we need to be close to him. I spend a lot of time sitting with him telling him what goes on. If I go away somewhere, my boy’s grave is the first place I go to when I get back. I have to check he’s ok and that he has fresh flowers. You know what I mean don’t yeah, a boy’s grave has to look cared for. Tree does the flowers and shit. I just sit by my boy and tell him about the day, tell him about all the stuff I can’t tell Tree”.

### **Older siblings caring for younger siblings (RQ4)**

Pete shared that as a child he used to spend time with his older sister and her family.

“I lived with my mammy and daddy, my 12 brothers and sisters. We lived in two trailers, one for mammy and daddy and one for us children. We had one bed for the boys and one bed for the girls. Life was hard, but it was good. My older siblings would sometimes stay with other family members. I used to spend time with my older sister and her family”.

His sister acted as his main care provider at times. Pete notes that he would do anything for his sister. His narrative suggests that his sister and other family members supported Pete’s parents in their parenting by taking on Pete and his siblings. It is reasonable to assume that family stepped in to provide care for the children to give them the best possible chance of survival, when times were hard, and work was limited.



## **Mary – Female Irish Traveller.**

Cultural trauma of evictions and attachment to place both in childhood and adulthood (RQ1)

Family worked together to provide for the family and care for the children, ensuring the family's survival (RQ3)

Attachment to the dead and the place where they rest (RQ3)

Religion and cultural beliefs provide guidance, security and emotional security (RQ3)

Comforting, happy childhood memories of living on her aunt's land (RQ3)

Close family bonds and shared parenting/caring for the elderly (RQ4)

For Mary, forced evictions have had far reaching consequences and had a negative impact on her emotional well-being.

### **Cultural trauma of evictions and attachment to place both in childhood and adulthood (RQ1)**

For Mary, who spent most of her early childhood living on her mother's sister's land in Ireland, her aunt's land was a place of safety and security where she and her mother and siblings lived while her father and uncle worked as labourers on the roads in England. Her father returned to Ireland each time her mother had a new baby so that he could give the new baby a name and then he would leave again, looking for work. They did not have mobile phones when Mary was a child, so it is reasonable to assume that Mary's father returned to his family roughly every nine months. Mary reported that she felt happy and settled living with her aunt and extended family.

Mary's father had built two sheds on the land, one for cooking and one for the little tin bath. Mary shared:

“Ma would heat the water in a big electric water boiler so us girls could have baths. My brothers never liked to bathe, but us girls loved it, sitting in our tin bath listening to the radio. Those were the happiest

days of my life, living on my aunt's land and travelling around Ireland visiting family".

Mary probably experienced strong feelings of fear and distress when her aunt died and the family had to leave her aunt's site, the place where she and her family had felt safe and happy. Her father decided that the whole family, including Mary's grandfather, would move to the UK and travel with him as he sought work as he didn't believe his family would be safe while he was away after they lost access to the place that they had made into a home.

Mary's life must have felt frightening and uncertain. Her attachments to people and place were disrupted as she was not only forced to leave the place where she felt safe and emotionally cared for, she also left her country of birth and her wider family.

Being forced to leave the country of her birth and everything that was familiar to her must have been culturally traumatic. Moving to England changed the family dynamics and reduced the support networks, which would no doubt have left Mary feeling isolated and fearful. The family faced overt prejudice and discrimination when they arrived in England, something that Mary had not experienced before. She shared her earliest memories of travelling in England *"it was shit. Everyone seemed to hate us"*.

It is reasonable to assume that this was a very emotionally difficult time for Mary. Her personal identity, sense of self and her position in the world would have been fragmented. The social, cultural, psychological dimensions of her childhood, which were connected to her secure base on her aunt's land, were no longer there to provide her with emotional security. Mary's attachment behaviours did not seem to have been sensitively responded to by her mother due to her mother's emotional unavailability. Mary possibly became needy, clingy and angry in her attempt to get her needs for emotional protection and containment met. Mary always dreamed of returning home to Ireland, as memories of her aunt's place seem to trigger feelings which provided her with some emotional comfort.

Mary notes that when she got married to John, she travelled with her husband as he followed work around the country. Mary had wanted to return to Ireland but John refused, telling Mary that there was nothing left for her there anymore. She notes that while it wasn't an easy life for a young Irish couple, they were happy. Mary and her husband settled when she found that she was pregnant.

“John bought a pitch on a site, we thought we were set up for life there. My John wanted the best for his children. He wanted to provide them with their own piece of land, to call home. We lived on our site for nine years, before the eviction. Five of our children were born there. They all went to nursery and big school. My sister even worked in the school as a dinner lady”.

Mary's pitch did not have planning permission, but when they applied for planning permission it was rejected. Mary shared that *“Life on the road is no life for children, not anymore”*. The lengthy legal battle to remain on their land went on for years and cost John thousands of pounds. Mary had her own family during this time. They had five children and were determined to fight to keep their home and their children's safe base. John and Mary had invested lots of emotional energy into making the site into their children's home. Mary felt happy and safe there, which enabled her to be emotionally available for her children.

The site was all Mary's children had ever known, they were settled in school and doing well. Fears that they would lose their land must have triggered her memories of losing her attachment place and brought back the feelings that she had experienced when her attachment to place had been disrupted as a child. She must have been consumed by her memories of her own feelings of insecurity and fear that losing her secure base had induced. Mary was heavily pregnant with twins when they lost their legal battle and they were evicted from their home. Mary shared that *“it broke me losing our plot it was my home. I felt safe there, the children were safe and happy there, and it was all they knew”*.

**Family unit worked together to provide for the family and care for the children, ensuring the family's survival (RQ3)**

Mary sadly lost the twins and the doctors believed this might have been due to the stress of the long legal fight and the eviction. Mary does not agree with this, she states, *"I think that they did not want to be born into a world that took away children's homes"*. Mary reported she'd *"lost her fight, I stopped keeping the van clean and tidy and the children ran wild"*. Mary's marriage broke down, her sisters took the children and provided them with the care that Mary no longer could. They also tried to look after Mary.

The family's strong attachment to each other has ensured that the children were cared for. The children lost their home and their safe base. They also lost their mother's emotional availability and their father's presence. Mary lost her home, her unborn twins and her feelings of emotional safety. She became overwhelmed as her feelings opened the floodgates to her distressing traumatic memories of her attachment to place being disrupted as a child.

**Attachment to the dead and the place where they rest (RQ3)**

Mary's mother also experienced a disruption to her attachments. Leaving her dead babies' graves, with no one to care for them, severely impacted on her emotional well-being resulting in her becoming emotionally unavailable for Mary. Mary states, *"nothing was ever the same again. Ma changed, she became sad and lost her spirit. She didn't want to leave her dead babies behind in Ireland, but it's our way to do as the man in the family says"*.

**Religion and cultural beliefs provide guidance, security and emotional security (RQ3)**

Religion played an important role in family life, providing safety and emotional security. The church seems to have been central to family life during Mary's childhood in Ireland. It was a place where all the family's births, weddings and deaths were celebrated.

*"We were a very close family, we'd meet up with family members at Church on Sunday. We never missed a Sunday Church meeting unless*

*we were really sick. My Ma taught me the difference from right and wrong. She didn't put up with any nonsense from us children. She'd put the fear of God into you when she got mad".*

### **Comforting, happy childhood memories of living on her aunt's land (RQ3)**

For Mary, her aunt's land was a place of safety and security, where her nuclear family lived and worked together with her wider extended family. It was a place where her family invested time, money and emotional energy to personalise it. Mary developed a bond or attachment to the aunt's land, which, together with her attachments to her care providers, enabled her to develop a secure base.

*"It were a good life while we were in Ireland. We were happy staying with Ma's sister. When she died, we had to leave her land, as the landlord wouldn't let us stay. I felt so sad leaving my aunts place, it wasn't anything special, just a field with hard standing, electric and a water pipe, but it was home. We had happy memories there and we had to leave them behind.....Those were the happiest days of my life, living on my aunt's land and travelling around Ireland visiting family".*

### **Close family bonds and shared parenting/ caring for the elderly (RQ4)**

For Mary, her family gave her feelings of safety and emotional comfort. Mary was one of 11 siblings, two of which had died. Mary reported "Jesus wanted them". Mary's strong family bonds provided her with a secure base from which to explore her world as a young child. Mary's family worked together to ensure that the children and the elderly were cared for and safe. Her grandparents were valued and respected. It appears that they often pooled resources at times of need. In Mary's family, the older female children helped to care for the younger children.

*"We were brought up to respect our elders and to care for the family. We took a pride in being a strong close family. We didn't ask anyone for anything, we looked after our own. We all cared for Grandpa after Grandma and Ma's sister passed away. He used to complain about us women fussing over him".*

While Mary's mother appears to have been her primary attachment figure her intergenerational relationships with aunt, grandparents and older siblings provided her with alternative attachment figures and care providers.

Mary's narrative suggests that for Mary, this shared care model of parenting provided her with safety and security, as there was always a family member who was emotionally available to respond sensitively to her needs, and to provide her with emotional comfort.

“Ma taught me that family is the most important thing in the world. If you have your family around you, you are a millionaire. You have nothing if you haven't got your family around you. We didn't need fancy things if we had our family close by”.

Sadly, Mary took her own life in January 2018. She was a fine upstanding woman who unfortunately struggled with losing her attachment places and told family before she passed away that she wanted to be with Jesus, her twins, her aunt and her mother. Mary's family have requested for her narrative to remain as part of this study.

## Ronnie – Male Bargee (River Gypsy)

Strong feelings of attachment to his mother and the physical and emotional attachment instability after mother's death (RQ1)

Feelings of emotional comfort when near or on flowing water (RQ1)

Reliving emotionally comforting and happy childhood memories (RQ1)

Bricks and mortar linked to loss and relationship upheaval (RQ2)

Security in ability to move on while staying close to his children (RQ4)

Ronnie is a Bargee (River Gypsy) he lives, works and holidays on flowing water.

### **Strong feelings of attachment to his mother and the physical and emotional attachment instability after mother's death (RQ1)**

Ronnie shared;

*“My mother died when I was 12 and from then on, I had to do most things for myself. I found myself by water most of the time when I just needed somewhere to go”.*

Losing his mother when he was only 12 years old turned Ronnie's world upside down. Puberty is a challenging and confusing time for most young people and losing his main attachment figure made Ronnie's world feel insecure and frightening. His attachment to his father was not as secure as his attachment to his mother had been as he worked away for long periods of time. Ronnie stated:

*“They were both loving parents, my mother was always fun and caring, definitely a great friend although she was the matriarch. My mother gave me a cuddle when I was sad, wiping my tears when I cried. She was happy when we were laughing, and she used to laugh when I used to do something silly to make them laugh. I presume that's part of being in a loving family. My father I had respect for and he was adventurous, we always went a bit further in our travels than anyone else. He was very knowledgeable, although later I found out some maybe a bit of a story. And definitely missed him as he was not always about, yeah, I did miss him when he was working away. Both my mother and father left my life a long time ago”.*

When his mother died, Ronnie was passed around his extended family, living with one or other family member for a while before being moved on to the next relation. This constant movement between relations provided him with basic care, but limited security. Ronnie would not have had a place to call his own.

### **Feelings of emotional comfort when near or on flowing water (RQ1)**

While Ronnie was always being moved between family members, he would not have been able to form attachments to his carers. It is possible that for Ronnie the cycle of developing attachment feelings and then having these attachment bonds broken when he was moved onto another family member may have been so traumatic, that in order to protect himself from the constant losses, he used this movement as a way to stop any attachment feelings developing. Therefore, for Ronnie constant movement ensured that he did not experience any more emotional loss. This may be why Ronnie found such emotional comfort when he returned to flowing water. Ronnie retrieved his 'episodic memories' of selective key events that had significance for him and his world. The feelings that were attached to these memories, over time, shaped his expectations of himself. His memories and their connection to the power of flowing water provide Ronnie with emotional comfort and soothe him when he is feeling upset or anxious.

### **Reliving emotionally comforting and happy childhood memories (RQ1)**

He linked flowing water to his mother and his memories of feeling safe and loved. *"When I was a child, we had holidays on boats and I loved the lifestyle! My father worked in aboard in the Middle East with the RAF while I was still young, so I travelled over there with my mum to see him for holidays".*

Whilst flowing water cannot physically comfort Ronnie at times of emotional distress, flowing water triggers his happy memories of his main attachment figure, his mother. Retreating into his memories of feeling loved, safe and secure triggers powerful emotions in Ronnie which seem to provide him with emotional containment and comfort.



At times of stress throughout Ronnie's life after his mother's death, he has felt drawn to return to flowing water so that he can relive his happy memories of his mother and feel emotional warmth and containment similar to the feelings that being held by his mother as a child had generated.

For Ronnie, who cannot seek the proximity to his protective adult, being close to flowing water has become a substitute for his need to be close to his attachment figure. When Ronnie returns to flowing water, his attachment memories soothe him and enable him to feel safe enough again to interact with the wider community. Flowing water seems to provide Ronnie with his secure base.

### **Bricks and mortar linked to loss and relationship upheaval (RQ2)**

Ronnie seems to have linked living in homes of bricks and mortar with relationship upheaval, more loss and emotional insecurity. Ronnie's narrative suggests that he tried to settle in homes of bricks and mortar during both of his failed marriages;

*"I lived in a house with my first wife and children, when we split up I moved into a caravan on a caravan and camping site, which allowed long leases for people who needed to live there due to work or relationship breakdowns. I felt free there, I was sad about splitting up with my wife but I was near enough to see my children every weekend".*

Ronnie's children are very important to him and he relates his parenting beliefs to his losing his mother.

*"Maybe 'cause my Mother died when I was still young, I think it's important to be there for them, always be there for them, my older kids have returned into my life now, which makes me happy. I give them love and support, encourage them to follow their own chosen paths in life and not to get bogged down by materialistic stuff, unless of course it's the materialistic stuff that makes them happy".*

Ronnie tried to settle in a home of bricks and mortar when he met his second wife but, again, he found life difficult living in a house. He shared;

*"I met my second wife and after a while, I moved in with her and her kid. We had two kiddies who I loved deeply. I hated being in the house; I felt so trapped and enclosed. I got another boat, which was my*

*sanctuary. She (second wife) didn't know about it, she would never have understood my need to be free and outside".*

Ronnie said he is in a happy relationship with his partner who lives on his boat with him.

### **Reliving emotionally comforting and happy childhood memories (RQ3)**

Ronnie reports that it took a life changing motorbike accident to make him evaluate his life and he decided that he *"wanted to be back on the rivers. So I could up anchor and move up or down the river, I felt at home and at peace again. You can't see the stars when you live on a housing estate. I needed to be able to sit on the boat and watch the real world, I hated sitting in watching soaps night after night"*.

### **Security in ability to move on while staying close to his children (RQ4)**

Ronnie has lived in a boat since separating from his second wife. His children play a large role in his life. Ronnie moors his boat close to his children and his business. He has the security of a permanent mooring while having the freedom to up anchor and move up or down the river. Ronnie reports that his life is now balanced and he is happy and secure. He seems to have chosen a semi-nomadic lifestyle as a bargee (water Gypsy) because he lacks place attachment to land, although he has formed his place attachment to waterways, rivers, lakes and the sea. Ronnie seems to feel safe and happy surrounded by ever-moving water. Living on the water provides Ronnie with feelings of happiness and safety in his daily life, enabling him to explore and live in the wider world. Flowing water provides him with freedom, and safety from other people hurting him. The water acts as a safety barrier to protect him at times of sadness. Krause (2016:24) writes that rivers can be boundaries and barriers but more often, they are lifelines, transport arteries that link to far-away places when the river reaches the sea.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, this chapter provided a presentation of the participants' IPA analysed narratives. The main themes were identified and highlighted and discussed for each participant. The participants' narratives have provided

detailed personal accounts about their childhood attachment relationships to people and place.

All of the participants were asked the same guided conversation questions about their attachment relationships to both people and place in their childhood and even though they come from different Gypsy and Traveller groups the narratives raised many similar themes. These themes were the importance of family and the shared care model of child rearing, the strong feelings of attachment to the places on their travelling circuits and the belief that the land held their history and memories for them to retrieve when they next visit the place and issues connected to discrimination and prejudice.

In the following chapter the participants' narratives will be linked together and will be examined in relation to the research aims and the wider knowledge base.

## Chapter Seven – Discussion - Dialogue between the Findings and Existing Literature



Photograph 8. Unauthorised Romani Gypsy family camp (Hamilton-Perry, 2014).

### **Introduction -**

In this chapter of the thesis, the findings presented in the previous chapters will be examined in relation to the research aims and discussed within the wider knowledge base and relevant literature. The potential implications for Social Work practice and social policy will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.

Before beginning this discussion, it is important to add a note that, although it has its critics and detractors, attachment to people is a fairly well-established theory and is underpinned with a large research base. However, as noted in the discussion about the conceptual framework in Chapter Three, attachment to place is a more disputed concept, as a 'place' is not seen as providing the same feelings of emotional safety and security as an attachment figure

(usually a main care provider). This is partly because a 'place' cannot reciprocate in the sense of communicating something back.

There is a research literature on attachment to God or other deities but that is not the same as the idea of an attachment to place. However, when one considers the four components of an attachment relationship i.e. the offer of a i) safe haven and ii) a secure base plus iii) proximity-seeking and iv) separation-protest, it is argued in this thesis that a 'place' can fulfil each of these functions. It is accepted that a place cannot provide certain kinds of nurturing experiences, such as a cuddle when one is upset, as a person such as a parent or carer would, but places can offer comfort of a different kind and indeed did in the minds of those interviewed. For example, they often revisited these places, even if only by reliving their memories as it was reassuring (safe haven and proximity-seeking) and they didn't like to be away from important places, even if it could only be recalled as a memory or from a photo (separation-protest). Drawing upon such memories also helped the participants of this study to feel more confident to be able get on with their lives (secure base).

### **Addressing the Research aims**

To recap from Chapter One, the primary research question of this thesis is:

#### **How do adult family members from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place?**

In addition, the following four supplementary questions have also been considered:

1. How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships?
2. How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has had on their family relationships?
3. How does the Traveller culture and way of life affect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?

4. Does the environment or place where families live affect how communities parent their children?

As noted in Chapter Two, UK Social Policy has impacted on Gypsies and Travellers' ability to travel freely around the UK. Despite attempts to assimilate Gypsies and Travellers into the majority settled communities, a large portion of these transient communities continue to retain and adapt their culturally traditional lifestyles.

### **Analysis of findings**

The previous chapter presented the findings from the IPA of the guided conversation/semi-structured interviews. The main themes identified for each participant were discussed and linked to the four research questions, exploring the extent and nature of attachment to people and place for members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

### **An examination of the findings in relation to existing research – dialogue between the findings and existing literature**

The recurring themes identified and the links between participants' personal experiences and their feelings of attachment to people and place will be explored and presented below in connection to the literature reviewed.

The key themes are identified in table 3.

**Table 3** shows the participants that reported experiencing each key theme. A dash indicates those participants who did not comment on the main key themes. This does not mean that they have not experienced these feelings; it only shows that they did not talk about the theme in any detail whilst being asked the set of semi-structured interview questions.

It appears that some of the key themes were interlinked and were experienced by the research participants in connection with several of the research questions. Each key theme will only be discussed in relation to the research question in which the highest number of participants spoke about the key theme.

**Table 3: Recurring themes identified from the participants guided conversation**

Participants	Molly	Doris	Lucy	Mandy	Arthur	Jane	Lee	Pete	Mary	Ronnie
<b>RQ1</b>										
Emotional trauma from forced evictions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Family groups provide feelings of safety and security	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Discrimination and prejudice and feelings of rejection and of not belonging	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>RQ2</b>										
Loss of the old ways/ attempts to adapt into the settled community	-	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-
<b>RQ3</b>										
Attachment to multiple care providers	X	X	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	-
Attachment to heritage and culture	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	-
Attachment to place and memories	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Attachment to religion and the Church	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	-
Attachment to the dead and their resting place	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>RQ4</b>										
Shared care of children and the elderly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Attachment to Multiple care providers	X	X	-	X	-	X	-	X	X	-
Attachment solely to parents	-	-	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	X
Desire to settle without losing their culture for children's education	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	-
Discrimination and Prejudice and feelings of rejection and of not belonging	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

## **RQ1 - How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant evictions has had on their family relationships?**

Cemlyn & Clark (2005) note that not having somewhere to live undermines Gypsies' and Travellers' basic Human Rights. Lacking somewhere safe and secure to live undermines not only people's Human Rights, it also undermines their other rights. The 1997 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly to which Britain is a signatory, set out *"the requirements of the state to abstain from, and protect against, the forced eviction of people from their homes and land"* (Tyler 2013:129). This treaty specifies that evictions should not result in families being made homeless and requires the state to take appropriate measures to ensure that there is adequate alternative housing, resettlement or access to productive land (Tyler 2013).

Section 175 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 provides that a person is homeless if he has accommodation but (a) he cannot secure entry to it, or (b) it consists of a moveable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he is entitled or permitted both to place it and to reside in it. *"This means that any Traveller who is on an unauthorised site is by definition homeless, now that 'tolerated' sites are no longer recognised"* (Avebury, 2003).

The ODPM Homelessness Code of Guidance (2006) for local authorities makes it clear that where a local authority has Gypsies and Travellers living in unauthorised encampments, it must consider whether a pitch in an authorised site is reasonably available, and if not, what other form of suitable accommodation is available.

Homeless Gypsies and Travellers with children would be seen as being in priority need for housing. Local authorities, however, do not have temporary or permanent accommodation suitable for their cultural need for hard standing, and local authority sites are invariably full. It is culturally inappropriate to expect Gypsies and Travellers to get rid of their trailers, their trucks and vans because many families will still be reliant on these for their



employment options and because of cultural aversion to bricks and mortar accommodation.

The participants gave numerous examples of forced evictions and problems that they have faced securing alternative housing. The process of submitting a homelessness application is a complex process requiring forms to be completed either in person or online and identification such as birth certificate or passports, needs to be produced. Although this is not as widespread as it has been historically, many Gypsy and Traveller children are not registered at birth, either due to their parent's lack of literacy or because they have been moved on before the mother has been able to register the birth. Applying for housing without identification, the completion of forms and dealing with letters can be a major problem for many, and one which often is forgotten or ignored because the task was too complex (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry 2010).

For the participants of this study, their narrative of their life experiences suggests that they have very different feelings about planned moves and forced evictions. Planned moves were looked forward to with excitement as families prepared to attend family celebrations, horse fairs or to meet up with extended family members on family campsites. The families followed their own travelling circuits, which reconnected them to the places that were important and to which they felt an emotional attachment.

This constant moving provided the family members from this study with feelings of safety and security. This suggests that participants attributed forced evictions to external, unstable and uncontrollable events, whereas conversely, planned moves were attributed to internal, stable and controllable events. Constant forced evictions often reinforced negative feelings of fear and failure to provide a secure base for their children and families. This may impact how individuals approach new situations. In contrast, planned moves reinforce positive feelings of pride, being in control and of providing for their families, leading to increased self-esteem and self worth (Maclean & Harrison 2015).

For Travellers such as Pete, interesting variations on the meaning of attachment emerged. It was noticeable, for example, that for him, 'movement' created some of the conditions for stability and 'felt security'. The addition of the word 'felt' is pivotal here: it is Pete's nuanced memories of connection to 'people and place' that form his lived experience of attachment. And, as with many Travellers, this is an unconventional, untypical and, from the house-dweller's perspective at any rate, 'unexpected' way of experiencing security but, for Pete, 'constant movement' was how he was able to feel safe as a child.

