

NO PLACE TO GO



TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION IN DUBLIN 1994



Old Navan Road October 1994

Price £3.00

Still **NO PLACE TO GO**

A SURVEY ON TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION IN DUBLIN 1994

The Dublin Accommodation Coalition with Travellers (DACT)
is a network of voluntary organisations working with Travellers in
the Dublin area who carried out the survey on sites and endorse
this written report:

Blanchardstown Travellers Support Group
Clondalkin Travellers Development Group
Crosscare
Dublin Committee for Travelling People - Youth Affairs
Dublin Travellers Education and Development Group (DTEDG)
Finglas Travellers Support Group
Irish Traveller Movement
Parish of Travelling People
Northside Travellers Support Group
Southside Travellers Action Group
Tallaght Travellers Support Group

Funding towards the cost of this publication was received from the
Combat Poverty Agency. The views expressed are those of the
authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Combat
Poverty Agency.

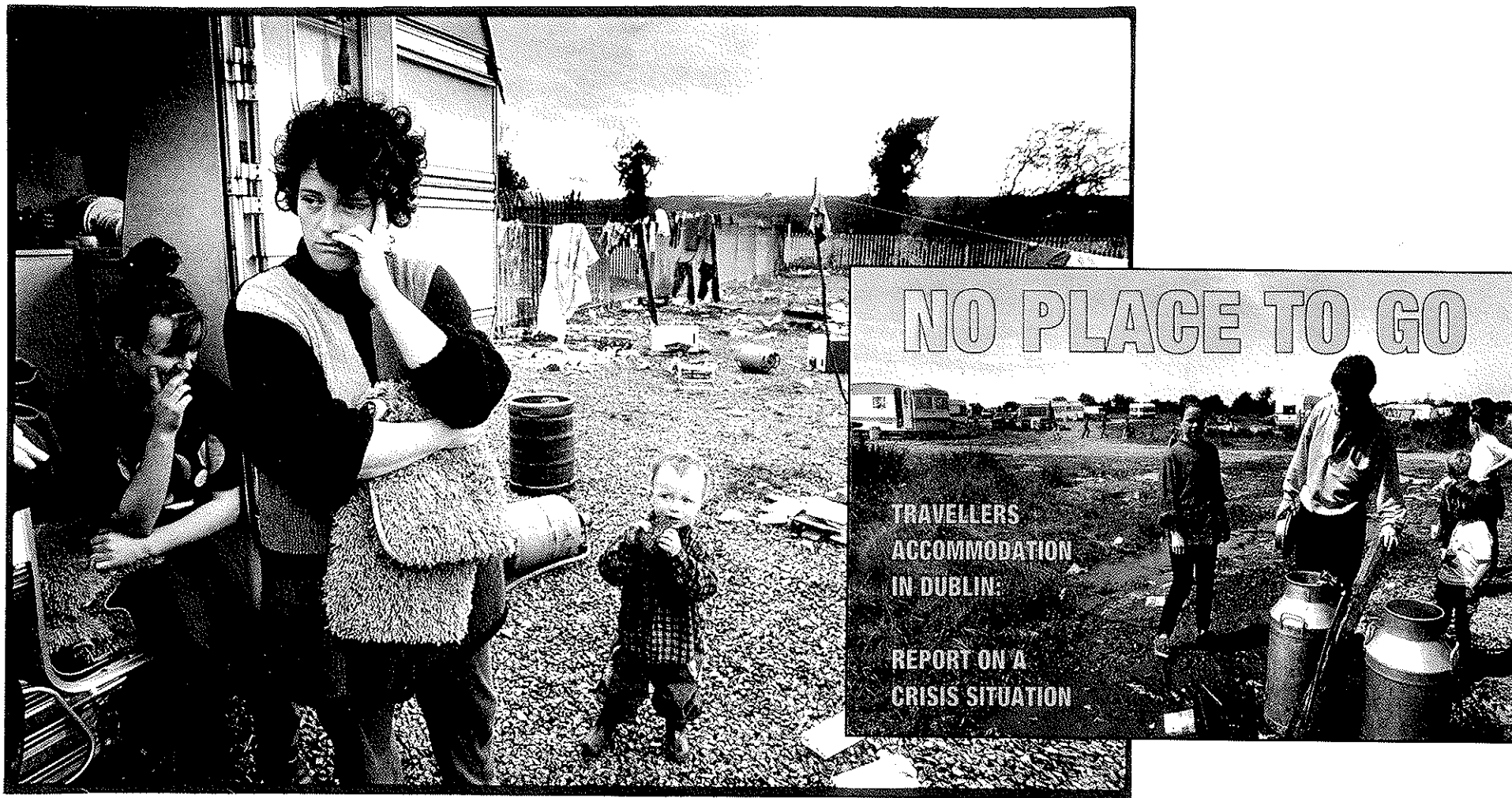
We acknowledge the co-operation of Travellers who answered the
survey questionnaires and who co-operated with the photographer.

We would like to thank the participants of the NOW Programme,
Exchange House for the use of the banners and quotes for their
book '*On the other side of the road*'.