Ronnie's narrative also highlighted that for him, having a secure mooring while being able to 'up anchor' and move up or down river also provided him with feelings of emotional safety, containment and a sense of balance in his life. Ronnie linked living in homes of bricks and mortar with relationship upheaval, loss and emotional insecurity. For Ronnie and for many other Gypsies and Travellers, therefore, being settled is, in effect, unsettling, resulting in increased feelings of emotional insecurity and loss of their secure base.

### **Emotional Trauma from forced evictions**

Constant forced evictions can lead to dangerous living conditions due to the health risks associated with unauthorised sites and the lack of basic service (Cemlyn & Clark 2005). Living on unauthorised sites make families vulnerable to racist harassment and vigilante attacks. Repeated evictions can be traumatic due to the nature of the intimidating and sometimes violent treatment by bailiffs. Eviction cycles are emotionally personally damaging for Gypsy and Traveller families as they can destroy their feelings of safety and security often resulting in feelings of emotional trauma and grief. Cemlyn et al (2009:v) argue that "*there is an unquantified but substantial negative psychological impact on children who experience repeated brutal evictions, family tensions associated with insecure lifestyles and an unending stream of overt and extreme hostility from the wider population*".

Repeated evictions are also financially costly for Local Authorities and the police (Hyman, 1989; Kenrick & Clark, 1999; Morris & Clements, 1999; Morris & Clements 2002; CRE, 2006e).

All participants reported that they had experienced some emotional distress and trauma during evictions. Their narratives highlighted that being evicted was personally damaging as it impoverished them in several ways, leading to marginalisation, loss of access to services such as health care and education, joblessness, homelessness and landlessness. Being homeless and landless increases the risks of trauma, relationship break downs, health risks and morbidity. As noted in Chapter Two Gypsies and Travellers already experience difficulties accessing services, being forcefully evicted increases these difficulties (Cemlyn, 2008; Morris & Clements 2002; Tyler 2013).

Government social policies require families to be socioeconomically independent. However, being forcefully evicted from a piece of land which they have legally bought can often impact on a family's ability to remain employment either self-employed or as an employee. Duschinsky et al (2014) note that the lack of socioeconomic resources can have an impact on children's attachment relationships. Being forcefully evicted must leave some Gypsy Traveller parents feeling helpless (Solomon & George 1999). A parent or care provider experiencing socioeconomic deprivation and feelings of helplessness may find it harder to regulate their emotions and lack the capacity to provide emotional warmth. Also, the lack of resources may increase the possibility of conflict, distress and chaos in the home (Duschinsky et al, 2014).

This appears to have been the case for Jane, as her narrative indicates that her parents became fearful and at times hostile towards her and her siblings during forced evictions. For Jane and her siblings, forced evictions must have been distressing, however, Jane's narrative suggests that while she was frightened of the situation, she was also frightened of her parents. When the world around her was frightening and uncertain, Jane did not feel that she could turn to her parents for emotional security so at these times she sought emotional comfort from her older brother (Main & Hesse 1990; Shemmings &

Shemmings 2014). Jane's parents appear to have been constantly fearful of being evicted, of prejudice and of discrimination. Her narrative indicates that she and her siblings looked after each other because their parent's care was unpredictable and did not make them feel safe.

### **Cultural Trauma**

Alexander et al (2004) suggest that cultural trauma occurs when members of a collective community feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways.

The concept of cultural trauma has been drawn upon by anthropologists and educationalists to describe the experiences of families and individuals from First Nation/ Indigenous communities, who have throughout history been forced to give up their traditional way of life, to make room for the growing dominant society (Smith & Greenfields, 2013).

The findings suggest that forced evictions have a negative effect on children and their families. Participants' narratives suggested that during evictions, many of the children's parents struggle with their own feelings of anxiety, anger and fear. Some of the participants noted that their parents were unable to emotionally contain themselves during evictions, resulting in them not being able to provide their children with the emotional containment, security and feelings of safety that they needed. Cemlyn et al (2009:iv) argue that "*existing evidence,.....highlights high rates of anxiety, depression and at times self-destructive behaviour (for example, suicide and/ or substance abuse)*". These are responses to the 'cultural trauma' that results from Britain's failure to find a sustainable solution to the lack of suitable, secure, culturally appropriate accommodation.

Rose (2006) recent study in Ireland indicated that the suicide rate of Irish Traveller men is 3-5 times higher than the wider population. Suicide appears to be a predominantly male issue. Rose (2006) suggests that the male Traveller suicide rates are over nine times higher than female Travellers'

suicide rates. The highest at-risk group is reported to be the 25- 29-year olds. Rose (2006) indicates that the increasing levels of male Traveller suicide may be connected to the loss of cultural traditions and stopping sites (attachment places), together with main stream society's public opinion of Travellers as being inferior and a threat to the settled lifestyle and values. Discrimination, prejudice and the constant rejection by the settled communities, and the ever-increasing legal restrictions and the resulting economic challenges, poverty, marginalisation, lack of employment and boredom also negatively impact on Gypsies' and Travellers' emotional wellbeing.

Raleigh (2017) highlights that Gypsy and Traveller teenagers in Ireland can't participate in normal teenage activities such as going to the local disco because they are refused entry at the door, simply because they are members of the travelling communities. Young Gypsies and Travellers are often not welcome in pubs and clubs, which leaves them feeling very isolated and impacts on their self-esteem and self worth.

It is suggested that the same concerning phenomenon is happening amongst all of the Gypsy and Traveller communities within the UK. Raleigh (2017), however, reports that mental health issues are more severe in the Irish Traveller communities and suggests that the suicide rate is higher than the All Ireland Traveller Health Study Team (AITHS Team), (2010) estimation, with levels six times higher than in the general population and seven times higher among young Traveller men. The lack of support, coupled with discrimination and racism, were documented as being the main reasons for the high rate. However it is also possible that Gypsy and Traveller men do not actively seek support with their mental health difficulties as many males feel that it is not the done thing to talk about their emotions, as it is often believed that only the women suffer with their nerves (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Pavee Point, 2015).

Nolte et al's (2011) study looks at the family factors involved in the development of anxiety disorders. Their findings highlight *'the interplay between stress, anxiety and the activation of the attachment system'*. They argue that *'this inter play directly affects the development of social-cognitive and mentalising capacities that are acquired in the interpersonal context of early attachment relationships'* (Nolte et al, 2011). The child's early attachment relationship experiences are deemed as the key organiser of the complex interplay between environmental, genetic and epigenetic contributions of the development of anxiety disorders. Therefore, if a child's parents are experiencing high levels of stress and are unable to be emotionally available for their child, their mentalising ability to understand the child's emotional state will also be limited resulting in the frightened child's fear not being safely contained by their parents, leaving the child being unable to regulate the negative emotional effect that the fear has produced. At times of forced evictions, the children could develop hyperactivation strategies that have the subsequent effect on the neural pathways within the brain leading to a *'multifactorial etiology from the dysfunctional co-regulation of the fear and stress states'* (Nolte et al 2011). This could negatively impact on the child's long-term social, emotional and developmental well-being. However, the shared care method of child rearing found in many Gypsy and Traveller communities, enables the children to form attachment relationships with more than one care provider. This provides them with some emotional containment and protection from experiencing emotional dysregulation and long-term emotional issues due to their parent's lack of emotional availability during forced evictions. The children will still experience their own feelings of fear and distress simply because of the nature of evictions but have the safety of their wider family and care providers to help them manage their fear. Nolte et al (2011) argue that early adversity and stressful events play a huge role in childhood anxiety and depression (Carlson & Sroufe, 1995; Heinrichs et al, 2003; Nolte et al, 2011; Powers et al, 2006)

For many Gypsies and Travellers, feeling forced to settle has resulted in them experiencing a form of cultural trauma. Smith and Greenfields (2013) note a number of components including traumatic change, such as forced evictions

that are sudden, rapid and beyond a group's control, which can be defined as a culturally traumatic event. The perception of what makes an event traumatising is relative, dependent on the individual and cultural formation of the event in relation to the socio-cultural context of a shared collectively. The mass eviction from Dale Farm in 2011 can be deemed not only as personally traumatic for the families, it can also be seen as a culturally traumatic event. The mass eviction of the individuals and families, whose planning applications had been rejected after years of lengthy legal appeals, has changed the future identity of Irish Travellers and their wider families in the UK. Many of the displaced families moved onto their extended family's sites around the country, resulting in increased tensions between the settled communities and the residents of the affected sites. In some areas long-standing tenants were forced or felt that they were forced to vacate their pitches when their peaceful sites were invaded by large groups of angry Irish Travellers. This in turn perpetuated the cultural trauma onto other uninvolved groups (CEN News, 2003, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c).

The Travellers of Dale Farm had not breached any criminal Laws; the planning dispute and eviction was a civil matter. Constant and Co Ltd, a notorious, private bailiff company, were charged, "*to carry out the biggest forced eviction of British Citizens from their own land and homes in living memory*" (Tyler, 2013:125).

Many families lost their homes as well as their access to the land that they legally owned and on which they had invested a considerable amount of income, time and labour, turning the unused polluted brown belt land into homes for their children. It has been reported by many writers that the evictees were extremely traumatised seeing their homes and land taken from them and in many cases destroyed. The families' land has been flattened, the hard standing has been broken up and large mounds of earth have been used to block their access. Their former pitches remain unused and have become overgrown, while the families have no other option but to live roadside.

This may have long term effects on their physical and mental health, their

trust in society and their willingness to abide by the majority's rules and regulations (Cernea, 2000; Quarmby, 2013; Taylor, 2008; Tyler, 2013).

Evicting most of the families from the illegal Dale Farm site has caused an increase in social problems. The families are now moving around the area from one unauthorised site to another. Many of the men have lost their jobs. Their children are no longer in school and no longer have their secure base from which to develop and grow. Before the eviction many of the Gypsies and Travellers were beginning to integrate with the settled community.

Quarmby's (2013) account of the stress that the women of Dale Farm were under at the time of the eviction suggests that any pregnant mothers who were at Dale Farm at the time of the eviction would have experienced high levels of stress, trauma and bereavement. Losing their home and security while pregnant and being forced into homelessness may have resulted in high levels of stress and trauma.

Saxbe & Morris (2018) highlight that exposure to high levels of the stress hormone cortisol can affect the development of a growing foetus. Babies tend to be born smaller, with smaller head circumferences indicating poorer brain growth. Chronic stress can alter the way that the brain develops. Babies exposed to stress in utero are often fussier, poor sleepers and have more challenging temperaments. As these babies grow, they can have problems with self-regulation and are more frequently diagnosed with ADHD.

The mother's traumatised emotions will have had a physical effect on their babies through the foetal environment and will have a relational effect on them through their early interactions with their traumatised, bereaved mothers.

The traumatised Gypsy and Traveller mothers would have possibly experienced severe emotional distress including heightened anxiety, hypervigilance to danger, depression and periods of dissociative withdrawal as a result of the loss of the home and security. They would have experienced



significant levels of post traumatic stress like symptoms, possibly resulting in them being unable to be emotionally available for their child, leading to the child being unable to form a secure attachment with its mother (Maskese, 2011).

The children who were directly exposed to the traumatic events of the forced evictions, the loss and for some the destruction of their homes may also have resulted in the children developing post-traumatic stress-like symptoms. This may cause older siblings to become detached from their younger siblings, also making them less available as attachment figures. This could leave the young children in a very frightening world, where no one around them is able to be emotionally available for them.

The possible division of family groups as they attempted to find suitable stopping places large enough for the family group may have made the world feel like a very unsafe, and lonely place. The withdrawal of an infant's main attachment figures, either physically or emotionally, is likely to have long-term implications for the children's emotional well being.

For Mary the stress of being evicted from her Dale Farm site may have been a contributing factor to her losing the twins that she was carrying. As we have seen from her narrative the stress and the post-traumatic stress that Mary felt overwhelmed her, resulting in her taking her own life. Mary's surviving children lost their home, both of their parents, and their main attachment figure. They remain in their aunt's care, living in laybys on the side of busy roads and car parks, their former safe base and home is now overgrown and covered in rubbish.

Purser (2016) notes that individuals find it hard to emigrate to another country, even when the move has been planned and is wanted. Being forced to emigrate causes a person to experience loss and ruptured attachment relationships to people and their attachment places. This leads to feelings of emotional trauma, fear, desperation and alienation from their own culture, while being assimilated into the new culture which views them with resentment, antagonism and even hatred. For Purser (2016) this leads to

*“Today” (becoming) broken from the past and the future does not make sense any more. Yesterday is lost and tomorrow is bleak”.*

### **Family groups provide feelings of safety and security**

On top of losing their place of attachment many Gypsy and Traveller families are forced to split up during and after an eviction, due to them being unable to find a camping place that is large enough for the whole of the family group. Research suggests that the ensuing reduction in support networks can create safety problems that adversely affect health and emotional well-being (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Hogg et al, 2015). Many of the participants reported that they only felt safer when they were living in large family groups, as there was ‘safety in numbers.

This ‘felt need’ to live in large family groups often makes individuals from the settled communities feel threatened when a large family group of Gypsies and Travellers move into their town or village. Green and White (2007) noted that in areas where people feel a strong sense of attachment to place and their local community the *us versus them* (Green & White, 2007) mentality can be strong, sometimes leading to feelings of mistrust and fear of any Gypsies and Traveller groups that attempt to stop in the area. The Gypsies and Travellers are seen as “outsiders” who are then deemed to be responsible for all the crime and trouble in the area while they are camped in or near their communities. This ‘us versus them’ feeling in an area often leads to individuals behaving towards the Gypsies and Travellers in a discriminative manner. This discrimination increases Gypsies’ and Travellers’ families ‘felt need’ to live in large family groups, for theirs and their children’s safety.

The theme of safety in numbers has recurred in Lucy, Doris and Mandy’s accounts of their lived experience of not being wanted within the settled communities. This rejection and, at times, overt harassment by the majority of settled communities pushes the Gypsy and Traveller families closer together, and further onto the extremities of mainstream society. The resulting marginalisation can force Gypsy and Traveller families to remain in their large family groups where they work together as a community to ensure their children’s safety and survival. The families’ relationships seem to be stronger

in families that have experienced multiple evictions, prejudice and discrimination.

For Molly, she sees her family group as her tribe with her extended family as her clan. As noted in Chapter Six, this suggests that Molly and her family view themselves as culturally separate from mainstream society. Molly's family do not see themselves as integrated into the culture of the settled communities and many appear to have no desire to want to fully integrate within the culture of the settled communities. Feelings of cultural independence were noticeable in most of the participants' narratives to some level, although Molly's feelings of wanting to remain separate from mainstream society were by far the strongest.

As discussed in Chapter Four, Belton (2005) argues that some people choose to be socially excluded from mainstream society by isolating themselves in family groups and not trying to integrate into mainstream society. This can be seen by some Gypsies and Travellers as a way to protect their family from prejudice and discrimination.

Most of the participants noted that in their communities, there is a lot of fear and mistrust towards individuals from the settled communities. Years of government policy designed to assimilate Gypsies and Travellers into mainstream society, have arguably not eased relations between Gypsy and Traveller groups and the settled communities. Governmental attempts to remove their ethnic minority status have led to an increased general feeling of mistrust and fear amongst many Gypsies and Travellers. When this is added to the incidents of overt discrimination, many Gypsies and Travellers turn their backs on Gorgio society and rely on living in large family groups for safety.

### **Discrimination and prejudice and feelings of rejection and of not belonging**

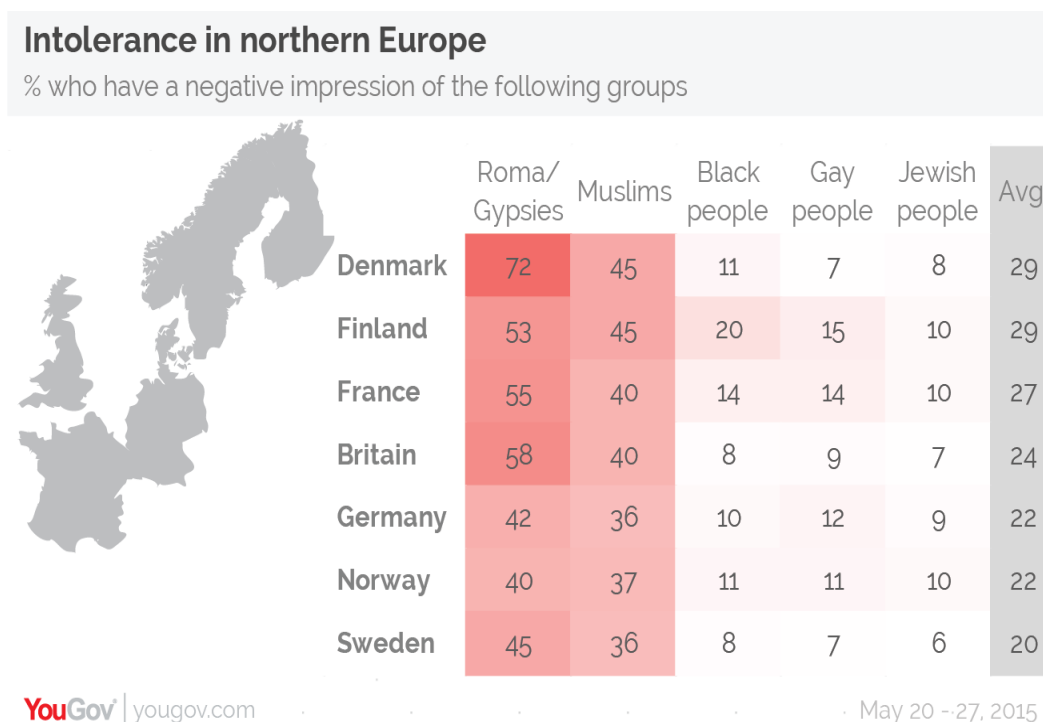
The prejudice, discrimination and persecution that Gypsy and Traveller communities have experienced throughout Europe since the first Gypsies came into Europe as immigrants from Asia around 1000AD has been

discussed in Chapter Four. Fortunately, today, Gypsies and Travellers are no longer killed purely for being Gypsy Travellers. Unfortunately prejudice and discrimination, however, continue to be faced by these semi-nomadic communities.

Racism towards most ethnic minority groups is no longer seen either as publicly or socially acceptable and is more hidden and less frequently expressed openly. This does not mean that they and other ethnic groups do not experience discrimination and prejudice at times, however, it is no longer seen as acceptable to discriminate against people due to their colour, their religion or their sexuality.

Discrimination and intolerance however continue to appear as the main barriers to social integration and inclusion. Dahlgreen (2015) highlighted that research has indicated that Roma Gypsies and Muslims are the least tolerated minorities in Europe. Figure 8, below presents the findings of YouGov research that was undertaken across seven northern European countries looking at the levels of intolerance felt towards minority groups. Roma Gypsies were the group who were the least tolerated in all seven countries. Muslims experienced the next highest levels of intolerance. Denmark appeared to be the least tolerant of all the seven countries and the research highlighted an extremely high level of negative thoughts about Roma Gypsies and Travellers. After Denmark the UK appears to have the next highest level of intolerance towards Gypsies and Travellers.

Figure 7: Intolerance in Northern Europe



Dahlgreen (2015).

While this research highlights that prejudice and discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers are still widely reported, this study only looked at 5 categories of minority groups when there are many more groups that were not included. The results could be deemed as being simplified and misleading, however the participants' narratives concur with YouGov UK's finding. (Dahlgreen, 2015).

Discrimination and racism towards Gypsies and Travellers are still common and seems to be seen as justified and are frequently overt. Overt prejudice and discriminatory behaviour is against the Race Relations Act 1965, incorporated in the Equality Act 2000, however, many minority ethnic groups still face considerable inequalities in some areas of their daily life (The Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2016).

In 2016, University of Reading's Agricultural Society's 'ethnic minorities' night sparked a media storm due to a group of unruly students being 'encouraged to dress as Pikeys'. The students were reported to have also been encouraged to behave like Pikeys, which resulted in them starting a riot in a

residential area, setting off fire extinguishers and chucking them around, setting off fireworks and stealing wheelie bins, traffic cones, metal railings and glasses from the bars. The university launched an investigation into the incident and published the statement using the language of the Equality Act 2000. *“The university stands for mutual respect and the use of derogatory language directed towards any individuals or groups with protected characteristics will not be tolerated, and appropriate action will be taken by the university”* (Hyde, 2016; The Equality Act 2000).

Negative media attention, overtly racist statements from local and national politicians add to the ignorance nurturing and legitimising the prejudice and discrimination of many members of the settled population, while those in authority frequently fail to challenge the institutional racism (Cemlyn et al, 2009; Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

*“While Gypsies and Travellers have experienced such hostility for centuries, what is remarkable and shameful, is that this continues in the present day, despite a wealth of legislation to promote equality and human rights and protect against discrimination”* (Cemlyn et al, 2009: v).

This can lead to social exclusion and in some cases, the eventual retaliation from the Gypsies and Travellers who can then either behave in an anti social way because they feel anger and frustration towards the settled population or some may try to exploit flaws in the planning system, which leads to further public unrest. Either way, the cycle of discrimination is perpetuated (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry 2010).

The Traveller Movement (2015) reports that while Gypsy and Traveller culture has always been able to adapt to survive and continues today, the rapid economic changes of the past decade such as the recession and the gradual dismantling of the grey economy, has driven many Gypsy and Traveller families into hard times. The criminalisation of ‘travelling’ and the shortage of authorised sites both private and council have compounded many families’ difficulties.

The Irish Travellers seem to face discrimination from not only the settled community, but also from other travelling groups. Doris reported “*you have to be careful of the Irish tinkers, they’d take your pitch and steal the clothes off your back while you are still wearing them, if you don’t watch them*”. This is a sentiment that has been shared by some of the other participants. Lee voiced quite strong opinions about his negative views about Irish Travellers.

All of the participants reported that they have experienced some level of discrimination and prejudice from members of the majority settled communities. Most of the participants shared that when people know their ethnic minority status, some services have not been welcoming or have even refused to provide them with the service. Gypsies and Travellers are often harassed or dismissed from employment when their minority ethnic status becomes known (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010). In Jane’s case, an employment offer has been withdrawn due to her being seen as a Gypsy girl.

Lucy’s narrative of her experiences of trying to settle in a home of bricks and mortar suggests that the local residents were unhappy when she and her family moved into their social housing property. From day one, Lucy and her children faced overt prejudice, discrimination, abuse and violent harassment. Lucy’s narrative indicates that she expected to be treated in a discriminatory manner by the settled community. She lacked confidence and trust, when dealing with members of the settled community, which may have made her appear confrontational and defensive. Her feelings of shock and fear about the extent of the racist abuse that she and her children experienced forced her to give up her home and return to living in a trailer roadside.

For Mandy, being verbally abused almost daily and having to try and protect her eleven children from people who, from Mandy’s perspective, seem to gain some pleasure from calling her and her children names like “pikey scum” was emotionally and physically draining. Mandy reports that she worries constantly for her children’s emotional safety as her younger ones can get very distressed by the constant abuse. Mandy did not find that the abuse was any less when she has lived in homes of bricks and mortar; in fact, Mandy

believes that it was at times, far worse.

This prejudice and discrimination could be partly due to the unconscious feelings that people hold towards other people, groups or cultures. Children often model their behaviours on their parents and those in close proximity to them. The social values, behaviours, attitudes and beliefs of the family in which children grow up become normalised in their unconscious. Therefore, if children grow up in families holding negative feelings towards Gypsies and Travellers, it is likely that the children will grow up holding the same beliefs (Maclean & Harrison 2008).

Social imagery also plays a part during a child's socialisation process, through the media and the language used. The portrayal of people, who are often devalued by society, also influences individuals' values and beliefs (Maclean & Harrison 2008:64). Social imagery is related to the processes of stereotyping and labelling. When individuals are valued, they tend to have positive experiences and high expectations are placed on them by society, which they strive to fulfil. When the majority of society devalues individuals, such as members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, they will have fewer demands placed on them. Expectations will be low and stereotyped. This results in Gypsies and Travellers lacking the motivation to engage with the wider communities. This in turn, can lead to them being denied opportunities because they are not expected to benefit from them, while the wider community often feels disadvantaged by having to provide them with the same opportunities as they have. This can be seen when local Governments attempt to address the need for permanent and transit sites (Maclean & Harrison 2008). Devalued, marginalised Gypsy and Traveller groups often face segregation. They can find it difficult to integrate and socially participate in the wider Gorgio community (Maclean & Harrison 2008).

**RQ2 - How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has on their family relationships?**

We have seen in the narratives of those interviewed that their ideas about



being 'settled' is arguably a loaded term, which involved alternative ways of experiencing security that problematise pre-conceived notions of attachment or our received wisdom about forms of human connectedness. Thus, the life of Gypsies and Travellers 'unsettles' house-dwellers' privileged, embodied and taken-for-granted conceptions of attachment.

**Loss of the old ways/ attempts to adapt into the settled community – isolation for the individual who decides to settle.**

Parry et al (2007) note that Nomadism used to be seen as central to Gypsy and Traveller identity and the inability to maintain a travelling lifestyle is generally mourned by Gypsies and Travellers who have felt that they have had to settle either in homes of bricks and mortar or on sites. Freedom, choice and socialising were seen as important elements of the Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle. Being forced to settle for whatever reason produced a sense of loss of freedom and has been connected to issues with emotional poor well-being and physical health (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Parry et al, 2007).

For many of the participants, the loss of the old ways induces feelings of sadness, uncertainty, fear and insecurity. Their family's shared cultural history and living and travelling in family groups provided them with feelings of emotional safety and security which, in turn, resulted in feelings of belonging to their community. Many found being unable to continue living in their tight family groups left them feeling vulnerable, emotionally distressed and isolated.

**Settled accommodation – bricks and mortar housing 'versus' sites**

The lack of secure, culturally suitable accommodation underpins many of the inequalities that Gypsy and Traveller communities experience. Planning policy has over the past 20 years shifted away from public local authority owned sites, which local housing authorities administer, to self-provision by families and community groups themselves. Disputes between the Gypsies and Travellers and the settled communities arise when Gypsies and Travellers apply for planning permission to develop a site on land that they have purchased privately. The opposition from local residents frequently leads to local authorities turning down planning applications, although a few are successful on appeal. The Government has allocated substantial sums to

local housing authorities to develop new sites or refurbish old ones. The extent to which local authorities and registered social landlords have accessed these grants, has varied considerably across the country and appears to be dependent upon political will and changing local circumstances (Celmyn et al, 2009).

There are mixed views regarding the preference for houses or living on a site as an alternative to travelling. Many Gypsy and Traveller families have moved into housing when they have been faced with no other alternative, either due to lack of legal sites vacancies, health issues or the desire for their children to gain an education.

The transition into bricks and mortar housing has, for many, proved difficult, with a high number of tenancies breaking down. Gypsies and Travellers' collective identity, emotional dependency and group solidarity, can increase the difficulties experienced when a Traveller family decides to settle into housing (Smith & Greenfields, 2013). Family members will try to influence others not to leave the community, which also increases feelings of anxiety connected to moving into homes of bricks and mortar (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

The 'culture shock' that many families have experienced seems partly due to losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse of living amongst a close-knit community which spends most of the social day living and working outside. Instead, they have to live in social isolation, living within four walls, with unknown neighbours, who are sometimes hostile. Many families cannot cope with living in a "house" and the lack of freedom this afforded to the children. The loss of perceptual reinforcements from their own culture and exposure to new stimuli can also be disorientating as it disrupts the familiar cultural patterns (Greenfields, 2006; Smith & Greenfields 2013; Parry et al, 2007).

Loss of contact with their close-knit family, together with experiences of racism and discrimination, can lead to failure of many Traveller housing placements. Many Gypsies and Travellers report deteriorating mental ill health

due to feelings of claustrophobia and enclosure, which upsets their “nerves”. Spiralling debts due to difficulties adjusting to the economic and bureaucratic responsibilities that are part of living in a house, also cause many Gypsy and Traveller families concern (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

Lucy didn't struggle to settle because of any difficulties that she had in adapting to living in a house. Lucy's attempt at settling in a home of bricks and mortar resulted in her and her children experiencing extreme physical and verbal racial abuse. She remained in her home for as long as she could as her children had settled and were starting to develop emotional connections to their home and school. Lucy's children's attachments were fragmented and broken when the family were forced to flee their home due to the high level of prejudice and discrimination.

While for some settling into housing is difficult, it is noted that many Gypsies and Travellers acknowledge that housing can be associated with greater comfort, hot running water and access to services (Greenfields and Smith, 2007). This seems to have been the case for Pete who struggled when his parents moved into a home of bricks and mortar. He remembers feeling isolated, trapped and claustrophobic. For Pete, he missed the predictability of the old transient way of life. The planned movement of his family had provided him with feelings of stability and security throughout his childhood. Pete was unable to settle happily in housing and secured a pitch on a local authority owned Traveller site. Settling on the Traveller's site for Pete was a good compromise as it gave his family the best of the Traveller lifestyle and yet enabled them to interact more easily with the settled communities.

Doris shared that she and her family moved onto a local authority site because she feels that the old ways have nearly died out, “*the settled folk have made sure of that*”. While she said that she feels lucky to have a permanent site where her family can all live close by, she also feels trapped and frustrated and longs for the freedom of the old days.

For Doris, the lack of legal sites means that she cannot leave her pitch for more than a few weeks, due to the fear that someone else will move onto it

while she is away. Doris is saddened that there are so few sites as she believes that living on the road is no longer an option for most families.

There is such a shortage of pitches available that Gypsies and Travellers are known on occasion to move onto another family's pitch if the family is deemed to be travelling. This was the case at the Smithy Fen Gypsy site in a rural village in Cambridgeshire in 2004. The site had been the home for dozens of English Gypsy families for many years that had peacefully coexisted with the settled community. Traveller families from Ireland started arriving in 2003 and the growing numbers of Irish Travellers forced many of the long-standing English Romani families off their pitches. The Irish Travellers were reported to have started using farmland next to the site without the permission of the owners, causing damage and laying hard standing. Relationships between the villagers and the residents from the now Irish Traveller site became increasingly difficult and totally broke down when the village postman was murdered in the local pub frequented by the Travellers. The villagers blamed the Irish Travellers and stepped up their battle to remove the illegal pitches (CEN News 2003; CEN News 2004; CEN News 2005a & b; CEN News 2006a, b & c).

For Lee, the Irish Travellers moving on to Smithy Fen and forcing the English Romani out and (as he saw it) causing problems in the village, angered him and his comments suggested that Gypsies and Travellers are not a homogeneous group and gave the indication that the various Gypsy and Traveller groups may hold negative feelings of prejudice and discrimination towards other groups.

Lee shared;

*“Everyone hates the Irish tinkers, and the Irish hate everyone else, even their own. Romani won't pull onto a site if there are Irish on in, many will leave their home site if Irish pull on, like what happened at Smithy Fen. There's a war going on there. The young ones are the worst, they have no respect for anything and even steal from their own; nothing's safe when tinkers are about. New Travellers are disliked by some Romani family's cos they don't drink and most New Travellers do. Tinkers are viewed by all as the wrong sort of Travellers. Some are ok, but not many”.*

### **RQ3 - How does the Traveller culture and way of life – affect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?**

As highlighted in the previous chapters, Gypsies and Travellers historically travelled in large family groups made up of grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles and their children. The males of the family stayed with their family when they married, and their wives and children joined their husband's family group. Conversely, when a female in the family got married, she would go and stay with her new husband's family. This reinforced family connections and ensured the bond between the two families.

Family groups are normally tightly-knit social groups with a strong sense of family identity and mutual self-help (Niner, 2003). These family groups work together to care for the children, the elderly and the sick. Greenfields (2006) suggests that certain aspects of Gypsy and Traveller lifestyles are a logical response to them being or previously being culturally a nomadic population, while other aspects of Gypsy and Traveller lifestyles, together with their belief systems, are probably social-cultural behaviours. Therefore, the shared cultural and behavioural expectations strengthen and secure the emotional bonds of the family to the group and to group members.

The cultural and moral expectations of individuals' behaviour within each family group act as an internal social control mechanism, which is accepted by all members of the family group. Disputes are normally settled within the family, minimising social disruptions within the group. When possible, disputes with other families are sorted out amongst themselves. If disputes cannot be settled, families tend to avoid places and situations in order to avoid the potential for social distress or the embarrassment of being in the same place as the family or individual that they have the dispute with (Greenfields 2008).

Molly reports that it is getting harder to avoid families with which they have a dispute. Molly notes that Gypsy and Traveller communities historically avoided territorial problems by families sticking to their own travelling routes, ensuring that their paths only crossed at large events such as horse fairs, where it was easy for them to tolerate each other. For Molly, the lack of campsites disrupted the Gypsy and Traveller community's natural hierarchy

and order, leading to more family feuds and fall-outs, as there are so few places where they are allowed to stop in recent years. This has resulted in both 'highborn' and 'lowborn' families competing for the limited campsites available.

Doris's narrative highlighted how important her family was to her when she was growing up. For Doris, families worked together to ensure their survival. This is a theme, which featured in most of the participant's narratives. As soon as children were old enough, they were given tasks, which helped to support the smooth functioning of the family and deepened the family's deep bonds and interdependence on each other. Doris noted that when she was growing up, girls were "*brought up to enjoy cleaning, to be proud of our homes and our men folk*". It needs to be noted that all of the participants' homes were very clean and tidy.

### **Attachment to multiple care providers**

According to Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1973), Attachment Theory provides an explanation of how the parent-child relationship emerges and influences subsequent development. Bowlby (1958) proposed that attachment is adaptive as it enhances the infant's chance of survival. In this way, it can be understood within an evolutionary context where the caregiver provides safety and security to the infant. Responsive relationships are biologically essential and required for healthy development. The absence of a responsive relationship presents the child with a serious threat to its emotional well being particularly during its earliest years (National Scientific Council for the developing child 2012). Therefore, human attachment is fundamentally important to the developing child.

While Bowlby (1958) was focused on the importance of the mother child relationship, research has suggested that infants can form multiple attachment relationships to sensitive non-parental care providers if these relationships are responsive and meet the infant's needs.

Gypsy and Traveller children are primarily the responsibility of their parents, grandparents, and immediate relatives. The wider community is also involved in caring for the children, watching out for them and their well-being. Family groups take a cooperative responsibility for raising children, ensuring that the children are educated in the appropriate cultural practices, as well as developing a clear sense of their ethnic and social identity (Greenfields 2008).

Children in Western settled societies often spend large proportions of their waking hours in the care of nurseries, child minders and nannies. Many form attachment relationships with their alternative carers and can experience feelings of loss and grief when their carer changes their employment, or the infant moves up into an older group, necessitating the infant having to be introduced to a new carer (Howes & Hamilton, 1993). In the Gypsy and Traveller communities, however, infants are cared for by family members rather than paid carers. This provides the children with consistent care from individuals who have a vested interest and an emotional connection to the infant.

Cooperative responsibility for caring for the children in a family group was noted in some of the participants' narratives, who reported that their grandparents or elder siblings had cared for them at times. Family members were reported to step in and provide care for the children in their group so that parents could work, or in times of hardship. None of the participants reported being cared for by someone from outside the family.

For Jane, her eldest brother provided her with most of her emotional care when she was a child due to her mother's overwhelming grief after her third baby was born stillborn. When Jane's eldest brother died suddenly, Jane took over his role as the main care provider for her siblings. She seems to feel that she is responsible for her mother and her family's well-being. Jane's mother has been emotionally unavailable to Jane and her siblings since their brothers died, this has necessitated Jane and her siblings identifying emotionally available adults within their community to develop strong emotional relationships with. This appears to have been their way of ensuring that they had some of the emotional needs met.

For Jane, people who lived on site became her attachment figures and she sees them as her extended family. While the people on Jane's site are not related to each other, they have developed a strong bond and group identity, helping and supporting each other and ensuring that the children are kept safe.

The narratives of the participants who reported being cared for by family members indicated that they had formed attachment relationships with multiple care providers, except for Ronnie whose experience of being cared for by multiple care providers had left him feeling emotionally insecure and frightened.

### **Attachment to heritage and culture**

As touched upon previously, Gypsy and Traveller heritage and culture are deeply rooted in their sense of self and community identity. Hawes & Perez (1996) suggest that the Gypsy and Traveller communities are mainly matriarchal and delineate male-female roles clearly. Strict sexual morality is highly valued in the Gypsy and Traveller cultures. Whilst the man is seen as the head of the household, his mother, if she is still alive, is held in high esteem and her views are valued. Children are highly valued and are kept on a tight rein. They are taught their parents' trades and how to behave in a respectful manner to the elders within the community. They are expected to obey orders quickly (Niner, 2003). This leads to strict social control (Hawes & Perez, 1996).

Many Gypsies and Travellers report that their traditions make them who they are and they valued these traditions even though in some cases they place limitations upon their lives, for instance, in terms of gender roles.

Nevertheless, few girls seem to wish to move away from their families, culture and the restrictive rules (Cemlyn et al, 2009). Life, death and caring duties within the community take priority over personal needs or personal health and work for the women (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010). Women and girls normally inhabit the private sphere of the family's life, while the men and boys inhabit the public sphere. A woman cannot discuss gender related personal problems with a male professional or vice-versa and a woman caring for a



man (unless husband and wife) could not undertake his personal care (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

Molly's family continue to live and work together and are generally self-governing with their own traditions and rules. While they live alongside others, they are not integrated into the culture of the settled community. The Romani hold many beliefs and taboos about pollution connected with things 'mochardi' (unclean as discussed in Chapter Four) (Greenfields, 40; Vesey-FitzGerald, 1973). Many modern Gypsy and Traveller families no longer follow such strict beliefs, however, Molly's narrative indicated that within her family, the beliefs and customs connected to 'Mochardi' are still followed. Molly believes that these beliefs together with the strict division of labour in her family strengthen the family group, because everybody knows their place and their role within the wider family. Molly shared that she believes that while the men folk complete the heavy work, and are seen as the strength of the clan, the women's close connection to each other provides the inner strength of the family unit.

Molly's family's customs around childbirth being seen as a strictly female business, together with their beliefs that there is a need for the new mother and new-born to be isolated from the men folk until the mother has been churched, bring the women of the clan together. Molly described how women would travel from all over the country to support the mother and child and to help with caring for any other children. These customs bring all the women together, away from the watchful eyes of the men folk. This female only time seems to strengthen their strong family bond, reinforcing their feelings of emotional attachment to each other and to their traditions. This seems to strengthen the family's core structure and connects all the branches of her tribe together.

For Molly, her family or clan still hold other strong cultural beliefs. For example, Molly's narrative indicates that she views her family as being a "big family" or "highborn" and not tainted by Gorgio blood. Molly talked about other families who allowed Gorgios into their family with distain. For Molly Gorgio

blood tainted the strict moral standards and values. Molly shared *“once Gorgios invade a family, in no time the family is arguing amongst themselves, drinking and destroying themselves with drugs, I think it’s the shame of losing status. No one from a big family will marry a lowborn, it ain’t done”*.

Doris values the traditional strict moral codes of conduct and the shared values and beliefs of Romani Gypsies as they have played an important role in her family’s life. Doris and her family are viewed within their community as being a family of high status due to Harry’s bare-knuckle fighting history. Status and honour are fundamental to Doris’ emotional well-being. She shared that she has taught her children Gypsy values and told them stories about their way of life, just like her mother had taught her. She is proud that she has taught her children right from wrong. Doris noted *“God help em if they do wrong, I’ll be right on em even now that they are all growed up”*.

Hancock (2002) links Romani Gypsy hierarchy to the Hindu Caste system. Harry and Pete’s father could be considered through the lens of the caste system (social tiers – Jatis) as belonging to the Kshatriyas (Warriors) who are deemed to be second level, and only one level below the Holy Men (Brahmins). This helps to understand Doris and her community’s beliefs about their social structure which conflict with the majority of the settled community’s beliefs about social class and structure.

Gypsies and Travellers tend to get married at a young age, normally to someone who is deemed to hold the same social standing within the community. Marriage is deemed to be for life. The level of divorce is exceptionally low amongst traditional Gypsies and Travellers. It is not uncommon for young people to marry their cousins or other young people they have grown up with. Marrying someone who is known to the family provides parents with feelings of security and confidence for their child’s future. A marriage also creates new relationship ties between families, ensuring the transmission of cultural values and knowledge of traditional practices, enabling the children to feel confident in their heritage (Greenfields

2008). Grandmothers take an active role in caring for their grandchildren and help new mothers to develop their parenting skills.

Mandy's Grandmother appears to have been Mandy's attachment figure as she provided Mandy and her siblings with most of their care while they were growing up. Mandy's grandmother was reported to have never forgiven Mandy's mother for bringing shame on the family, so she was determined to teach Mandy and her siblings traditional values and morals. Mandy has been with the father of her 11 children since she was in her mid-teens, while he travels to find work, to visit his family and to buy and sell horses, he always returns to her and his children.

Most of the participants spoke about a strong attachment to family and their family's traditions and customs. For Lucy, keeping her home clean is a matter of pride and appears to provide her with feelings of emotional comfort and a connection with her deceased mother. She values items and belongings, which have been handed down through the generations. These items indicate the family's history and status, so they are treasured and honoured. Lucy's narrative suggests that caring for her family's Crown Derby China and the china dolls provides her with a physical link to her memories and to her feelings of being safe and cared for. Lucy teaches her daughter respect for the family heirlooms, how to cook, clean and look after the home but she also encourages her to gain an education.

Arthur's childhood experiences differ from the other participants due to him being from a mixed heritage background. He shared that he did not feel that he belonged to either his mother's Gypsy culture or his father's Gorgio culture. Arthur grew up feeling rejected by both cultures. As a young child, he learnt to hide his identity in an attempt to avoid rejection. This appears to be common with many Gypsy and Traveller children today when they enter the education system (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry 2010). It is only now as a father and grandfather, that Arthur has proudly accepted his mixed heritage.

### **Attachment to place and memories**

Gypsies and Travellers' emotional connections to their places of attachment appear to be deeply rooted in their family history and cultural beliefs. As highlighted in Chapter Four, Gypsy and Traveller feelings of attachment to important places accords with the attachment to place that many First Nation cultures, such as the Aboriginal communities of Australia, experience (Yeo, 2003).

For Scannell & Gifford (2010:3) *'the cultural and individual levels of place attachment are not entirely independent. Cultural place meanings and values influence the extent of individual place attachment and individual experiences within a place and, if positive, can maintain and possibly strengthen cultural place attachment'*.

Many of the participants noted that the land or attachment places are believed to hold individuals' memories and their shared family history. The attachment place may be marked with rocks or marks carved into the tree to mark each family's territory. These places may also be viewed as sacred sites. Similar beliefs are held by Aboriginal and First Nation communities (Yeo 2003).

As we saw in the previous chapter, Molly's family has many customs and superstitions connected to their attachment places. Molly values these customs and wants future generations to be able to visit her family's important sites. The rituals that the women engage in whilst visiting their attachment places have been part of her family's life for many generations. The women travel from all over the country to join together to celebrate life and give thanks to the spirits. These rituals reinforce the women of the clan's emotional attachment bond to each other, their culture and their clan's history.

For Mandy, and some of the other participants, their attachment places hold the keys to theirs and their family's history. Reduced memory capacity caused by living 'in the moment' and needing to remember important information each day such as the dates and places of birth of all her children, caring for the children and animals and her general poor memory, (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry 2010) results in Mandy and many other Gypsies and Travellers storing

their important memories in their long-term memory. Daily life issues reside in Mandy's short-term memory capacity and, therefore, she cannot retain and recall her memories as easily as an individual who can read and write and keep a written account of her history.

When Mandy visits her attachment places, the sights, sound and smells act as a trigger bringing these forgotten thoughts and feelings back into her short-term memory (Preston, 2018). Returning to a place that holds happy memories provides her with emotional comfort and feelings of emotional security. Mandy believes that places hold her family histories and memories and that she cannot reach them unless she is in the place that holds the memory. For Mandy, each place which she feels attached to, holds a different part of hers and her family's history. When she leaves a place, the thoughts are subconsciously returned to her long-term memory and are replaced by her memories of the travelling route that she needs to take and then the memories from the next place that she is visiting return, enabling her to relive them again and to share them with her children while they are sitting around the fire.

Her extended family also have limited literacy so, for Mandy, spending time in her attachment places provides her with the link to hers and her family's history. Mandy's attachment places hold or trigger her memories, therefore, returning to each attachment place enables her to access her memories and provides her with feelings of emotional safety, security and well-being. Mandy notes that she avoids places where bad things have happened to ensure that these memories fade and die.

Beck (2011) illustrates that "*memories are cued by the physical environment. When you visit a place you used to live, these cues can cause you to revert back to the person you were when you lived there*". She argues that when people are not in a place that they have attachment feelings for the memories from the place are kept largely separated in our minds. "*The more connections our brain makes to something, the more likely our everyday thoughts are to lead us there*" (Beck, 2011). Therefore connections that our

brain makes in one place can be isolated from those made in another, so we may not think about them until we return to the attachment place.

Le Bas (2018:20) remembers that his uncles still know where all the 'atchin tans' (stopping places) were. He writes they "*never forgot the old stopping places that lay besides the hedgerows, stabbed like splinters between roads and fields, between highways and the countryside*". The 'atchin tans' were what rooted his family "*here, there, wherever they had been*".

For Le Bas (2018:23) the stopping places had played a crucial role in shaping the characters of the people from whom he had come. The stopping places held ancient connections with his family's history and were on the fringes and in-between places. Most of these places were places that nobody lived except Gypsies and Travellers. Le Bas believes that they were the nomad's old haunts. Many have now been built upon or destroyed although some have survived more or less in tact for centuries. *They form the hidden Gypsy and Traveller map of the country we live in: the bedrock of our reality and, perhaps, the antidote to unending cycles of romanticisation and demonization (Le Bas 2018:25)*".

People from the settled community also have attachment feelings towards places as discussed in Chapter three. Clayton (2012) argues that the place where we grew up usually retains an iconic status. But while it is human nature to want to have a place to belong, many of us will return to our childhood home at times of distress, as our attachment places provide us with a secure base from which we can gain emotional comfort and feelings of safety and containment (Cresswell, 2004).

Lee has chosen to stop travelling so that he can look after his elderly mother. He finds living in his trailer on his mother's land peaceful as he has the best of both worlds. He is settled but without the feelings of being confined and trapped that living in a house makes him feel. Lee is also pleased that he no longer has to face the worries of being evicted or finding a place to park up, he notes that he is too old to live in such a stressful way. Living in an

environment filled with powerful happy memories of his childhood and his dad, provides Lee with emotional comfort. Being close to his mother stops him worrying about her being able to manage and look after herself and enables her to remain in her home. Without Lee's support, his mother would not have been able to stay in her home that she has lived in for over 65 years. Lee believes that his mother would fade away if she were separated from the home that she and his father lived in and where he and his sisters were born. For him, the family home and its land are a place of love and happiness, a place of safety and sanctuary.

Lee states;

*"She loves this place, she filled it with love and happiness. Everywhere you go in the house and on her land, there are reminders of dad. I am happy to stop here, as it's a good place. You know, any place that has powerful memories both good and bad. Places hold your memories, you're connected to somewhere by the experiences you had there. Going home or being in a place where things happened opens the door to things that you thought you'd forgotten".*

When Lee was asked his feelings for his mother's land and if he felt happy to be there, he stated;

*"Fuck yeah man, it has so many memories, me as a boy. Bringing my first girl back, telling dad that I'd got the girl pregnant and getting him to tell mum while I stayed out the way till she calmed down, that kinda thing. I can watch dad in my mind's eye trying to help mum around the place, and just getting under her feet and in her way. He died here, so his soul is linked to the land. I get up in the morning and can walk for miles and not see another person. As its mum's land, no one can throw me off or give me any shit. You know there comes a time when you just want to settle and be at peace, stop fighting and just to have somewhere to park up and get on with life".*

For Arthur, he did not feel attached to his childhood homes due to his family always moving to a new location, as their homes were dependent on his father's employment. His father's dependency on his employment to provide his family with somewhere to live caused the family stress every-time that Arthur's father changed his jobs. House moves were often not his family's choice, therefore, each move felt traumatic and scary for Arthur.

Arthur has since bought his own home and land for his horses and other animals. He has developed a strong attachment to his property as it gives him

the safety and security that he lacked while growing up. Arthur ensures that all of his family can use his home and land as their secure base as he doesn't want any of his grandchildren to experience the feelings of insecurity that he felt as a child.

All of the participants seemed to find comfort and security from seeking out their attachment places, either by visiting them or by reliving their memories connected to the place, often sharing emotionally comforting stories with family and friends.

Gypsies' and Travellers' traditional camping grounds have, during the past century, been closed off to them. This results in many Gypsies and Travellers being unable to return to the sites and camping grounds of their childhood, resulting in disrupted attachments to place and, consequently, family memories and histories have been lost.

When access to the participants' attachment places were blocked, some of the participants experienced devastating emotional distress and feelings of cultural trauma and loss. For Mary, losing the secure base of her aunt's land as a child disturbed the social, cultural, psychological dimensions of her childhood. Mary's mother had struggled with her own feelings of loss and fear and it appears that she was unable to be emotionally available for Mary during this traumatic time. Losing hers and her children's home at Dale Farm during the mass evictions triggered her unresolved cultural trauma and loss from losing her attachment place as a child. Losing her secure base caused her so much emotional distress that she was unable to function as a mother, resulting in her also losing her children and husband. As recorded in the previous chapter for Mary, the loss of her attachment place caused her so much emotional distress that she sadly took her own life.

Quarmby & Townsend (2012) highlight that many of the Travellers who were evicted from Dale Farm experienced similar feelings of trauma and loss as Mary, however it seems that many sought medical support and were



prescribed antidepressants for mental or physical health illnesses before the eviction and were still taking them more than a year later.

### **Attachment to the dead and their resting place**

Gypsies and Travellers have many traditions and customs connected with death and the deceased. Traditionally, the trailer and the possessions of the deceased were burned to protect the living from any evil spirits that may be lingering close to their loved one. This is something that Doris and her family have been preparing for as the health of her husband of 65 years is failing and doctors have warned them that he may not be with them much longer.

Doris shared:

*“We have bought a trailer for him to spend his last weeks in as the trailer will be burnt after his death as is the tradition. If we didn’t move him into another trailer, I would end up homeless when he dies. We live by the old traditions so when he dies, me and the children, will remain by his side day and night for one week. We will not eat or drink. We will bath him and talk to him. He will know how much we love him. All our friends and family will come and pay their respects. Me and the girls will offer food to all who come. We will wear black for one year after his passing, we will socialise at the wake, but we will not socialise again for a year. This will show our respect and honour for him”.*

Koehler (2016) notes that Gypsy and Traveller communities have a higher death rate than mainstream society. Koehler (2016) puts this down to the nature of Traveller lifestyles, which increases the risk of poor health and death. This is partly due to limited access to health care and the lack of safe stopping places. The close-knit nature of Gypsy and Traveller communities’ results in the whole community being affected by the death of one of its members. A death is felt as both a personal and a social loss. People will often travel vast distances across the country to attend the funeral of a family member or friend. Gypsy and Traveller funerals are normally extremely elaborate events due to the perception that the larger the funeral, the greater the respect shown to the deceased. Ornate headstones illustrate “the importance of the place that is held by the dead in the lives of the living” (Koehler 2016).

For Pete, he feels a deep emotional and spiritual connection to his son's resting place. Pete and his wife visit his grave regularly. Pete reports that sitting by the grave enables him to feel connected to his son. Pete likes to keep his son up-to-date with all the family's news. Pete's wife tends the grave and ensures that it always has plenty of fresh flowers. For Pete and his family, keeping the grave tidy and well cared for shows the world how important their son was to them and how much he is missed. Showering the grave with love and attention can be seen as one way of keeping their attachment relationship alive. Spending time by a loved one's grave also helps to keep the memory of the deceased alive.

For Jane, her family's life appears to have been dominated by the loss of two of her male siblings; Junior was stillborn before Jane was born and Jake who died in his sleep just before his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Jane's narrative suggests that her mother never got over losing Junior. Jane's eldest brother's unexpected death rocked Jane's emotional security. The family visit and tend both Junior's and Jake's graves weekly. Jane's mother used to sit for hours each day tending each grave, talking to her lost sons. Tending their graves gives Jane's mother a sense of peace and she gains comfort from tending the little gardens that she has made on each grave. The family no longer travel out of the area as Jane's mother needs the emotional security of visiting the graves to enable her to function on even a basic level.

### **Attachment to religion and the church**

For many Gypsy and Traveller families, religion is an important aspect of their lives. Many Irish Travellers are practising Catholics, while some Gypsies and Travellers are part of the Christian Evangelical Movement. Religion is for many an important aspect of their cultural identity (Koehler 2016; The Traveller Movement, 2015).

When the first Romani Gypsies arrived in Europe, many claimed to be pilgrims and were granted some protection through adopting this role. By the sixteenth century, however, the Catholic and Protestant Churches had begun to create barriers to stop Gypsies accessing church services and sacraments. During the nineteenth century, many churches took an assimilationist stance

and undertook missionary work with the intention of pressuring or persuading individuals to give up the Gypsy way of life and settle (Cemlyn et al 2009; Fraser 1995; Mayall 1995). Gypsies' and Travellers began forming their own Gypsy Evangelical Churches to escape the discrimination that they faced when trying to access regular churches. Many people do not attend formal church services preferring to pray in private.

Some of the participants had experienced the death of their child or a child within the family group. Mary, Mandy and Pete turned to their religious beliefs to gain some comfort and reported that "Jesus wanted them". The thought that their lost children were with Jesus seemed to provide them with some emotional comfort and helped them to deal with their grief.

Jane's mother was the only participant who did not turn to religion when she lost her first-born Jake after losing Junior, in fact, she turned away from religion and had Jake buried in a woodland burial site instead of a church graveyard. Jane states that her mother lost her faith when Jake died. She didn't want a God whom she felt was greedy and cruel, and took not only one, but two of her sons.

While religion played an important role in both the Romani and Irish participants, it did not seem to be as important to the New Age Travellers, the Bargees or the mixed heritage people who were interviewed, so it is unclear if this can be generalised across these communities.

#### **RQ4 - Does the environment or place where families live affect how communities' parent their children?**

Recapping from Chapter Four, the literature discussed suggests that there is some correlation between the environment and the perceived level of risk that the environment poses to the children and the child rearing practices, which have developed to ensure that the children survive to adulthood. This indicates that the environment shapes the development of parenting practices, suggesting that place plays also an important role in the development of an infant's secure base.

It seems that for cultures where there is a high infant mortality rate due to environment issues, 'Polymatric' parenting practices (Le Vine & Le Vine, 1963; Leiderman & Leiderman, 1974) ensure the infant's best chance of survival. Infants from Polymatric cultures appear to form more than one attachment, however, they seem to primarily attach to one main attachment figure, which is not necessarily the biological mother.

Polymatric parenting practices seem to fit closely with Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices (Farre, 2013; Hawes & Perez, 1996; Niner, 2003). Traveller sites are often dangerous places for small children, either because they are also the workplace for many of the Traveller men, or because the family are parked up in a layby where the children are vulnerable from passing traffic (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010). For Mandy, life living at the roadside is hard; she hasn't got family who will help her so she has to keep her children safe by herself. The older children help Mandy to look after the younger ones and the sibling bond is very strong. The younger children appear to have developed predictable attachments with their elder siblings who share the parenting duties with Mandy.

When Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices are viewed from cross-cultural perspectives, similarities in childrearing practices can be found. The literature review highlighted that in many third world cultures, childrearing practices and attachment relationships differ from 'monomatric' Western industrialised cultures (Keroian & Leiderman 1986). The studies discussed indicate that the environment, in which children live, shape childrearing practices.

### **Cross Cultural Studies – Sharing the care of the children and the elderly - Attachment to multiple care providers**

When the environment poses a continuous risk to the infants, collectivist societies such as First Nation Aboriginals, the Gusii and the Hausa women work together to ensure that all infants born into their community have the best chance of survival by sharing the caring duties. Polymatric cultures distribute childcare tasks amongst all the women and the older siblings. According to Kermoian & Leiderman (1986), this division of caregiving duties ensures that the infant forms its primary attachment with his/her mother, due

to the mother providing all the physical care. The infant also forms attachments to other child caregivers through their involvement in the infant's cognitive development by, for example, stimulating social and play activities. Infants from these societies are able to develop multiple attachments to ensure that their social and emotional needs were met.

As noted in Chapter Three, Bowlby (1958) used the term attachment to describe a disposition that promotes proximity-seeking behaviour in infants when they are hurt, alarmed or separated from their familiar caregiver (Duschinsky et al, 2014). Bowlby (1958) proposed that attachment is adaptive as it enhances the infant's chance of survival. Influenced by ethology, Bowlby (1969) also believed that the tendency for primate infants to develop attachments to a familiar care provider was the result of evolutionary pressures since attachment behaviour would facilitate the infant's survival in the face of dangers such as predation, exposure to the elements or attacks from animals.

Therefore, if an infant is born into an environment which poses a risk to the infant's survival, sharing the care of the infants and enabling them to develop attachment relationships with more than one care provider gives them the best chance of survival. In a collectivist society, the long-term survival and social cohesion of a community living in hazardous environments requires the cultivation of food and the survival of the children.

It is not unusual to observe very young Gypsy and Traveller children being carried around campsites by their elder siblings, for similar reasons to the Gusii and Hausa, who keep their infants in close proximity. Gypsy and Traveller girls from a young age will help their mother and, hence, learn to cook and clean. Siblings who are too young to cook and clean are often left to mind the babies while their mother and sister ensure that the family have clean clothes, a clean trailer and food on the table. Molly shared that living roadside can be dangerous for small children:

*“Our mum also taught me about having eyes in the back of your head when living road-side. That’s when us women really come together as our family tribe and keep all the babies safe. Five*

*mammies' can watch the children better than one mammy on her own".*

Doris noted that their environment shaped how they were parented. She shared that her family were very close. "*Living roadside can be dangerous, we learnt from a very early age to look out for each other*". Doris and her siblings looked after each other to keep each other safe to give them the best chance of survival. They supported each other and pulled together to ensure that the children were cared for when her parents were working. Doris and Harry's children and grandchildren are now caring for Harry.

Pete spoke proudly of his mother's ability to keep the trailers clean and to bring up 13 children. Pete's sister helped their mother from a young age. He remembers spending quite a lot of time living with his older sister as a child and his older brothers staying with other family members. Pete's narrative suggests that he had a meaningful attachment relationship with both his mother and his sister. Pete noted "*Life was hard, but it was good*", thus his sibling group's survival was enhanced by family members sharing the care of the 13 children.

As we have seen in Chapter Four, in some non-western societies, which experience moderate or extreme social deprivation throughout the life cycle, the shared care of infants appears to be minimal or non-existent. Research by Du Bois (1944) noted that Infant mortality was reported to be high in the Alorese community. When we look at the Alorese infants through the lens of Bowlby's "conditions for attachment" (Seymour, 2013:134) which highlighted that infants need to be kept safe in the close proximity of others, this basic need was mostly satisfied as many different members of the village often carried the infant around until it could walk. The infants' need for nourishment was not met and hunger was a real issue for the infants and children. The infants being left without a good reliable source of nourishment found it difficult to trust the adults around them as they failed to meet their basic need for a reliable food source. The infants were not provided with the opportunity to develop secure attachment relationships with their care providers, as the adults were emotionally unavailable to them. The infants developed insecure

attachments to their mothers or in their absence, their grandmothers. The infants' mothers also became objects of overt frustration and anger.

Scheper-Hughes' (1993) research and work in Alto do Cruzeiro, the poorest and largest of the shantytowns in Brazil, evidenced how long-term marginalisation and deprivation damages a mother's capacity to protect and bond with her infant. Mothers were so emotionally detached from their infants, that the weaker ones experienced maternal selective neglect and were left to die to give the stronger ones a greater chance of survival. The surviving children's mothers would slowly invest their love in their child and the children developed strong attachments to their mothers. Scheper-Hughes (1993) helped the desperately poor mothers to work together to form a cooperative crèche to enable them to work and for their infants to be cared for. The mothers worked together, the infant mortality rates dropped, and the children thrived in the crèche.

Many Gypsies and Travellers live in large family groups, which can be described as a cooperative community. Splitting up family groups during evictions or due to enforced settlement reduces a mother's support network and could have long-term negative effects on the children's attachment relationships and their emotional well-being.

### **Attachment solely to parents**

The narratives of four of the participants, Lucy, Arthur, Lee, and Ronnie, indicated that they had not developed multiple attachments to multiple carers. This may be due to Arthur, Lee and Ronnie being brought up in the settled community and choosing to identify with a more nomadic lifestyle. Lucy's narrative suggests that she was the oldest child in her family; therefore, she would have been cared for mainly by her mother, this would have resulted in her developing a strong attachment to her.

### **Desire to settle without losing their culture for children's education**

Many participants noted that they wanted their children to gain an education, however, the lack of legal sites and the constant evictions have made this

difficult or impossible. The UK's lack of affordable housing is at crisis level (Wilson & Barton, 2018). The Gypsies and Travellers interviewed felt that the Government has criminalised their mobile lifestyle, forcing them into housing, as there are not enough authorised pitches while at the same time wanting them to give up their cultural identity and traditions. The government has not taken the responsibility of finding them culturally suitable housing, an issue that is exacerbated by the fact that there are not enough houses for people from the settled community.

Cemlyn et al (2009) suggest that in order to avoid the eviction cycle or to access vital services such as education and healthcare, many Gypsies and Travellers reluctantly accept the alternative of local authority housing. Research suggests that Gypsies and Travellers are *“typically housed on the most deprived estates, sharing the wider environmental disadvantages of their neighbours and exposed to more direct and immediate hostility focused on their ethnicity or lifestyle”* (Cemlyn et al, 2009:V).

The participants' children's ability to access education was cited as being important for all of the participants. Most noted, however, that evictions or discrimination made it almost impossible at times. Jane shared that evictions stopped her family accessing services and some of the older participants have shared unhappy memories of attending school during the winter due to bullying by both pupils and staff.

Jane looked upon school favourably, apart from being bullied and called names, and her fears that her family would be evicted while she was there. Jane notes that during school term time, her family tried to find places to park up which were close to the schools. Her parents fought hard to keep her in education as they were determined that their children would gain a good education. Jane remembers that her family always seemed to get evicted at the beginning of each school year. This made it difficult for Jane to start the new school year with her peers. Being a Traveller pupil, Jane was faced with many problems over coming prejudice and discrimination and trying to fit in, each new school year. Missing the first few days or weeks due to being



evicted made it feel like an impossible task starting a new school year for Jane as her peers had started to build their friendship groups and were less likely to accept her and invite her into their friendship groups. Jane remembers that one year, her parents took it in turns to drive her the hour and a half journey to school each morning for a couple of months until her dad had found a site closer to the school.

For Pete, settling on a site ensured that his children gained an education. Pete also accessed some adult education and has learnt to read and write. Pete notes that there is no room left in the world for Travellers to live a traditional lifestyle anymore, so his children needed an education so that they could make their way in the ever-changing world.

More and more Gypsies and Travellers are now accessing education, going on to undertake employment related training courses as well as academic courses. There has, in recent years, been an increase in the numbers of Gypsy and Traveller young people attending and achieving good degrees at University. While they want to access employment and education opportunities, which had until recent years only been an option for individuals from the settled communities, however, they also want to retain the cultural and ethnic heritage.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study provide us with the participants' personal accounts of their childhood attachment relationships to both people and place. Their narratives highlight the complexities of attachment to people and place for many Gypsy and Traveller families.

The findings of this thesis suggest that for many Gypsies and Travellers their parents were not their sole care providers, their older female siblings, aunts and grandparents also provided them with care as infants, resulting in them forming multiple attachment relationships. This shared care model of child rearing seems to have provided the participants with consistent reliable

emotional support, which helped them to develop resilience in the face of multiple and complex forms of exclusion and discrimination.

The participants of this study reported having deep emotional bonds or feelings of attachment to their special places and that they experience emotional and cultural trauma when these places were lost to them, either through the development of the land or due to public bylaws.

For the Gypsies and Travellers who took part in this research the combination of their attachment relationships to their care providers and to their special places provided them with their secure bases. However, when families are evicted from their own land, or an illegal site, families are often separated, reducing their support networks. This leaves families feeling isolated and vulnerable. For young children evictions can result in them having their attachment relationships to people and place fragmented, leaving them feeling anxious and frightened. The cycle of evictions has a negative effect on a family's emotional well-being and identity, sometimes leading to mental health issues such as depression and suicide.

Many of the participants noted that they want their children to gain an education. To do so they need to be able to semi settle in school term time. Many found this difficult due to the lack of legal sites and the hostility of local residents.

It seems from the narratives that while Gypsies and Travellers want to retain their cultural heritage and lifestyles, many would like to build relationships with the settled communities.

The findings will be examined further in the final chapter of this thesis, together with a discussion about what the findings mean and why they are important. The thesis will conclude with considerations and recommendations for Social Work education and practice.

## Chapter Eight - Conclusions and Reflections



Photograph 8: New Age Traveller's live in bus (Mel Hamilton-Perry, 1998).

### **Introduction**

In this final chapter of the thesis, the key findings presented in the two previous chapters will be discussed and the importance of the findings will be highlighted. This will be followed by some reflections on the research process, an exploration of the limitations of this research together with suggestions for further research. Finally, this will link into a discussion about the potential implications and recommendations for Social Work education and practice.

### **Key findings**

This research found that the participants have developed strong attachments to both people and places and that, together their main attachment figures and their main attachment places, have provided them with their safe havens and secure bases. The participants' attachments to places were seen as important to their emotional security and wellbeing. It was further recognised that it is not only Gypsies and Travellers that form attachment feelings to their environment. As noted in the previous chapters, adults and children from the settled communities and First Nation communities also develop strong place attachment feelings to their home environment.

<b>Table 4; Key findings from the participants' narratives</b>	
1	Many Gypsy and Traveller clans/groups appear to remain very family focused and work together to ensure the physical and emotional survival of the clan because their accommodation status and the environments in which they live can be hostile at times and makes them feel vulnerable.
2	Infants often have multiple care providers that have a vested interest in their care and survival, for example - elder siblings, aunts and grandmothers.
3	Gypsy and Traveller children form multiple attachments with their care providers and this ensures that their emotional needs and their emotional wellbeing are protected and encouraged at times when their parents are emotionally unavailable.
4	Gypsy and Traveller children's parents can, at times of forced evictions, become emotionally unavailable. Some can become aggressive and dismissive to their children due to the stress of the eviction.
5	Gypsies and Travellers experience cultural and emotional trauma due to the constant forced evictions.
6	Gypsies and Travellers not only experience far-reaching inequality, prejudice and discrimination together with racism from politicians, but also from the media, the public and from the universal services that are designed to support Britain's population.
7	Forced evictions can result in family groups becoming split up, leading to the breakdown of family support networks.
8	Gypsies and Travellers appear to have strong emotional attachments to the places on their travelling circuits and being unable to access these places can cause families and individuals' great emotional distress.
9	Gypsies and Travellers attachment places seem to hold/ trigger memories and family histories that cannot be reached unless the person is physically at their place of attachment. These thoughts and feelings link into Aboriginal beliefs about their connection to the land.
10	Many Gypsies and Travellers seem to have deep emotional attachments to the places where their children or family are buried.
11	Many Gypsies and Travellers understand that the old way of life is over and they want to semi-settle on sites so that their children can access educational provisions. They have accepted that having an education is the only way that their children will be able to survive in the ever-changing world.
12	While the old way of life seems to be over for the Gypsies and Travellers who took part in this study, the family and moral values that they hold could benefit the wider settled community.
13	There is an urgent need for the provision of more legal sites and pitches. This could reduce the media's negative representation of the Gypsy and Traveller communities and might lead to improved community cohesion, which, in turn, could enable Gypsies and Travellers to develop attachment relationships with the wider settled community therefore reducing incidents of conflict and promoting well-being.

Each finding will be discussed below under the heading of the number of each finding.

### **The importance of the findings**

Anton & Lawrence (2014) argued, with the focus on the settled communities, that developing place attachment to one's home and local area is normally beneficial as it has been linked with positive social, emotional and physical outcomes. They suggest that people with a strong place attachment report greater social and emotional involvement within their communities. They also put forward that communities populated by highly attached people are more likely to work together to achieve the desired outcomes of the community. Being attached to place benefits individuals as it can lead to greater physical and psychological health, strong and mutually beneficial social relationships (Harris, Werner, Brown & Ingebritsen, 1995). However, as Fried (2000) notes, place attachment can become dysfunctional if it hinders people from moving for employment or because of illness.

Jack (2013) argues that children develop emotional feelings from a young age to their surroundings and form specific attachments with people and places that are associated with a sense of security and other positive experiences. While for children from the settled community, the child's home is likely to be the main source of his/her initial attachment to place, for children from the Gypsy and Traveller communities, their main sources of initial attachment to place appears to be to special places on the family's travelling circuits. Places where they joined their extended families and set up camp with their family seem to hold happy safe positive memories.

It is the ultimate combination of attachments to significant people and places that provides a child with the 'safe haven and secure base' that enables the child's healthy development. At the same time this combination cultivates a strong sense of identity, feelings of security and belonging.

### **Key Finding: One**

While Gypsies and Travellers are not a homogenous group; they appear to share similar beliefs and child-rearing practices. As discussed in the previous

chapters, most Gypsy and Traveller groups live in close family groups, which, work and live together to ensure the survival of the family group.

While New Age Travellers do not tend to travel in large family groups, this research suggests that families join like-minded families, building emotionally connected small communities. Jane's narrative implies that the members of these small communities or the one in which she has grown up, formed close bonds or attachments with each other and by Jane's account, they appear to have worked together for the common good of the group, in the same way that a large family would.

### **Key Finding: Two**

This study highlights that the level of social deprivation has a significant impact on a parent's ability to be emotionally available for their children. As we have seen in the cross-cultural studies discussed in Chapter Four, it appears that in some non-western deprived communities, where the social structure has fragmented and the ecological conditions and social arrangements are hostile to an infant's social, emotional and physical development, as well as the emotional well-being of the mother, the rates of infant mortality are high and infants' and children's positive experiences of childhood appear minimal (Scheper-Hughes, 1993). Some of these non-western disadvantaged societies appeared to have developed a shared care approach to child rearing which ensure the survival of the children. As we have seen, Gypsies and Travellers also adopt a shared care approach to child rearing. The children and elders are cared for within the family groups, although children remain primarily the responsibility of their parents. Grandparents, immediate relatives and the wider community are also involved in caring for the children, teaching them appropriate cultural practices as well as helping them to developing a clear sense of their ethnic and social identity. Family groups take mutual responsibility for watching out for them and their well-being (Greenfields, 2008).

The participants' narratives provided insight in to some of the possible reasons why Gypsies and Travellers have adopted a shared care model of child rearing practices. For Molly, sharing the care of the children in her tribe

with other female members was just the way that her family cared for the children and the elderly. Molly believed it was the only way to bring up healthy children. Doris, on the other hand, highlighted that it can be very dangerous for children when the family are living by the roadside, so all of the children were taught from a very early age to look out for each other and to work together to keep the younger children fed and safe. For Mandy, being in her grandmother's care made her feel safe.

### **Key Finding: Three**

It seems that for some of the participants, being cared for by multiple carers not only secured their physical survival, but it also enabled them to develop multiple attachments, to both people and places, ensuring that their emotional needs for safety and security were met during infancy and childhood. Jane's narrative is quite different from the other participants, as it was her older brother who stepped in, to care for her and her other brothers when her mother was overwhelmed with her grief. Jane took over from her brother and cared for her siblings when her brother unexpectedly passed away. Jane has developed attachment relationships with members of her community for her emotional support.

### **Key Findings: Four**

The participants noted that when they were children and their parents become very stressed and short-tempered and emotionally unavailable during forced evictions, their multiple attachment figures such as their older siblings, aunts and grandmothers, were able to provide them with feelings of emotional containment and physical safety and security.

It seems that having multiple attachments helped Gypsy and Traveller children to remain resilient in the face of what are often multiple and complex forms of exclusion (Cemlyn et al, 2009). Having multiple attachments appeared to have also helped the Hausa and the Gusii children to feel safe and secure in the perceived dangerous environment in which they lived (Kermoian & Leiderman, 1986; Le Vine & Le Vine, 1963; Munroe & Munroe, 1975; Van-ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz).

### **Key Findings: Five**

The findings indicate that a person's experience of living a settled life in one place or living a life of mobility is connected to the level of choice that they have regarding where and how they live. Gypsy and Traveller children seem to learn from a very young age, which family members will be at each stopping place. Gypsy and Traveller children form attachments to many of the places on their travelling circuit as these places provide the children with a safe secure base. Declerck & Lenay (2017) suggest that one phenomenological feature of lived space is that space is essentially experienced as a system of interconnected places that can somehow be equated to a network. This theory helps to explain Gypsy and Traveller attachments to the places on their travelling circuits.

Gypsy and Traveller lives can be destroyed by evictions, as this study has sadly highlighted in the human cost of the 2011 Dale Farm mass eviction. Mary's children lost their home, their attachment place and their mother, their main attachment figure. The children feel hurt and angry. They are British citizens who must be wondering what was achieved by turning their home into a concrete strewn wasteland (Gordon, 2017).

Most of the participants reported that they had experienced emotional and cultural trauma when they were evicted, either from temporary stopping sites, illegal sites or from their own land due to the lack of planning permission. For Jane, forced evictions are a time of fear and distress, when many belongings can get lost or broken. Lee's experience of forced evictions appears to have been extremely traumatic, his narrative of the Battle of the Bean Field is the most extreme account of all the participants. The Battle of the Bean Field has been documented as one of the most brutal evictions in UK history and many of the New Age Travellers, after years of legal battles, received huge compensation payouts but as Lee points out, compensation cannot bring back the personal items such as photographs that were destroyed by the police, or heal the psychological emotional scars.



### **Key Findings: Six**

The findings of this study suggest that services that should be designed to meet the needs of all people are, unfortunately, often managed by professionals who hold stereotypical beliefs and prejudices towards Gypsies and Travellers (Cemlyn et al, 2009). *'Socio-political discourse has cemented automatic discriminatory attitudes towards Gypsies, Roma and Travellers as a socially acceptable bastion of racism'* (Allan, 2016:40-52).

The participants' narratives linked closely to published research such as Cemlyn et al (2009) and Bennett & Hamilton-Perry (2010), both note that services should be made easier for Gypsies and Travellers to access as many of the participants did not understand how to gain help or how the systems worked. The reasons for this appeared to be a complex mixture of their difficulties understanding language and processing information, poor literacy and 'literal' or 'concrete' thinking that they cannot transfer to other situations (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010)

In addition, as discussed some of the participants reported that they experienced poor memory, lack of self-esteem, feelings of low confidence, low assertiveness and fear, alongside a pride in their culture and heritage that does not allow them to acknowledge their difficulties for fear of further discrimination, often exacerbating the situation (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010). The lack of literacy results in many Gypsies and Travellers needing to remember all-important information because calendars and diaries are not used, this leaves very little memory space to learn how to successfully negotiate services.

Bennett & Hamilton-Perry (2010) note that it also seems that many services had the expectation that individuals with learning difficulties could, and would, be able to negotiate service pathways, however, it needs to be noted that most adults with learning difficulties either have support staff or family who understand how the system works. This expectation, unfortunately, sets Gypsies and Travellers up to fail and denies them the same access to services enjoyed by others. Arthur shared that while his mother loved him

unconditionally, she could not teach him the skills that he needed to survive in Gorgio society, for example, how banks worked or how to pay for utilities such as electric, gas and water. To this day, Arthur resents having to pay for water.

Engaging with Gypsy and Traveller children in schools could enable them to form bonds and relationships with their peers from the settled and wider community. It would also provide the children with a better knowledge of how to negotiate services. Individuals from both communities could then learn from each other so that, hopefully, some of the barriers would be removed, resulting in a more cohesive and fair society.

Accommodation is prerequisite to accessing all other statutory services. In some cases, the lack of secure accommodation caused health issues, with the homeless suffering the worst inequalities and experiencing the worst difficulties accessing health care. Gypsies and Travellers that lack a home address are unable to call for an ambulance, receive letters and routine appointments resulting in homeless Gypsies and Travellers failing to attend medical appointments (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

### **Key Findings: Seven**

As we have seen, evictions were recognised as traumatic events in the participants' lives. Trauma caused by the constant forced evictions has had long-term negative effects on theirs and their families' lives and their attachment relationships. If families cannot find places where their large family group can park up together, family groups can be separated, reducing the support networks and leaving parents isolated and feeling vulnerable. This, in turn, could leave the children without the opportunity to develop attachment relationships with their extended family members.

### **Key Findings: Eight**

Planning policy has moved away from local authority site provision to self-provision. Gaining planning permission to develop a family site on land legally purchased by members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities, however, is a complex and difficult process. Local residents' opposition to a private family site results in most planning applications being turned down. This leaves

families stuck in a cycle of evictions. Appealing against a refused planning application is costly and time consuming. Many Gypsies and Travellers struggle with the appeal process, due to it being very complex and expensive, together with having low level or no literacy skills. The Significant changes to the civil legal aid in England and Wales which came into effect on 1 April 2013, as part of a plan to reform the system to save £350m a year, has also made it harder for Gypsies and Travellers appeal against refused planning applications. Without professional support and advocacy, appealing against the decisions can feel impossible for many families.

Fried (2002) argues that when people from the settled community have strong place attachment to their homes and community, it can lead to inter-group conflicts when people from a different ethnic and cultural background try to move into the area that they are attached to.

When a family of Gypsy Travellers attempt to settle and build a family site in a place where there is a high proportion of attached settled people, the people may feel that their attachment place is threatened. The settled community may also feel concerned that the landscape may become unrecognisable to the people who live there and that the place will change into a place to which they no longer have an emotional bond. This can feel frightening to the settled communities, so they act negatively without giving the Gypsies and Travellers a fair chance, resulting in the planning application being turned down.

Albrecht et al (2007) note that if the planning application is granted and the Gypsy or Traveller family sets up a small family site which does not alter the place significantly, the sensed change can still result in feelings of mourning for the place, for its perceived loss. These feelings of perceived loss can manifest into feelings of anger towards the Gypsies and Travellers, who are believed to have taken their attachment place from them.

The participants reported strong feelings of anger and grief when their attachment places become inaccessible and some spoke about the effect that the cultural trauma of losing their attachment places had on them. Gypsies and Travellers can also experience feelings of grief and loss when they are separated from their attachment places. Attachment to place is important to

an individual's self-definitions and communal aspects of their identity. Being forced to move when one does not want to can threaten the individual's self-definitions and identity (Spencer, 2004).

### **Key Findings: Nine**

As noted by participants, many Gypsies and Travellers believe that places hold personal memories and family histories. Visiting these attachment places enables individuals to retrieve their memories and share them with their children, therefore, keeping the memories alive for future generations. Up until the late 1970s, very few Gypsies and Travellers could read or write, so the only way to keep a family's history alive was to tell the stories to the children, who would then grow up and repeat these to their own children. Today, more Gypsies and Travellers can read and write, and the stories are slowly starting to be written down to help keep the family's history alive.

Lee shared that he believes that 'places hold your memories'. For Lee, he feels connected to his attachment places by the experiences and the memories that he had there and returning to his attachment places opens the door to all of the forgotten memories. Mandy has reported similar beliefs about the land holding her memories and keeping them safe for her to retrieve when she next visits her attachment places. Mandy shares the memories with her children to keep the memories alive, so that her children can retrieve them when they next visit their mother's attachment place. This seems to encourage the whole family to develop an attachment bond to the place. Molly believes that the land has powerful places, which have spiritual meanings for her and her family.

Gypsies and Travellers are not the only societies that have developed attachments to the land and specific places. First Nation and Aboriginal communities often have deep emotional ties to their land. Mills (2011) notes that the Aboriginal "*links to their land are a holistic part of being, integral to spirit and survival*". Mills (2011) also notes that if the link to the land is lost, it can have a huge impact on their emotional well-being. Many have experienced grief due to displacement. For an Aboriginal person, losing their

attachment to their country is akin to losing the attachment to a parent. Such losses can sometimes result in mental ill-health.

### **Key Findings: Ten**

As we have seen in the narratives, the participants have deep emotional attachments to the places where their children and other family members are buried. Gypsies and Travellers will travel hundreds of miles to visit the grave of a loved one on their birthday. For Pete and Tree, when they visit their son's grave, they feel connected to their boy in the next world. Pete shared that he spent hours chatting to his son, keeping him up to date with all the news so that their son would know how his family are. Pete also reported that it keeps his memory alive to spend time sitting with him. Tree keeps her son's grave as spotless as she does her chalet (double mobile home). Pete notes that caring for a grave gives the deceased person status, because they are valued and are important to the living.

Mary shared that it broke her mother having to leave her babies' graves behind in Ireland, when her family had to move to England. For Mary, she felt that she lost part of her mother when they moved from Ireland, as her spirit remained behind to care for the babies.

### **Key Findings: Eleven**

All the participants reported that they would like their children to access an education and want them to be part of the wider settled community while retaining their cultural heritage. Unfortunately, Lucy and her children experienced extreme racial discrimination and victimisation when she tried to settle in a house so that her children could go to school. Mandy found that being constantly evicted disrupts her children's education and causes them stress. Mandy reports that she just wants a pitch on a site where the other residents have the same moral values as her, or a small piece of land where she can park up so that her children can get an education, to give them the opportunity to have a better life than she had.

When families cannot secure their own sites, some move into local authority housing so that they can access services. Some of the participants of this study reported that they had had negative experiences when they either reluctantly or voluntarily accepted local authority housing.

In many cases, the dislocation from their families, their communities, their culture and their support systems lead to further cycles of disadvantage, because their attachment figures are unable to live in close proximity. Children that had developed multiple attachment relationships with their care providers from their extended family can have their attachment relationships fragmented or broken when they moved into homes made of bricks and mortar. This caused emotional distress and trauma, resulting in high levels of anxiety and fear. This was also noted in other studies, for example Bennett & Hamilton-Perry (2010) and Cemlyn et al (2009).

### **Key Findings: Twelve**

The participants' narratives suggested that many Gypsies and Travellers want to be able to interact with and develop attachment relationships with the wider settled community. The participants seemed to hold many values and beliefs that seem to have disappeared from mainstream society, such as the importance of providing for the wider family network. It seems that for the participants the family group provided care and support from birth right through the life cycle to death.

With the growing ageing population within the UK, the settled communities could benefit from some of the values and beliefs that Gypsies and Travellers hold about the importance of the family group and of caring for their elderly. Arthur shared that he was taught to respect and care for his elders and that he had positive beneficial relationships with them. Arthur is now a grandfather who enjoys and values his time with his grandchildren. For Arthur cross-generational relationships are very important as he feels that children can learn so much from their grandparents and the other way around.

### **Key Finding: Thirteen**

Gypsies and Travellers are one of the largest minority ethnic groups in the

UK. They have survived hundreds of years of assimilatory policies, persecution, prejudice and discrimination while still holding on to the heritage and their cultural beliefs. We have seen that most of the participants understand that the old ways are dying out and that they need to adapt to survive. As discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, participants such as Pete, Mandy, Doris, and Lucy seemed to suggest that Gypsies and Travellers want their children to gain an education so that they can have the opportunity to be able to be part of the wider settled community while retaining their Gypsy and Traveller heritage.

The participants' narratives highlighted that for them there is a real shortage of Gypsy and Traveller sites. This finding links closely with published research such as Cemlyn et al (2009) and also with Government statistics as we have seen Chapter Two (Figure Three).

The lack of legal sites increases the social problems connected to illegal encampments. As we have seen throughout this thesis the often-negative media reports inflame feelings of prejudice and discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers.

This suggests that there is a real need for better Gypsy and Traveller site provision, as this would reduce the number of illegal encampments, which in turn would reduce negative media reporting and enable greater cohesion between the settled community and the Gypsy and Traveller communities.

The lived experiences of the participants of this study suggest that many Gypsies and Travellers want to semi-settle on sites while keeping their cultural customs and living in their family groups, so that their children can access education, the elderly and the infirm can access health care and families can make a secure base for their children while having the close family support network.

The findings also suggest that policies need to be introduced that engage with and include the Gypsy and Traveller communities to reduce social exclusion, marginalisation and to promote community cohesion.

Livingston et al (2008) argue that place attachment is associated with stable, cohesive neighbourhoods, where it is viewed as encouraging resident engagement in the neighbourhood in a positive way. This is a theme that Anton & Lawrence (2014) also argued (although their focus was on attachment to place for members of the settled communities) when they said that developing place attachment to one's home and local area is normally beneficial, as it has been linked with positive social, emotional and physical outcomes. They suggest that people with a strong place attachment report greater social and emotional involvement within their communities. They also put forward that communities populated by highly attached people are more likely to work together to achieve the desired outcomes of the community.

All of the participants reported strong attachments to their family group and wider communities. As we have seen, Gypsies and Travellers work together for the common good of their group. Being attached to place benefits individuals as it can lead to greater physical and psychological health, strong and mutually beneficial social relationships (Harris et al, 1995).

This suggests that if Gypsies and Travellers were given the opportunity to choose to develop their own sites so that they could continue to live in a culturally appropriate way within, or close to, the settled communities, they could maintain their cultural identity while beginning to develop relationships with the settled community. In time, the Gypsies and Travellers might be able to develop place attachment to the site and to the wider community. This could, in turn, reduce some of the perceived social issues that many members of the settled communities fear when Gypsies and Travellers apply for planning applications.



It will take time to reduce the perceived hostility from the settled community, However, Lee found that when people from the settled community got to know him, he was accepted and built friendships with local people.

### **What this might mean**

Gypsies and Travellers need to have legal safe sites or culturally appropriate housing where they can retain their cultural identity as they integrate with the settled community, because as we have seen, societies that experience high levels of marginalisation and deprivation are populated by adults whose focus is on their own survival and not on meeting their children's needs in an emotionally available, sensitive manner. This was evidenced in the small sample of cross-cultural studies that were explored in Chapter Four which highlighted how the environment and the level of social deprivation appear to affect some parents' capacity to be emotionally available to respond sensitively to their infants and children's needs.

The Gypsy and Traveller 'shared care' method of child rearing enables infants to form attachment relationships with elder siblings, grandmothers or aunties. This, in turn, helps to ensure that the infants have an attachment figure available at all times, such as when their parents are emotionally unavailable due to dealing with the eviction, working or planning to move. Gypsy and Traveller close-knit family-oriented culture reduces some of the possible damage to the children's sense of self and their long-term emotional well-being by sharing the care of the children and providing the children with alternative attachment figures.

### **Why this is important in terms of attachment to people and place?**

As we have also seen throughout this thesis, attachment relationships are important for the healthy emotional development of a child, irrespective of their heritage and culture.

The findings of this thesis suggest that forced evictions can threaten the development of attachment relationships with people and place for Gypsy and Traveller infants. Children who grow up without being able to form organised

attachment relationships with their main attachment figure or figures, may grow up into adults who struggle with their emotions, especially if no-one contained them when they were distressed as infants, or taught them how to manage and contain these emotions. This can result in the infant growing into an adult who finds it frightening to get close to other people due to their low self-esteem and their general lack of trust in other people. These fearful adults may feel the need to constantly be in control to make themselves feel safe. They may also experience high levels of anger if people disagree with their plans or if their plans fail to happen. Infants who have been unable to form organised attachment relationships may then grow into adults who are unable to be available as attachment figures for their own children perpetuating the circle of emotionally neglected children (Smith et al, 2018).

### **Limitations of the Research**

One of the main challenges in undertaking a research project and writing about the findings when Gypsies and Travellers are the focus of the study, is that people often think that they already know who Gypsies and Travellers are and how they behave.

To make a valuable contribution to the knowledge base, it has been essential to inform the reader about Gypsy and Traveller history and culture in a non-biased factual way, as discussed in Chapter Four. Matras (2015:33) note that sadly many *'people's views about Gypsies and Travellers have been shaped over many generations by literary images, which are so powerful that people often dismiss the reality of real-life encounters with Roms'*, *Romani Gypsies and Travellers*. The term Roms, is another name for the Romani Gypsy which is often used in Europe.

The main issue is that a lot of the information about Gypsies and Travellers continues to be scattered, contradictory, unreliable, fragmented and often only available to academics and specialists.

Matras (2015) notes that websites and media reports offer a huge range of historical explanations, descriptions, and stereotypical ideas. The sources of

much of this information, however, are not always transparent or verifiable. While academic researchers tend to specialise in the linguistics and the cultures of the individual Gypsy and Traveller communities, it seems that none have studied their parenting practices or attachment relationships.

It is very difficult to generalize about any culture or the individuals that belong to it (Matras, 2015). This thesis, therefore, has used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to ensure that each of the participant's narratives have been individually analysed in order to present an in-depth personal account of their lived experiences.

Qualitative research methodology is an explanatory technique that can be used to explore less known or less understood topics and to help uncover unexpected knowledge about phenomenon being researched. Furthermore, the approach is suitable when a detailed in-depth view of a phenomenon is needed to explore a complex process and to illuminate the multifaceted nature of human experience (Tuffour, 2017).

As discussed in Chapter Five, it was considered both reasonable and appropriate to adopt a qualitative approach to investigate the unknown topic area of Gypsy and Traveller attachment to people and place, and as such, the approach has allowed for an in-depth consideration of the participants' lived experiences.

Doing qualitative research, using IPA seemed daunting at first. Smith & Osborn (2007:54) note that;

*'IPA has a theoretical commitment to the person as a cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical being, and assumes a chain of connection between people's talk, and their thinking and emotional state. At the same time, IPA researchers realise this chain of connection is complicated – people struggle to express what they are thinking and feeling, there may be reasons why they do not wish to self-disclose and the researcher has to interpret people's mental and emotional state from what they say'.*

IPA's methodology requires the researcher to submerge themselves into the narratives of the participants to enable them to gain, as Smith and Osborn (2007:53) call it, the 'insider perspective'.

IPA is a challenging methodology as it involves interpreting the meanings that people assign to their experiences in everyday language. Tuffour (2017) notes "*the uniqueness of qualitative inquiry is its experiential understanding of the complex interrelationships among phenomena and its direct interpretation of events*". To achieve this, the researcher has to exercise their subjective judgement while all the time, being aware of how their preconceptions can shape the findings produced. It has been important to self-analyse and self-evaluate throughout the research process, therefore, to ensure personal reflexivity. This should ensure that the findings represent the perspectives of the participants and not from the researcher's perspective.

Qualitative analysis is inevitably a personal process. The analysis itself is the interpretative work, which the researcher does at each of the stages. It has been important to understand my own perception of who Gypsies and Travellers are, and to be aware of my personal values and even my emotional state on the day when the guided conversations/semi structured interviews were analysed, as both could have influenced the findings.

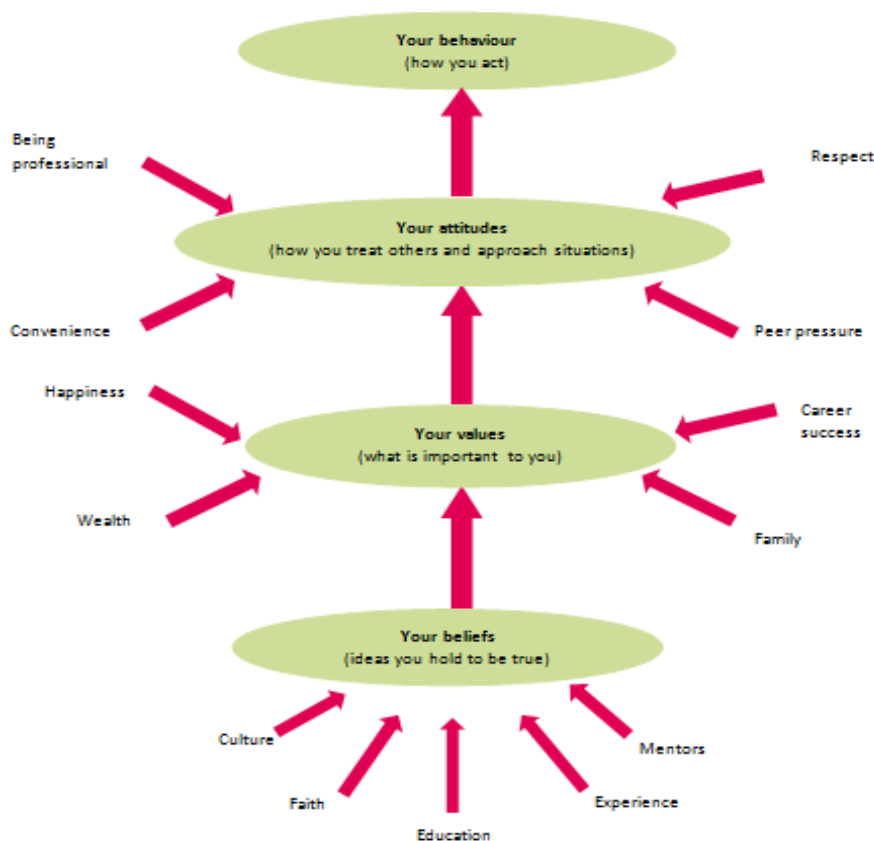
Putting oneself in the participants' position and developing an understanding of their experiences was far more difficult than expected. It was important to consider that the participants' lived experiences and feelings would not be the same as one's own if in the same situation. Working with Gypsies and Travellers for the past 15 years did not prepare me fully for the emotional connection that I felt when the participants shared their life histories.

This raised the question, 'What were my personal preconceptions of Gypsies and Travellers?' This was challenging in itself to develop an understanding of my personal beliefs and value base.

Firstly, I considered where my beliefs came from and conceded that most came from my life experiences, others from my education, employment and research interests. Societal and cultural norms have also shaped my beliefs to a lesser extent.

Secondly, I contemplated my value base and noted that my values have been developed from my long-standing beliefs. These long-standing beliefs, in turn, have developed into my value base as my commitment to them has grown. My values are the standard by which I conduct my normal day-to-day life and help me to make choices (iaa.govt.nz, 2018).

Figure 8: Personal beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour



(iaa.govt.nz, 2018).

However, after personal preconceptions about what the participants were sharing were understood and acknowledged, I met with the participants again,

to gain their thoughts on the analysis of the transcript of their guided conversations/interviews. This made it easier to analyse their narratives.

After a shaky start, IPA has ultimately provided an adaptable and accessible approach to phenomenological research and has provided insight into the perceptions and beliefs that the participants hold about their life experiences.

There are clear limitations when using IPA, such as it being riddled with ambiguities as well as lacking standardisation (Giorgia, 2010), coupled with the small sample size of a research study. This methodology provided only a small amount of data, however this data was rich in detail. The approach is both similar to and different from phenomenology and grounded theory.

Smith and Osborn (2007:56) state that '*IPA researchers normally try to find a fairly homogeneous sample and values purposive sampling over representative sampling when researching a specific issue*'. They also note that when investigating a broader issue, IPA uses a similar logic to social anthropologists conducting ethnographic research in a particular community, attempting to choose participants from a similar demographic/ social-economic background. It is important to note that any research study '*will, in part, be defined by the participants who are prepared to be included in it*' (Smith & Osborn 2007:56).

It is noted that the researcher was well known within the Gypsy and Traveller communities within the demographic area of this study. This made it easier to gain the trust and openness of the participants. It was noticeable that during the early stages of this research, individuals that had only heard about the researcher and had not worked with her before, were far less open during the guided conversation interviews, and as such, their narratives were more guarded and failed to provide any useable data for this study.

At the start of the analysis process, many of the emerging themes were unclear. It was only through the process of grouping the themes together according to the conceptual similarities, and then re-reading the transcripts of

the structured conversations, that connections emerged (Smith & Pietkiewicz, 2012).

Although the sample size was limited to ten individuals, undertaking the structured guided conversations and the analysis was time-consuming and challenging. As noted previously, Gypsies and Travellers like to talk, but they are often reluctant to share their personal narratives until they feel ready to.

Having a small sample offered an opportunity to more easily examine similarities and differences between the individuals. At the same time, the amount of qualitative data gathered was rich and meaningful, but not totally overwhelming. This provided the opportunity to learn a lot about the individual, his or her attachment relationships to people and place, and consider the connections between different aspects of the personal accounts.

It was noted that some of the data collected was not relevant for the four research questions. The participants have given their consent for unused data to be securely stored for use in a later research study, as it provides an insight into the private world of Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle.

The topic of attachment to people and place is vast, with many conflicting views. This study has been quite ambitious and has attempted to gain data on many areas of the participants' lived life experiences. The data collected is rich and I feel privileged that the participants have shared their personal narratives. The findings indicate that further research in this area would be beneficial as Gypsy and Traveller attachment relationships to people and place is an under-researched area. The emotional effect of the loss of the old way of life, the loss of historical stopping places, the lack of legal sites, and the resulting evictions needs to be explored and understood so that services can be provided to support members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. Also, an increased knowledge base would provide valuable data that could be shared with government policy makers to highlight the need for more site provision.

### **Directions for further research**

The findings suggest four possible directions or areas for future research.

Firstly, this study could be broken down into smaller research projects. As this study has found that the Gypsy and Traveller participants grew up and continue to live in supportive family groups where the children are cared for primarily by their mother, but also by older siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and that the children tend to develop multiple attachment relationships, further research could focus on Gypsy and Traveller parenting practices and the resulting attachment relationships.

Secondly, another area that could be independently studied is Gypsy and Traveller attachment to place, linking closely with research relating to Aboriginals and other First Nation people. It would be interesting to assess if there are any similarities between UK site provision and the connected social issues and the social issues connected to the reservations, which are designed for the Aboriginal people. This could also explore the level of emotional distress that adults and children experience when they can no longer access their attachment places.

Thirdly, gaining a greater understanding of Gypsy and Traveller attachments to place could suggest that further research is required looking at planning applications and site provision, together with identifying possible ways to enable Gypsies and Travellers to secure their own sites. This could encourage more Gypsies and Travellers to settle which in turn would in time, bring the Travelling communities closer to mainstream society

Finally, as this study was undertaken in a small demographic area with a small sample size, it would be beneficial to the knowledge base if the study were repeated over a wider demographic area, with a larger sample size. This would enable us to gain a greater understanding of Gypsy and Traveller attachment relationships to people and place throughout the country.

It needs to be noted, however, that most Gypsy and Traveller individuals are mistrustful of Gorgios and professionals. This could result in future



participants being reluctant to be as open about their experiences and feelings as the participants of this study have been, with an unknown researcher.

### **Implications for Social Work Education and Practice**

Before concluding this thesis with a personal reflection on the research process, this section will consider the implications of the findings discussed in Chapters Six and Seven for Social Work education and practice.

**Table 5: The key observations for Social Work Education and Practice**

Social Workers need to be supported by their management teams to develop knowledge and confidence when working with children and families from minority ethnic groups.
Social Workers need to actually get to know the families that they work with and develop an understanding of the family's cultural heritage, whether they are Gypsies and Travellers, displaced people or other minority ethnic groups.
Social Workers and all professionals need to take the time to ask the Gypsy and Traveller families questions about their lived experiences and lifestyle in jargon-free language.
Social Workers need to be mindful that many Gypsies and Travellers cannot read or write and, therefore, all paperwork needs to be read <i>to</i> them to ensure they understand it.
Many Social Workers working within Children's Services have not been given the opportunity to develop their cultural understanding of the issues that Gypsies and Travellers face, particularly the result of violent evictions.
Social Workers need to feel confident enough to 'think outside of the box' when undertaking statutory assessments
There are culturally appropriate tools available, which can be used when working with Gypsy and Traveller children.
Social Workers need to challenge stereotypical comments, prejudice and discrimination.
Social Work supervisions need to allocate time to reflect on practice and provide time for the safe exploration of feelings of fear and intimidation.
Local authorities that have large populations of an ethnic group like Gypsies and Travellers need to develop the role of lead Social Worker for them.
Most important of all, all children whatever their cultural background or the ethnic minority status, have the right to be protected from significant harm.

The findings of this study suggest that there are two main key areas that Social Work practitioners and students could benefit from developing a

deeper understanding and knowledge base of so that they can incorporate the theory into their practice. The first key area is the growing interest and importance to attachment to place in child development and Social Work assessments.

The second key area is the need for Social Workers and other service providers to be provided with detailed training on Gypsies and Travellers' history, culture, shared care child rearing practices and the issues that families from these communities face on a daily basis.

### **Attachment to place**

As we have seen in the participants' narratives, attachment to place has played a significant role in each person's lived experiences. This finding has some resonance with the wider body of research and literature regarding attachment to place in the fields of Environmental Psychology and Human Geography. Interest in the field of Social Work has been limited, however, this appears to be slowly growing.

Researchers such as Jack (2015, 2013, 2012, 2010, 1997) continue to emphasise the importance of place attachment in an infant's sense of self, identity, safety and security, together with the emotional trauma of losing their attachment place. The lack of research studying attachment to place in the social care field suggests that there is a need for further research to increase the knowledge base.

Social Work degree courses spend some time exploring attachment theory, however, attachment to place is not taught, as it presently remains a disputed concept in the field of social sciences. Place attachment does appear, however, to be a concept valued in the fields of environmental psychology and anthropology. The findings of this study indicate that Social Work students would benefit from being taught about attachment to place, the powerful bonds that infants develop with their places of attachment and the importance of these attachment feelings in the development of infants and children's sense of self and identity, safety and security.

Place attachment, when linked to attachment to the main care provider, provides the infant and child with their secure base. Jack (2015) proposes that it is the intimate combination of attachments to significant people and places, which provides the individuals with the 'secure base' necessary for healthy development.

Jack (2015, 2012, & 2010) argues that despite a slowly growing body of evidence about the close links that exist between an individual's well-being and their attachments to places. Social Work literature in the UK and in other countries that underpins working with children and families, almost completely ignores the meaning and the important aspect of attachment to place on human development. This includes the UK Government guidance such as, Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018), which sets out the legislative requirements of Social Work practice,

Official guidance issued to practitioners in all parts of the UK for the assessment of children in need, makes no mention of the role that attachment to the places in which a child has grown up plays, nor to the feelings of emotional safety that their places of attachment provide them with (Jack, 2015).

Thomas and Holland (2010) note that many Social Workers, when completing the identity section of a single assessment of children in need, tend to comment only on the aspects of children's identities suggested in the official guidance, for example, age, gender, nationality and the child's status in the family. They note that Social Workers are failing to mention the role that the child's attachment to place plays in the child's developing identity.

For homeless children, displaced and asylum-seeking children, Gypsy and Traveller children and the children of economic migrants, attachment to place and particularly the disruption of their attachment relationships to their important places, can have a significant effect on the child's emotional well-being and their feelings of security. Social Worker assessments, which include the child's early attachments to place, could help to provide a deeper understanding of the needs of the child and help to identify possible areas of

unmet need. This in turn, could help Social Workers to support families when trying to explore the possible causes behind some of the children's challenging behaviours. It needs to be noted that this thesis is not suggesting that all challenging behaviours that the children and young people with whom Social Workers work, are the result of the loss of their early attachment relationships. This thesis is suggesting that attachment to place could be an important area to consider when exploring a child's development and their life experiences.

The Children Act 1989/Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to make sufficient provision to meet the needs of all Looked After Children in their area, with any accommodation to be within the local authority's area and near to the child's home, if safe for the child and whenever possible. It can be argued that this is not only to support family relationships and enable them to be maintained, but also so that the child can remain reasonably close to the places which he/she has developed attachment feelings too. Jack (2015) notes that many looked after children feel a sense of dislocation if they are placed too far away from attachment places, which often results in placement instability and breakdown.

We have all experienced some form of affective bond or attachment to a place at some point in our lives. Childhood attachment places often hold special memories and we feel drawn to return to them at times of stress and unhappiness, either in person, or by looking at photographs or reliving comforting memories. These comforting attachments to place memories are often linked to memories of their attachment relationships to their care providers and to the feeling of being safe, secure and cared for.

Most attachment places appear to be the house in which we live or have lived; it may be a certain room in the home, or the area around the home, neighbourhood, the city, and the country. For Gypsies and Travellers, the places on their travelling circuits where they have felt safe, secure and happy appear to be their attachment places.

Therefore, gaining an understanding of an individual's attachment

relationships to people and place and linking this awareness with the developing theoretical knowledge base so that both can be incorporated into practice when working with not only Gypsies and Travellers, but also with minority ethnic groups, displaced people such as homeless families, asylum seekers and economic migrants, could provide Social Workers with a greater insight into the possible emotional distress and uncertainty that some children and families might be experiencing. This in turn, would enable Social Workers to work in partnership with families more effectively and would enable them to think more clearly about the type of interventions that the child and family need.

### **Cultural Diversity Training and Knowledge**

The second key theme that this thesis has identified, is the need for an increased focus on the development of skills when working with minority ethnic groups, particularly with regards to Social Workers' sense of professional expertise.

For example, the ethnic backgrounds of the families that Social Workers work with, can vary in different locations. Some Social Work students that have grown up and studied in white middle-class areas, may have had limited contact with minority ethnic groups, and consequently, will have limited knowledge about different cultural behaviours. Conversely, the population of many London boroughs is often very diverse, with families from many racial backgrounds living and working in close proximity, whereas in many small rural towns the population remains predominantly white British/ white eastern European. Cambridgeshire has a large Gypsy and Traveller population while some areas in the neighbouring counties have high populations of Eastern Europeans.

Social Work training needs to prepare individuals to work with the widely diverse demographics of each area. The ethnic backgrounds of the population in the UK are changing due to growing numbers of 'newly arrived communities' (Manthorpe, 2013). Social Workers need to have the knowledge and the skills to be able to engage with children and families in a culturally appropriate way. As highlighted throughout this thesis, it is not only the newly

arrived communities who have cultural needs that are unknown to statutory agencies. Gypsy and Traveller heritage and culture remain widely misunderstood and to some degree feared (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010). Therefore cultural diversity training could help to break down some perceived barriers and misguided fear.

Social Work degree programmes could review and strengthen their course material by including more cultural diversity competency sessions. To achieve this Social Work, academics and researchers might well develop teaching programmes that offer a deeper understanding, not only of Gypsy and Traveller cultural traits and history, but also of other minority ethnic groups, displaced populations and economic migrants so that Social Workers can engage with the families that they work with in a culturally appropriate way that takes account of the contexts in which they live. This would help to increase the focus on the skills that Social Work students will need when working with minority groups.

Teaching professionals about local demographics and cultural issues could provide them with a deeper understanding of the impact of discrimination and the resulting socio-economic hardship that Gypsies and Travellers and other minority groups experience.

Levels of depression and anxiety are reported to be higher in the Gypsy and Traveller population than in the lowest social-economic UK population group (Parry et al, 2004). Social Workers and health care providers need to consider the effect of constant evictions and the resulting environmental challenges when assessing children and their parents. Mineka (1985) suggests that children who observe their attachment figures experiencing high levels of anxiety are more predisposed to the intergenerational transmission of anxiety disorders. As we saw from Jane, Mandy and Mary's narratives, their parents became stressed, anxious and emotionally unavailable during evictions, which suggests that many Gypsy and Traveller children could be at a higher risk of developing mental health difficulties in later life, than individuals who have not experience the trauma of being evicted.

Child Protection professionals need to be sufficiently skilled and supported by good supervision, training and management oversight to develop their practice and an understanding of their own automatic fear and prejudices during the assessment process. Allen and Riding (2018) argue that without effective casework, supervision and training, Child Protection professionals can sometimes assume that Gypsy and Traveller children are at more risk of significant harm than other children simply because of their culture. This assumption can lead to unreliable and unverifiable assessments and oppressive and coercive practice. This thesis is not disputing that Gypsy and Traveller lifestyles can increase the risk that children might be exposed to, but it suggests that Gypsy and Traveller families work together to manage the extra possible risks by living in family groups, where the children's needs are met by not only the child's mother but by close family members and the group as a whole.

The serious case review for Family A, Southampton (2014) suggests that there is a need for increased knowledge, skills and core values to minimise the opportunity for oppression and to enable a more equal system of Child Protection practice so that ultimately Gypsy and Traveller children can have successful outcomes. This would require Child Protection professionals to be able to understand the impact of their automatic prejudices so that un-reflected value judgements do not form part of an assessment analysis. This could result in fewer Gypsy and Traveller children and families being failed and would enable Social Workers to develop improved working relationships with some of the hardest to reach, marginalised Gypsy and Traveller communities (Allen & Riding, 2018).

The Child Protection system should ensure that the welfare of the Gypsy and Traveller and all children is paramount. Social Workers, however, have a professional duty to promote equality and to value diversity while challenging discrimination and oppressive practice to make equality practice a reality (Thompson, 2003).

Kandylaki & Kallinikaki (2018) highlight Dominelli's (2002) argument that unless Social Workers understand oppression and how it is reproduced, their interventions can become oppressive either directly or indirectly. Social Work draws its values and ethics from humanitarian and democratic ideals, therefore human rights form part of Social Work's core value basis (Buchanan and Gunn, 2007). Principles of social justice, human rights, and collective responsibility together with respect for diversities need to remain central to social work practice (IFSW, 2014).

Anti-oppressive approaches value and respect the uniqueness of human beings and their cultural diversity, as long as children's rights are not violated (Kandylaki & Kallinikaki's, 2018; O'Kin, 1999; Phillips, 2009). Kandylaki & Kallinikaki (2018) argue that Anti-Oppressive practice involves working closely with children and families to raise their awareness and understanding of children's services concerns so that they can fully participate in the assessment process and any further support and involvement. Therefore Social Workers need to develop ways of empowering Gypsy and Traveller children and their families rather than allowing their automatic prejudices to hinder positive working together relationships.

The HCPC Standards of proficiency for Social Workers in England require Social Workers to be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner and to;

- be able to work with others to promote social justice, equality and inclusion
- able to use practice to challenge and address the impact of discrimination, disadvantage and oppression
- be aware of the characteristics and consequences of verbal and non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by a range of factors including age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status (Health Care Professions Council - HCPC, 2017).

A deeper knowledge and understanding of who Gypsies and Travellers are, would empower Social Workers to ensure that their practice conforms with HCPC standards of proficiency when working with them. The lack of cultural knowledge can disempower Social Workers when investigating Child



Protection concerns, which can lead to workers relying on stereotypical conceptualisations that they have observed in the media rather than on the Gypsies and Travellers actual lived experiences, making it difficult for Social Workers to promote social justice, equality and inclusion.

This is a point that Allen (2016) raised when he suggested that there is uneven attention being given to the role of Child Protection with Gypsy and Traveller children. This, in turn, raises the concern that practice can sometimes become determined by individual intuition, sentiment and tacit knowledge rather than empirically or theoretically informed judgment.

Cultural awareness training could help to reduce this and could be integrated throughout the many services, including social care. The participants' narratives and the literature indicate that at times these services can appear to be either not available or are not welcoming or are culturally inappropriate with regards to Gypsies and Travellers. This includes services in relation to health, homelessness, social services, substance misuse, early years, youth work, domestic violence, criminal justice, and community cohesion (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

While it is important to be mindful of cultural differences, protecting children from harm is paramount and the Social Work team, health care professionals, education providers, housing and the police may feel more able and confident when working with Gypsies and Travellers if they have a working knowledge of Gypsy and Traveller history and culture. Practitioners who have not had much experience or access to training may benefit from the practice guide (Manthorpe, 2013).

This is not only important when working with Gypsies and Travellers. Having a good working knowledge of the minority ethnic groups and the cultural traits and beliefs of any displaced people, economic migrants or newly-arrived people who populate the demographic area of any Social Work team, would benefit the Social Workers and would enable better working together relationships with these groups which in turn should improve the outcomes for the children and their families.

McDonagh (2018) offers advice to the police on how to engage with Gypsies and Travellers. This suggestion is relevant for all service providers.

He suggests;

*'the secret to approaching Gypsies and Travellers is simply to approach them like you would any other person from any other ethnic group. With respect, with friendliness and an open mind. They want to be treated them like anyone else. If they've not committed a crime, treat them like they are innocent. If they are behaving violently or dangerously, then use whatever force necessary, like you would anyone else. But if they are being cooperative, then don't. It's simple'*

McDonagh (2018) notes that Gypsies and Travellers do not want special treatment because of their minority ethnic status; they just want to be treated equally by all the professionals that work with them. Lord Ouseley (2018), former chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, and current chair of 'Kick it Out' and a member of the Institute for Race Relations, argues that data from the 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that housed Gypsies and Irish Travellers had less confidence in their local police compared to their neighbours. The Traveller Movements' (2018) research highlights that some police officers are reported to use derogatory language when speaking about Gypsies and Travellers. One of the participants of their research, '*an Irish Traveller woman said she was asked by a police officer – "why are the majority of Gypsies and Travellers criminals?"*' (Lord Ouseley, 2018; The Traveller Movement, 2018). The research also noted that a police officer was overheard saying "*dead Gypsy good Gypsy*" (Lord Ouseley, 2018; The Traveller Movement, 2018).

The Traveller Movements (2018) research discovered that negative, stereotypical assumptions held by many about Britain's Gypsy and Traveller communities have permeated institutional structures and procedures. Their report provides the example of their participants describing how the police can turn up to deal with an incident involving Gypsy and Traveller people with far more police officers than they would if non-Gypsy and Traveller people were involved. The report demonstrates that ethnicity is sometimes treated as a risk factor. In addition, where there are police roles exclusively dedicated to Gypsy and Traveller communities, these are more likely to focus on enforcement to

the exclusion of engagement which, in turn, perpetuates the idea that criminality is associated with Gypsy and Traveller individuals (Lord Ouseley, 2018).

While this research relates to the Police, it suggests that prejudice and discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers is still a concerning issue within some service provisions. It does not seem right that in 2018, some people are still having a more negative experience when dealing with public institutions such as the police and social care simply because they belong to a particular ethnic group.

Allen & Riding (2018) suggest that successful Child Protection practice with not only Gypsy and Traveller children, but with all children, requires professionals to engage in exercises of pre-reflection to ensure that the Child Protection procedure is only instigated because there are verified concerns about a child's welfare.

Allen & Riding (2018:7) argue that;

*'The lack of opportunity associated with time, training, resources, mediation, advocacy and community-based practice combine to mean that some Child Protection professionals are ill-equipped and under pressure'*

The shortage of qualified Social Workers in some areas often results in workers having caseloads that are so high, that the workers feel overwhelmed and having the time to critically reflect on one's own practice is sometimes lost. Managers and Social Workers need to ensure that they have regular supervision and reflection time, to ensure that their practice is anti-oppressive and that the decisions made are in the best interests of the child.

As noted in chapter four, Allen (2016) and Harrington (2014) highlighted emerging concerns, suggesting that sometimes, the decisions made and the actions taken when undertaking Child Protection investigations, do not always protect Gypsy and Traveller children from harm.

Harrington (2014), noted in the Serious Case Review of Family A, that the police and Social Workers felt intimidated by the Gypsies and Travellers when

making a home visit to a Traveller site to undertake an assessment of one of the family's children's needs. It is possible that if the Social Workers and the police had had a greater understanding of Gypsy and Traveller culture, including their lifestyle and communication styles, professionals may not have felt so intimidated and would have been able to engage more positively with the family and the children who they had safeguarding concerns about.

Harrington (2014) suggested that the Gypsies and Travellers on the site acted in a very intimidating manner, congregating around the family, their trailer, the police and Social Worker. It is not clear as to the mood of the situation, however it is possible that the police and the Social Workers were not aware that when a group of Gypsies and Travellers are together, their speech seems to be really fast and they appear to shout and swear at each other even when they are being friendly and sociable. The person shouting the loudest seems to be the only one heard. It needs to be highlighted that many Gypsies and Travellers have slight hearing difficulties as they have limited access to health care services, which could check their hearing and provide hearing aids (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

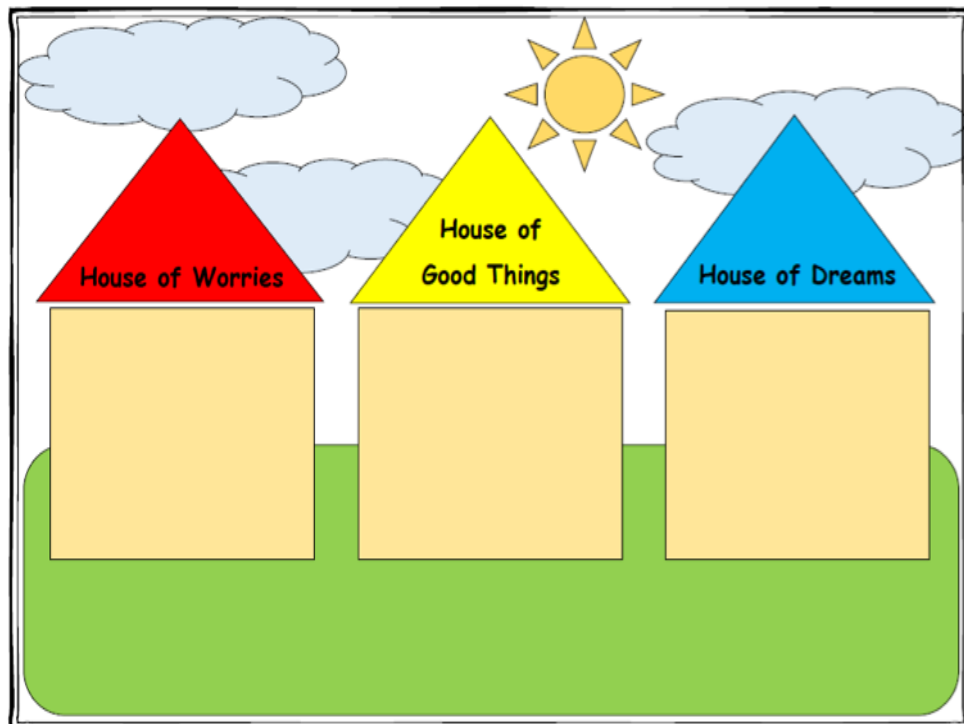
As discussed throughout this thesis, many Gypsies and Travellers seem to have difficulty expressing themselves as they do not always have the right words. This can result in them appearing to be very 'in your face' and very loud, which can at times appear intimidating, but which in most cases is not meant to be. Quite often, they will not listen to a professional until they have said everything that they wanted to say because if they are interrupted, many Gypsies and Travellers can lose the thread of what they wanted to say. Allowing Gypsies and Travellers to say what they want to say first, shows them respect and once most Gypsies and Travellers have said what they want to say, they will normally listen to professionals. Also, if Gypsies and Travellers are listened to, it is easier to gain a deeper understanding about their concerns and their home situation. Professionals should ask questions about what the Gypsy and Traveller family tell them to quantify what the children and families have shared with them. Paraphrasing helps to ensure a deeper level of understanding of the child's world.

Gypsies and Travellers tend to live an outdoor lifestyle and if somebody new arrives on a site, it is common for many people to congregate close to the visitor to see who they are and to check that the family who is being visited is ok. This again could appear intimidating when it is simply the other residents being nosy and protective.

Harrington (2014) also reported in the Serious Case Review, that the assessment of the children's needs had been completed without even talking to the children. The Munro Review (2011) identified the need for Social Workers to undertake more direct work with children to gain a better understanding of what life looks like for them.

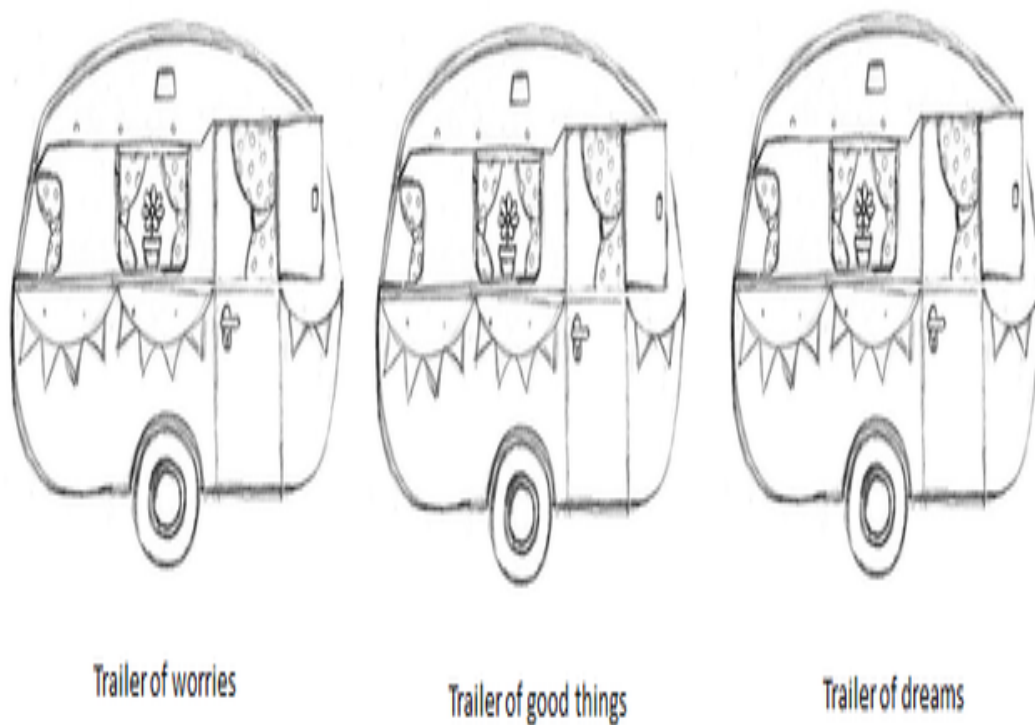
Direct work is a task, which many newly qualified workers and even some experienced Social Workers find daunting. Nearly all children like to draw and play therefore Social Workers would benefit from having their own resources bags that they take on home visits. Well-known direct work tools such as the Signs of Safety three houses have been adapted for Gypsies and Travellers.

Figure 9: Signs of Safety- Risk Assessment tool.



(Norfolk Local Safeguarding Board, 2018).

Figure 10: Signs of Safety – Trailers, not Houses (not suitable for all communities)



(Train, 2018).

The application of the Three Trailers above with Gypsy and Traveller children has not yet been fully explored. It may however help Gypsy and Traveller children feel that their culture and heritage is being valued by the Social Worker, enabling them to talk about the issues affecting them such as the limited access to a safe and secure living place (Train, 2018).

Social Workers need to also be mindful when completing assessments that Gypsy and Traveller children may not present with attachment relationships solely to their parents. As highlighted in the findings, many Gypsy and Traveller infants receive care and develop attachment relationships with their older siblings, grandparents and some members of the wider family, due to the shared nature of child rearing practices. This could result in an assessment raising concerns about an infant or child's attachments to their parents.

An assessment tool which can help assess Gypsy and Traveller children's attachment relationships with their care providers, is an adapted form of the Story Stem Assessment Profile, (the technique is taught at the Anna Freud Centre in London as discussed in Chapter Three). Being an accredited administrator and coder, I have adapted the technique to be more culturally appropriate, using dolls and a wider selection of toy household items to encourage Gypsy and Traveller children to role-play using the dolls through stories that I start. The role-play introduces situations which involve low levels of family conflict, such as a minor accident or an argument. The way that the child continues the story provides insights into the child's world and their attachment relationships (Shemmings et al, 2018). Story Stem Assessment Profile can be very helpful when working with children who struggle to communicate verbally for whatever reason, as the way that the child makes the dolls interact with each other can show more than words can at times.

It is accepted that seeing Gypsy and Traveller children alone is not always easy unless they are in education and can be seen within school, as many families are reluctant to leave their children alone with Gorgios because they do not trust their intentions. This can be made easier when the Social Worker is able to develop a good respectful working relationship with the adults.

It also needs to be noted that many traditional Gypsy and Traveller families would not want a female child to be spoken to by a male Gorgio professional and vice-versa, however it seems that a Gorgio female worker talking to a young male is often seen as slightly more acceptable. This is due to the concern for the child's moral welfare and safety. Similarly, many Gypsy and Traveller women will not discuss gender related personal problems with a male professional, while others will find it difficult to talk to a female worker until they feel that they can trust her. It is, therefore, important to bear this in mind when new cases are being allocated to workers. Wherever possible, it would be helpful to allocate families to a worker of the preferred gender (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

During the research process, it has been noticed that most of the participants were proud of their community and heritage. This was perpetuated through folklore, traditional practice, family influence and reluctance to mix socially outside the community. For Gypsies and Travellers, the lack of respect and discrimination are closely entwined. It has also been noted that positive working relationships are easier to develop when professionals are non-judgemental, and are respectful, willing to understand, and if they did not understand something, showed a willingness to learn, accept and respect Gypsy and Traveller traditional values (regardless of personal viewpoint). Social Workers who asked questions, rather than assume the answers, also found it easier to engage with families and achieve successful outcomes for the children and their families (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010).

All professionals working with children would benefit from developing trusting respectful relationships through familiarity with the Gypsies and Travellers. Working relationships with Gypsies and Travellers benefit from professionals who are sensitive to their lifestyle issues while ensuring that children are protected from harm. Professionals need to be mindful that many Gypsies and Travellers cannot read and write, so giving them a Child Protection Conference report or a Child Protection Plan without thoroughly explaining Children's Services' concerns and what is expected of them is setting parents up to fail. Families cannot bring about change if they are unaware of what needs to be changed.

### **Reflecting on the research process**

In this final section of this concluding chapter, the reflections of the researcher on the research process will be considered. As noted by Phillips and Pugh (2005), it is important to consider the undertaking of PhD research as a method by which one can hope to become proficient in the process of doing research in a particular field. Having conducted small-scale research projects before, for example, as part of a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Social Policy and as part of a Masters Degree in a Social Work, I was familiar at the outset with the method of using guided conversation interviews, however, I had not undertaken any research using IPA prior to this study. I have now become



familiar with IPA methodology and the skills that I have developed interpreting the participants' narratives, are skills that I can use in my daily life when I am undertaking Section 47 investigations in my role as a Senior Child Protection Social Worker.

During this research process, I have reflected on my practice as a Senior Child Protection Social Worker, Practice Educator and ASYE Supervisor. The findings from both the literature reviewed and the participants' accounts have influenced how I now undertake statutory assessments and reports.

Attachment relationships to people and places are now explored more deeply, especially with older siblings and family members and the emotional safety that a child and the child's parents feel in their home. I aim to collate a best practice guide to support Social Workers when assessing the needs of Gypsy and Traveller children, which will also be transferable to all newly-arrived people, economic migrants, and minority groups.

I am also developing the role of lead Social Worker with Gypsies and Travellers in the local authority where I work and plan to introduce workshops to provide others with ethnic and cultural knowledge.

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**Appendices 1: Historical Social and Cultural overview of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities living within the UK.**

Traveller groups	History
<p><b>Romanichal, English Gypsies, Romani Gypsies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The largest of the Traveller group within the UK.</li> <li>- Recorded in England since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and have been recognised as a racial group since 1988.</li> <li>- It's a matriarchal culture, which places great value on family and kinship and prefer to live in extended family groupings.</li> <li>- Intermarriage between family groups is common, leading to a tightly knit social group with the members having a strong sense of community identity and mutual self-help.</li> <li>- Romani have many beliefs and taboos about pollution connected with things 'Mochardi' (unclean).</li> <li>- Disputed origins (will be discussed in Chapter IV).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Roma</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Roma are relatives of English Romani Gypsies and thought to share a common origin in India.</li> <li>- Whereas the English Romani Gypsies migrated into the UK from 1000AD, the Roma settled in most countries across Europe, often favouring the Eastern European Countries.</li> <li>- The European Union accepted the term Roma to describe all European Gypsies.</li> <li>- The Roma are not a homogenous group. There are many different tribes and groups that have territorial/ geographical associations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Irish Travellers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sometimes referred to as 'Minceir' or 'Pavees'. Their traditional language is Shelta, which is spoken in different dialects including Cant, Gamin/ Gammon.</li> <li>- Irish Travellers have many similar traditions and customs to Romani\English Gypsies, particularly surrounding cleanliness and hygiene.</li> <li>- Great value on family and kinship, preferring to live in extended family groupings.</li> <li>- Irish Travellers were recognised as a racial group in England and Wales in 2000 and have been recorded travelling in Ireland as a distinct social group since the 1880s.</li> <li>- Disputed origins (will be discussed in Chapter IV).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scottish Travellers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Scottish Travellers (Nachins) are recognised as an individual ethnic group with its own cultural history</li> <li>- Scottish Travellers are reported to have similar</li> </ul>

	<p>origins to some of the Irish Traveller groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scotland also has records of travelling metal workers from as early as the twelfth century.</li> <li>- Scottish Gypsies have similar customs and beliefs with regards to hygiene, cleanliness and morality as the English Gypsies and Irish Travellers and origins.</li> </ul>
<b>Welsh Travellers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welsh Travellers (Kale) are also recognised as an individual racial group with their own origins and histories.</li> <li>- Welsh Travellers are thought to be descendants of the Woods and other families that migrated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from the South West of England. They are thought to have lived nomadic lives separate from the Welsh community for several generations.</li> <li>- Welsh Travellers were known to be highly skilled wood carvers, wagon builders, horse dealers, fishermen and excellent musicians.</li> <li>- Most Welsh Travellers now live in houses, however, many have retained their traditions</li> </ul>
<b>Didicoi Didicoy Didikois</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Labeling some members of the Travelling communities as Didicoi, means different things to different groups, depending on their social standing.</li> <li>- For pure Romanis, this term is reported to mean 'half blood, or posh rat'.</li> <li>- Term used to describe people who are deemed as not being of pure Romani blood, either due to having a mixed heritage background of Romani and Gorgia,</li> <li>- 'Someone of very little Romani Blood' or no Romani blood at all, that has been accepted into the Gypsy/Traveller community as a member of the family.</li> <li>- Historically, the term Didicoi referred to 'a tribe of low caste people in India'</li> </ul>
<b>Tramps and Mumpers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tramps and mumpers are not Travellers in the true sense of the word as applied to Gypsies and Travellers</li> <li>- At the beginning of the 1960's, Tramps and mumpers would join the Gypsies and Travellers harvesting crops.</li> <li>- Tramps were people who come from the cities looking for work, who then returned to the cities in winter, staying in doss houses or cheep room.</li> <li>- Mumpers were county tramps, who would spend their winters in an old shack or old wagon, that they had brought cheaply.</li> <li>- Mumpers sometimes called hedge-crawlers.</li> <li>- Mumpers were seen as at the bottom of the Gypsy and Traveller hierarchy.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Showmen</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Showmen are self-employed Travellers that travel the country with funfairs.</li> <li>- ‘Show’ or ‘fairground people’ have a distinctive culture and lifestyle that stretches back many centuries. Fairs in Britain have a long history, with their origins going back to pagan customs when seasonal gatherings were held for trade and festivity.</li> <li>- Today, most belong to the Showman’s Guild of Great Britain and are required to follow a code of practice covering the control and running of fairs and guidance on site provision and legislation</li> <li>- Membership of the Guild provides Showmen with exemption from the site licensing requirements of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 when they are travelling for the purpose of their business or where they only occupy their winter sites for some period between the beginning of October to the end of March</li> </ul>
<p><b>Circus People</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Circus people are Travelling entertainers.</li> <li>- Circuses tend to be owned and administered by a single family, the circus proprietor. The proprietor hires a range of acts, often from abroad, to make up the repertoire for the yearly circuit.</li> <li>- Many circus entertainers are not from circus backgrounds.</li> <li>- Records show that athletes and animals have performed together to provide entertainment since the days of ancient Rome, in amphitheatres such as the ‘Circus Maximus’. The Latin word ‘circus’ translates as ‘circle’ in English. As such, Amphitheatres are thought to be the precursor of the racetrack. When not used for racing, the space would be shared by the ‘circus’.</li> <li>- The ‘modern’ circus is believed to have originated in Britain in 1768 when Sergeant-Major Philip Astley, roped off a field in London and performed riding displays using horses that he had trained.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bargees – Water Gypsies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bargees are a distinct group of Gypsy Travellers who live and work on barges on waterways throughout Europe.</li> <li>- The term is more commonly used in the Netherlands, where freight is still carried by barges on the canals.</li> <li>- Currently, there are relatively few families still living and working on the network of British inland waterways</li> <li>- Water Gypsies (Bargees) and boat dwellers, are not regulated by the same planning policies and</li> </ul>



	laws as land dwelling Gypsies and Traveller's.
<b>New Age Travellers/ New Travellers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The New Age Travellers or 'new travellers' are not recognised as a distinct ethnic group.</li> <li>- Originally a small group of hippy Travellers who travelled between the free festivals that sprung up throughout the 1960s and 1970s.</li> <li>- Their alternative lifestyle was part 'new social movement' and part 'youth subculture'.</li> <li>- Most lived in converted coaches, lorries, vans and benders.</li> <li>- The numbers of New Age Travellers swelled during the 1980s and early 1990s.</li> <li>- Many of the New Travellers that emerged during this time did not share some of the earlier peaceful hippy ideals.</li> <li>- They were angry young people who were forced onto the road due to unemployment and homelessness</li> </ul>
<b>Historical Social and Cultural overview of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities living within the UK.</b>	Adapted from (BBC-Kent-Romany, 2006; Belton, 2005; Dodds, 1966:17;Francis, 2010; Farre, 2013:73; Fitzpatrick et al 2000; Fitzpatrick & Jones 2005:392; Greenfields, 2006; Hayward, 2003:48; Hawes & Perez, 1996:8; Hetherington, 2000:4; Hills et al, 2002:121;Jando, 2012; Jones, 2004:36, 38; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002; Kenrick & Puxon, 2009; Matras, 2014; Mayall, 1988; Murdoch & Johnson, 2004:3; NATT+ 2012a,b,c,d & f; Niner, 2003:22; Okely, 1983; Romany Jib, 2012; Smolinska-Poffley, 2012; The Showman's Guild of Great Britain, 2012; Vesey-FitzGerald, 1973:43-55).

## Appendices 2: Social Policy Timeline.

Date	Action	Outcome
1514 England	First mention of a Gypsy in the country	
1530 England and Wales	Expulsion of Gypsies ordered. Harry VIII forbids the transportation of Gypsies into England	
1540 Scotland	Gypsies allowed to live under their own laws	
1544 England	Gypsies deported to Norway	
1547 England	Edward VI, introduced a law in 1547, which required that Gypsies to be seized and branded on their chest with a 'V' (for vagabond).	These Gypsies were then enslaved for two years. If they escaped and were later caught, they were re-branded with an 'S' and enslaved for life
1554 England	The death penalty is imposed for any Gypsy not leaving the country within a month	
1554 England	Order for Avoiding of All Doubts and Ambiguities' Act	Aimed at controlling simple people in a fellowship of vagabonds, also commonly known as 'Aegyptians'.
1562 England	Provision of previous Acts widened to include people who live and travel like Gypsies	
1569 England	106 men and women condemned to death at York just for being Gypsies, but only 9 are executed. The others prove they were born in England.	
1573 Scotland	Gypsies either to settle down or leave country	
1579 Wales	First record of Gypsies	
1611 Scotland	Three Gypsies hanged (under 1554 law)	
1650 England	Last known execution for being Gypsies, in	

	Suffolk. Others are transported to America.	
1660 – 1800	The identity of the English Gypsy Romanichal group is formed.	
1714 Scotland	British planters and merchants apply to the Privy Council for Gypsies to be shipped to the Caribbean	
1715 Scotland	Ten Gypsies deported to Virginia in the Americas	
1822 United Kingdom	Turnpike Act introduced:	Gypsies camping on the roadside to be fined
1835 United Kingdom	Highways Act strengthens the provisions of the 1822 Turnpike Act	
1871 - England	Fairs Act	Provided a legal basis for ending fairs.
1885 - England	Housing of working classes Act	New by-law to control the nuisance of tents and caravans
1885 – 95 England	Unsuccessful attempts to introduce the Moveable Dwellings Bills in Parliament to regulate Gypsy life	
1889 - England	Commons Act	Provided powers to stop and remove Gypsies from camping on common land
1889 England	The Showmen's Guild formed to oppose the Moveable Dwellings Bills.	Showmen begin to become a distinct group from other Travellers or Gypsies.
1908 England	The Children's Act makes education compulsory for travelling Gypsy children, but only for half a year.	
1909 - England	Town Planning Act	
1927 Britain	RL Turner proves that the phonetics of the Romani language had earlier been linked with the central group of Hindi languages in India	

1936 – England	Public Health Act	Aim at clearing the slums in towns, Tents and Caravan's classed as statutory nuisance
1944 - England	Education Act	
1944 - England	Highways and Road Traffic Act	Made camping on the highways an offence
1939-45 Europe	Second World War. Up to 500,000 Gypsies killed in Europe; Nazis draw up lists of English Gypsies for internment.	
1939-45 United Kingdom	British government creates caravan sites for families of Gypsies in the army or doing farm labour. These sites are closed after the war.	
1944 England	Education Act Gypsy children need only attend half a year. Many Gypsy children have no schooling	
1945 – 60 England	Gypsies begin to use motor drawn trailers, and buy land for their own stopping places	
1947 - England	Town and County Planning Act	Gave local authorities the power to prosecute and remove caravan dwellers.
1948 - England	Town and County Acts	
1950 England	Road Traffic Act	Expanded the powers of the Turnpike Act 1822. Gypsies found camping on the roadside were fined.
1960 England and Wales –	Caravan Sites and control of development Act – sites owners were required to obtain a site license, which regulated the size of the site and the activities permitted on the site.	Reduced provision of caravan sites and stopped new private sites being built until 1972. Eviction and harassment of Gypsies started to reach a crisis.
1966 Britain	Gypsy Council set up	
1967 England	First Gypsy Council summer school, in Essex	
1968 England and	Caravan Sites Act	Insisted that from 1970,

Wales	An incentive of the act was the designation of towns and county's that had made sufficient site provision to satisfy the secretary of state (see figure 1).	local authorities should provide caravan sites for Gypsies. It became a criminal offence for Travellers to camp on unauthorised land in designated areas. This Act is never fully enforced.
1970 England	National Gypsy Education Council established	
1971 England	First World Romani Congress held near London	
1971 United Kingdom	Government begins to exempt some councils from building sites.  The Gypsy Council begins to split.  Government starts to give grants only to Gypsy organizations who co-operate with it.	
1972 England	Romani Guild founded	
1976	Race Relations Act	The RRA makes it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone 'on racial grounds' and prohibits discrimination by way of victimisation in the areas of employment, education, training and housing. The term on racial grounds' means 'on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins'.
1977 England and Wales	Cripps report on Gypsies published	
1983 - England	Mobile Home Act	
1985 - England	Housing Act	
1985 England	Bradford 's attempts to make it illegal for nomadic Gypsies to	

	come within city limits overthrown by the Courts	
1985 England	Swann Report published	The first major report on 'The Educational Needs of Travellers' Children – Chapter 16
1988 England	English Romani Gypsies as ethnic minority group under the Race Relations Act 1976 (up- dated in 2000).	
1990 - England	Town and County Act Amended the 1948 Act	
1991 - England	Planning and compulsory purchase Act	
1993 Scotland	Scottish Gypsy Traveller Association set up	
1994 Britain	Criminal Justice Act.	Nomadism criminalised Abolished the Caravan Sites Act leaving about 5,000 families with no legal home. British Gypsies looked to Europe for protection.
1995 - UK	The Disability Act	Made it unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person
1996 - England	Housing Act amended	
1997 England	Romani Refugees from the Slovak Republic arrive in Dover seeking asylum and receive mainly negative reactions and scepticism from local residents and the national news media.	
1998	Human Rights Act	
2000 United Kingdom	The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000	The RRAA extended the scope of the RRA to outlaw acts of discrimination in all other public functions carried out by public bodies. The RRAA also places a general duty on public authorities to

		work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups in the carrying out of their functions.
2000 - England	Planning Policy Guidance	
2000 England	Irish Travellers recognised as an Ethnic Minority under Race Relations Act	
2001 England June	First Gypsy, Roma Traveller History Month in London	
2001 - UK	The Special Education Act	Amended the 1995 Act
2002 – UK	Traveller and Gypsy Strategy	To tackle growing public concerns about unauthorised encampments
2002 – England	Private Members Bill	Traveller Law Reform Bill – re-introduced a statutory duty to provide sites
2002 - England	Disabled Facilities Grant	Extended to people living in caravans
2002 – UK	Homelessness Act	Amended the 1996 Housing Act
2003 – UK	Traveller Law Reform bill introduced in the House of Commons	Rejected
2004 - United Kingdom	The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 has introduced a new section 62A into the 1994 Criminal Justice Act.	
2004 – UK	Planning and compulsory purchase Act	
2004 England	The Housing Act	Requires local authorities to include Travellers in the accommodation assessment process

2007 England October	Ministrial approval of Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month	
2008 England June	First National Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month	
2011 England	Mass eviction of Dale Farm	Nearly 1000 people including children were forcefully evicted from their owned sites, due to lack of planning permission.
2013 England	Scrap Metal Dealers Act	
<b>Social Policy Time Line,</b>	(Adapted from Crawley, 2004:17-19; Dodds, 1966:46; Greenfields, 2006:70; Hawes & Perez, 1996:23-25; Hancock, 2012; Johnson, Murdoch & Willers 2004; Patrin, 2000; Matthews, 2010; Mayall, 2004; Richardson, 2006).	



### **Appendices 3 - Michael Howards controversial 2005 speech.**

#### **I BELIEVE IN FAIR PLAY.**

The same rules should apply to everyone.

Whatever your background,

Whatever the colour of your skin,

Whatever your sex or religion.

I don't believe in special rules for special interest groups.

We are all British.

We are one nation.

I believe that different people, from different communities should be free to lead their lives in different ways.

But freedom comes with a responsibility.

The responsibility to do the right thing by your community.

Many travellers accept this, living happily in neighbourhoods across our country.

Sadly, a small minority of travellers do not.

They are openly abusing our planning system.

People claim it's racist to raise this issue.

It is not.

It has nothing to do with race.

It's about standing up for the right values.

It's about common sense.

And it's about making sure that people abide by the law.

If you want to build a new home, you have to get planning permission first.

And if you don't, you can be fined or forced to pull it down.

That's fair enough because we need to protect our local environment.

But if you are a traveller you can use the so-called human rights act to bend planning law – building where you like.

That's just not fair.

There shouldn't be one rule to travellers and another for everyone else.

This is one of the reasons why the conservative party is reviewing the human rights act.

And if can't be improved we will scrap it (Howard, 2005: cited by Billig et al, 2006).

## Appendices 4; Ethic's approval

Royal Holloway

University of London Department of Social Work

### Ethics Approval Form

Are you: A member of staff?  A Postgraduate Student?  An Undergraduate Student?

Your Name: Melanie Hamilton-Perry

The Title of Your Project: **Gypsy and Traveller Attachment to People and Place: a contradiction in terms?**

Proposed Start date: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012

If you are a student, the name of your Supervisor: Professor David Shemmings PhD and Professor Anna Gupta

Date: \_Funding Agency (if appropriate) N/A

Contact e-mail address: mel.hamilton-perry@hotmail.com

Will your proposed research involve obtaining data *directly* from people recruited to participate in the project?: Yes  No

IF NO: You do not need to complete the rest of this form.

IF YES: Please complete all parts of the form and the checklist. Please append consent form(s) and information sheets and any other materials in support of your application.

All applicants should refer to the Royal Holloway University of London Research Ethics Guidelines document.

<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/research-and-enterprise/CategoryTemplate.asp?LEVEL=TERTIARY&DID=1&CID=7&TID=0>

Does your project involved NHS patients, staff and/or facilities? Yes [ ] No [ X]

IF NO: Please complete all parts of the form and the checklist. Please append consent form(s) and information sheets and any other materials in support of your application.

IF YES: If your project *only* involves NHS patients, staff and facilities, you do not need to complete the rest of this form. Please send the above information, along with a copy of your initial NHS ethics application to your departmental ethics coordinator and the college ethics committee secretary. Please provide any interim communication about amendments required. Final approval by the college can only be provided once evidence of NHS approval has been provided. The researcher should provide an electronic version of the final approved NHS application, with all its attachments and a photocopy/scanned copy of the final letter of approval from the NHS ethics committee.

## Section 1

Do you intend to study people in any of the following groups?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Children aged under 16  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Those aged 16-18.   | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. People with learning or communication difficulties.                               | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Patients.   | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Clients.  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. People in custody.  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. People not already mentioned who could be regarded as vulnerable in some way.     | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. People potentially or actually involved in illegal activities such as drugtaking. | <del>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></del> |

If you have answered 'YES' to ANY of the questions above, please give further details below  
(expand as necessary):

1. While the focus of this research project is on attachment indicators in adulthood, using the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), there may be occasions when the participants will have their children (who could be under the age of 16 years old) with them. Children are highly valued within all of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and are seen as an essential part of community survival and, as such, small children remain with family members at all times, until they are five rising six years old. Participants will be asked prior to the AAI interview, to arrange for alternative childcare for the duration of the interview. This may not always be possible if the family are living roadside, without any extended family members. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller mothers will keep their children in the trailer with her for safety reasons, when there may not be anywhere safe for the children to play.

If this is the case, I will provide an age appropriate activity, which can be undertaken at the opposite end of the family trailer, to keep the child/ children occupied during the interview. If children are present, parents will be asked for their consent for their children to be present and tape recorded during the AAI interview.

Any comments made by the children while their parents are participating in the AAI interview, will not be transcribed or used within this research project. The identity of all children will be protected and will remain confidential.

2. Within the Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities many young people are married at 16 and are seen as adults. Therefore some of the participants of this study may be aged between 16 and 18. I will ensure that all participants have the capacity to understand the nature of my research and understand that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from this research for any reason without prejudice.

3. Individuals from the Gypsy, Roma and Travelling communities often have low-level literacy skills. There can also be communication difficulties at times due to people assuming that as Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are seen to speak English no language barrier exists. While a form of English is spoken, often with a strong dialect involving different words and meanings, it decreases the likelihood of individuals making immediate sense of what is being said to them unless they are talking to their own community. This can result in difficulties processing verbal information; therefore on occasion several sentences can be lost, leading to misunderstanding. Many Gypsies, Romas and Travellers also find it difficult to express them because they do not have the right words. I will ensure that I read the information sheet and the consent form carefully to participants and will discuss the contents of these in detail. I will use culturally understandable language and will answer all questions honestly and fully.

7. I am mindful that all marginalised individuals can be regarded as vulnerable in some way. Gypsies Roma and Travellers face prejudice and discrimination in nearly all areas of their daily lives. Therefore I will ensure that I treat all participants and their family/ community members who I come into contact with, with respect and honesty.

8. When undertaking visits to Gypsy and Traveller sites and homes, there is always a possibility of coming into contact with individuals who are potentially or actually involved in illegal activities such as drug taking. However in my 10 years of working with Gypsy and Traveller families, it has been extremely unusual for Gypsy and Traveller individuals to openly engage in illegal activities in front of a 'Gorgio', (a non Romani/ settled person) - even a trusted one.

As the focus of this research study is not looking at anti-social or illegal activities, I do not fore see that this will raise ethical concerns unless an child or young person appears to be at risk of being harmed or is already being harmed. If this were the case I would inform the appropriate agencies. I will ensure my personal safety at all times and will ensure that somebody knows where I am going and at what time I will be returning home as I would if I was lone working for a local authority.

## Section 2

9. Do you intend to pay research participants? Yes [ ] No [ x ]
10. Will data collection for the study involve the use of video-recording equipment? Yes [ x ] No [ ]
11. Does your involvement in this study give rise to any financial or other conflicts of interest for you, colleagues or the department? Yes [ ] No [ x ]
12. Will your project involve research participants being deceived or misled in any way about the purpose of the study? Yes [ ] No [ x ]
13. Is there any realistic risk that research participants will experience physical and/or psychological distress, discomfort or harm as a result of their participation in the study? Yes [ x ] No [ ]
14. Is there any realistic risk that researchers will experience physical and/or psychological distress, discomfort or harm as a result of carrying out the study? Yes [ x ] No [ ]
15. Does the project require approval by any ethics committee outside Royal Holloway? Yes [ ] No [ x ]

If you have answered 'YES' to ANY of the questions above, please give further details below (expand as necessary). Describe any measures you will take to avoid or minimise distress, discomfort or harm to research participants or researchers.

10. I have not to date decided if I will video, tape record or make note during the interviews, which I intend to undertake. I am mindful that some Gypsy, Roma and Traveller individuals could find being filmed uncomfortable and distressing, if this is the case, the participant's wishes will be respected and the interview will not be recorded. Whichever method of recording interviews that I use, will be agreed with the participant prior to the start of the interview.

All participants will be free to stop the recording of any interview at anything, without needing to provide a reason. All recordings will be only be used to provide data for this research project (unless a safeguarding issue become apparent) and will only be viewed by the researcher and the research supervisors with the participant's consent. All recording will be stored securely in a locked cabinet, and will be destroyed in accordance with data protection legislation at the end of this study.

13. Due to the Adult Attachment Interview's focus on the participants' childhood relationships with their primary carer, there is a slight but realistic risk that research participants may experience some psychological distress, as a result of their

participation in the study. As I am an experienced Child Protection Social Worker, I believe that I have good communications skills and that I am acutely aware of people's emotional states. I believe that these skills will enable me to minimize any possible risk of psychological distress for the participants.

I intend to ensure that all participant's have a realistic understanding of the research before I start interviewing. I will assess the participant's through-out the interviews for signs of emotional distress and will stop the interview if the participant becomes distressed and did not want to continue. I will also ensure that before the end of the interview the participant attention will be turned to neutral topics so that the interview ends with the participant feeling safe.

I have also sourced a Counselling service, which is run purely for Gypsies and Travellers. I will offer all participants the telephone number of the service or offer to contact the service on their behalf.

14. There is always a slight but realistic risk that I could experience physical and/or psychological distress, discomfort or harm when visiting a Gypsy Traveller site or homes as part of this study as it is never possible to know exactly which family members may be visiting at the time. Gypsies and Travellers tend to sort out the disagreements amongst themselves, which can at time appear to be quite intimidating. However I have been working with individuals from the various Gypsy Roma and Traveller communities for the past 10 years and I have a good understanding of their customs and traditions. I also have a good knowledge of family connections, and the families who are more likely to pose a risk to myself. This enables me to assess any possible risk on entering a site or home. If I am in any doubt regarding my safety, I will remove myself form any possible risk and end the interview. I will undertake a future risk assessment before arranging to return at another time if appropriate. I will always adopt lone working behaviours and ensure that my where-abouts are known. I will adopt a telephone call in and out routine to ensure that my position is known.

### Section 3

16. Will you fully inform research participants about what they can expect during the data collection process? Yes X No [ ]

17. Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary? Yes X No [ ]

18. Will you obtain written consent from research participants? Yes X No [ ]

19. Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will have no detrimental consequences to them? Yes X No [ ]

20. Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason? Yes X No [ ]

21. Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs? Yes X No [ ]

22. Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation for example by giving them a brief explanation of the study? Yes X No [ ]

#### **Section 4**

23. If the research involves observing research participants, will you seek their consent to being observed? Yes X No [ ] Not Applicable [ ]

24. Where questionnaires or interviews are used, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer? Yes [ ] No [ ] Not Applicable X

25. If the research involves data collection within a Social Work setting, will you seek permission from an appropriate manager? Yes [ ] No [ ] Not Applicable X

If you have answered 'NO' to ANY of the questions above, please give further details below (expand as necessary).

Please attach your proposal (Please see attached proposal)

Section 4: Applicant's Statement I am familiar with the RHUL and other appropriate subject-specific ethical guidelines. I undertake to inform the Committee of any changes to the protocol or the staffing of this project



Name: Melanie Hamilton-Perry Title of Your Project: **Gypsy and Traveller Attachment to People and Place: a contradiction in terms?**

Status: A member of staff? [ ] A Postgraduate Student? [X] An Undergraduate Student? [ ]

Lead Researcher: Melanie Hamilton-Perry

Signature: Date: ...31.05.2012

Print Name:.....Melanie Hamilton-Perry

Head of Department (or designate) statement of support (if project is to be forwarded to the College Ethics Committee)

Section 5: STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL Applicant:

Melanie Hamilton-Perry Department: Social Work

Title of project: **Gypsy and Traveller Attachment to People and Place: a contradiction in terms?**

Start Date: 01/02/2012

Please complete the appropriate section below:

1. This project has been considered and has been approved by the Department of Social Work for

Signed: ..... Print Name: .....

Date: ..... (Chair, Departmental Ethics Committee)

2. This project has been considered by the Royal Holloway, University of London Research Ethics Committee and is now approved for ..... months.

Signed: ..... Print Name: .....

Date: ..... (Chair, RHUL Ethics Committee)

3. This project has been approved by Chair's action and is authorised for ..... months.

Signed: ..... Print Name: ..... Date:

..... (Chair, RHUL Ethics Committee)

## Appendix I: References and Additional Resources

'Conducting research on the internet', Hewson, C. (2003). *The Psychologist*. 16(6). 290-293.

British Sociological Association Statement of Ethical Practice:

<http://www.britisoc.co.uk/equality/Statement+Ethical+Practice.htm>

Procedures for Data Protection: [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)

NHS Integrated Research Approval System (IRAS):

<https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/>

ESRC Research Ethics Framework:

[http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/ESRC\\_Re\\_Ethics\\_Frame\\_tcm6-11291.pdf](http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/ESRC_Re_Ethics_Frame_tcm6-11291.pdf)

Social Research Association (SRA) Ethical Guidelines: <http://www.the-sra.org.uk/documents/pdfs/ethics03.pdf>

Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=2172>

Criminal Records Bureau: [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

Economic and Social Data Service Guidance on informed consent:

<http://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/create/consent.asp#Written>

National Children's Bureau Guidelines for Research:

[http://www.ncb.org.uk/dotpdf/open%20access%20-%20phase%201%20only/research\\_guidelines\\_200604.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/dotpdf/open%20access%20-%20phase%201%20only/research_guidelines_200604.pdf)

The RESPECT Code of Practice for Ethical Research:

<http://www.respectproject.org/code/>

## **Research proposal**

### **Gypsies and Travellers and Attachment to People and Place: a contradiction in terms?**

For the purpose of this research, while respecting the diversity of all of the various Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups, I will refer to all groups simply by the term Traveller unless specification is necessary.

The aim of this research project is to explore the connection between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller lifestyles/ culture and recollections of early childhood relationships with parents/carers using the Adult Attachment Interview.

The sample will comprise 40 adults, thought likely to represent the main ways adults think about close relationships including how adults show high levels of disorganised close relationships in childhood.

We would expect connections between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller lifestyle/ culture to permeate during the interview.

### **The Main research question**

How do adult family members from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes to people and place in their childhoods?

### **Main research questions**

- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- How does the Traveller culture and way of life – effect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?
- Does the environment or place where families live effect how communities parent their children?

**Methodology** Central to the research process is the literature search, which will enable me to review and evaluate the published literature in my

proposed area.

The proposed study has evolved from the qualitative paradigm and will use interpretive phenomenological design. This design has been chosen because it is based on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, with an emphasis on the personal perspective and interpretation. This approach enables the researcher to understand the subjective experience and gain insights into people's actions and motivations by reducing accepted assumptions (Lester 1999).

I intend to present an overview of Gypsy Roma and Traveller social, cultural and historical diversity, together with detailed discussion on UK legislation and Government policies relating to Gypsies, Roma and Travellers. This will provide the social context for the research questions.

I intend to collate a concise family history and genograms where possible, for each person who participates in this study. This will provide the historical and cultural background for each case.

I will interview 40 adults from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

I will undertake training in Adult Attachment Interviews (AAI).

I am aware that the Adult Attachment Interview may need adapting for some participants with low literacy skills

Due to the nature of the data collected by phenomenological methods, this study will present detailed comments about Gypsy, Roma and Traveller parents accommodation status, their views on their status, along with the effect accommodation status has on attachment relationships within the families studied.

### **Sample Selection**

It is essential that all the participants have experience of the phenomenon being studied. The Travelling community is not a homogeneous group. Each group has its own slight cultural and traditional variations. Therefore participants will be chosen from a cross- section of both nomadic and settled Traveller families, from the various Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. I

have worked with the Traveller communities for the past 10 years and I am accepted within most Traveller groups. I have made it known to the various families that I am undertaking this research and that I am looking for volunteers to participate in this study. Several families have already volunteered to take part in this study. I am also intending to place an advert in the Traveller Times.

### **Ethical and moral considerations**

This study will be guided by the University's research ethics guidelines.

### **Rational behind the study**

There is a distinct lack of published literature exploring how Travelling families care for their children. Travellers face a lot of negative stereotyping, from the planning system, the Government and the public; multi-agency professionals sometimes do not see past illegal Traveller sites, lack of amenities and poor school attendance, and may fail to notice that most Traveller children may could be happy and secure within their families.

While undertaking a previous research project on the Health Needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Bedfordshire, I noted that Gypsy and Traveller children reported that they loved the freedom and stimulation of travelling but acknowledged the difficulties of enforced mobility. The children highlighted that the constant eviction left them feeling unsettled and insecure, their parents stressed and angry.

The resulting lack of basic utilities was also a problem. The children thought that the eviction process seemed pointless and unnecessary, creating more problems than it solved. The children who took part in this study with their parents appeared to have learnt, through experience, that they were not wanted by the settled society. Many of the housed Gypsy and Traveller children spoke about racism from neighbours as well as bullying at school in the form of verbal and physical abuse. Many children reported that their ethnic identity seemed to be unrecognised by the settled community, who refused to accept it as the children's birthright.

Many of the children had experienced having to hide their identity unless it was safe to share. (Bennett & Hamilton-Perry, 2010; Kiddle, 1999; Warrington, 2006).

Therefore if Gypsy and Traveller children report that they are made to feel unsettled and insecure due to the routine and regular evictions, will their parents' narratives of their childhoods reflect the same feelings of insecurity and of not being wanted by the settled community? Do adults feel the same emotions of insecurity every time that they are moved on? Can this be linked to unresolved trauma and loss? What is the long-term affect of these feelings on adults from the Travelling communities? Can a parent be emotionally available as an attachment figure when they are experiencing high levels of stress, due to their environment and accommodation status? Has this made families develop stronger bonds within the group to counteract these feelings?

We have recently observed the mass eviction of nearly 1000 people from Dale Farm in Basildon, which made families homeless, with no where (legal) to go, Social Workers and multi-agency professionals will benefit from an understanding of the likely impact on these children and their families. Many of the children were born at Dale Farm and have lived their whole lives there with their extended family.

## **Appendix 5: Information Sheet and Consent Form**

### **Information sheet for PhD research project: - How do adult family members, from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes in their childhoods?**

The aim of this research project is to explore the connection between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller lifestyles/ culture and recollections of early childhood relationships with parents/carers using the Adult Attachment Interview.

The sample will comprise 40 adults, thought likely to represent the main ways adults think about close relationships including how adults show high levels of disorganised close relationships in childhood.

We would expect connections between Gypsy, Roma and Traveller lifestyle/ culture to permeate during the interview.

#### **Main research questions**

- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that enforced mobility and constant eviction has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- How do adult Travellers describe the effect that the lack of mobility and loss of the traditional way of life has had on their family relationships during childhood?
- How does the Traveller culture and way of life – effect child rearing practices and attachment behaviours?
- Does the environment or place where families live effect how communities parent their children?

## **Participant consent from**

**Title of research project: How do adult family members, from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes in their childhoods?**

**Name of researcher and contact details:** Melanie Perry, Postgraduate Researcher Department of Social Work, Royal Holloway University of London

Egham Hill TW20 0EX.

**Name of participant:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. I agree to take part in the above research.
2. I have a) Read the participant information sheet, which is attached to this form. b) Had the participant information sheet read to me and the information it contained explained to me in a detailed manner.
3. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
4. I agree to the interviews being either filmed or audio recorded. I understand that if I feel uncomfortable being recorded, the researcher will respect feelings and will stop recording the interview.
5. I agree to interviews being audio recorded if my children are present, as I have been informed that their identity will remain confidential.
6. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.
7. I have been informed that the confidentiality and anonymity of the information that I provide will be guaranteed unless issues regarding the safety and well being of children and vulnerable adults are recorded.
8. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.
9. I have been provided with a copy of this form and a participant information



sheet.

**Data protection:** I agree to the researcher processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the research project as outlined to me.

**Name of participant**.....**Signed**.....**Date**.....

**Name of witness**.....**Signed**.....**Date**.....

You will be given a copy of this form for your own records.

**If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form below and return it to the main researcher.**

**Title of research project; How do adult family members, from the Traveller Communities think and talk about attachment processes in their childhoods?**

**I wish to withdraw from this study**

**Signed:.....**

**Date:.....**

## **Appendices 6 – Adapted AAI questions**

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today, to share with me some of your family history. To enable me to understand how you as a Gypsy Traveller think and talk about attachment processes to people and place in your childhood.

By Attachment process I mean, the bond/ close relationship with people who are emotionally important to you, as they cared for you when you were a small child. This could be your mother or another main care provider.

I am also interested in places, which are emotionally important to you.

Are you ok with this?

Could you start by helping me get to know your early family situation, and where you lived and so on?

Did you see much of your grandparents when you were little? Aunts/ uncles?

How many brothers and sister's do you have?

I would like to draw a genogram showing your family members, is this ok?

Can you tell me where you were born, whether you moved around much, what your family did at various times for a living?

## **Mobile**

Can you tell me your earliest memories of travelling?

Did you family follow set travelling circuits?

Who did your family travel with?

Can you tell me the route that your family took?

Do you still follow this travelling circuit – if not can you tell me, when you

stopped and the reasons?

### **Settled**

Has your family always been settled?

Can you tell me your first memories of being settled?

### **Family**

I'd like you to describe your relationship with your parents as a young child. If you could start from as far back as you can remember?

Can tell me, to which parent did you feel the closest, and why?

Why isn't there this feeling with the other parent?

I'd like to ask you about your early relationship with your family, and what you think about the way it might have affected you.