Published 1994 by the Irish Traveller Movement
ISBN 0 9520155 4 4

Photographs by Derek Speirs/Report
Design and Layout by Pat Pidgeon

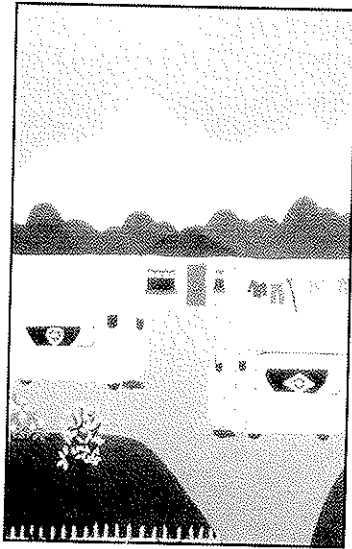
For further information contact:
ITM (Irish Traveller Movement),
C/o St Josephs Training Centre,
Barry Road,
Finglas,
Dublin 11.



Cappagh Field November 1994

Introduction

In 1991 a number of voluntary organisations working with Travellers in the Dublin area came together to express their concern about the appalling living conditions of hundreds of



"Travellers have always made a living from collecting and selling - scraping cars has been one way for Travellers to do this. So building halting sites without a place for scraping cars is like trying to bake a cake with no flour."

Alice McDonagh.

Traveller families and the lack of sufficient properly serviced sites. An independent survey of all sites and accommodation for Travellers (excluding standard housing) was carried out and published in 1992 as "No Place to Go" and was launched by the Lord Mayor in the Mansion House. The following reasons were highlighted as a rationale for this independent survey:

- 1 The continued increase in the Traveller population in Dublin especially in the Clondalkin and Blanchardstown areas.
- 2 A recognition that the official figures issued by local authorities did not correspond with the actual number of families as experienced by people on the ground. Figures for families in standard housing are especially unreliable. Some families move in and out of standard housing very quickly. Some local authorities count families who have long since left housing. It is not at all clear what group of families are being
- 3 counted where standard housing is concerned. Therefore, families in standard housing are not included in this survey.
- 4 A need to document exactly what services or lack of services are being provided on the large temporary sites such as Cruiserath, Cappagh Field and Deansrath by the local authorities.
- 5 A need to get as accurate a figure as possible of the number of families still living in unacceptable conditions and awaiting site accommodation.
- 6 A desire to highlight the fact that hundreds of Traveller families still live without toilets, electricity or proper washing facilities in Dublin.
- 7 To document the contrast between the number of families in need of accommodation and the proposed number of sites in local authorities plans for sites.

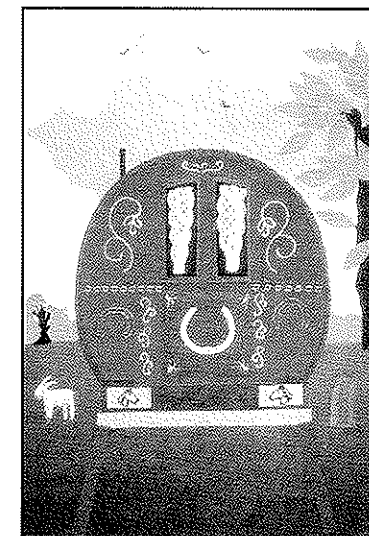
We feel that these arguments are still pertinent and therefore decided to carry out a similar independent survey in 1994. The results of which are documented in this publication aptly called *"Still No Place To Go"*.

DACT (Dublin Accommodation Coalition with Travellers) has undertaken work at a number of levels over the past three years.

- Organised meetings between local authority officials, politicians and Traveller groups.
- Delegations from DACT made oral presentations at Dublin Corporation and Dublin County Council meetings.
- Held protests to highlight the appalling living conditions of Travellers in Dublin.
- Made a written response to the Programme for Government and to the Task Force on Travellers.

- Wrote to new local authorities seeking information in how they intended addressing Traveller accommodation issues and later made oral presentations to new local authorities.
- Lobbied politicians about Traveller accommodation situation and highlighted issues in the media.
- Took up incidents in particular areas and offered support to Traveller groups.

DACT is publishing *"Still No Place To Go"* to highlight the need for urgent and comprehensive government action and to encourage other groups to take up Traveller accommodation issues.



"You could have 20 - 30 wagons camped along an old boreen. It was a lovely thing to watch them all with their small campfires lighting at night. It's lovely to see the old wagons. It brings back lots of memories."

Nanny Lynch

1. Background

On the 10th of March 1993 the U.N Commission on Human Rights unanimously adopted the following resolution on forced evictions.

1. *Affirms that the practice of forced evictions constitutes a gross violation of human rights, in particular the right to adequate housing:*

2. *Urges Governments to undertake immediate measures, at all levels, aimed at eliminating the practice of forced evictions:*

3. *Also urges Governments to confer legal security of tenure to all persons currently threatened with forced eviction and to adopt all necessary measures giving full protection against forced evictions, based upon effective participation, consultation and negotiation with affected persons or groups:*

4. *Recommends that all Governments provide immediate restitution, compensation and/or appropriate and sufficient alternative accommodation or land, consistent with their wishes or needs, to persons and communities which have been forcibly evicted, following mutually satisfactory negotiations with the affected persons or groups:*

Unfortunately, the experience of forced evictions is still a common one for Travellers in the Greater Dublin area, as it is for Travellers in many parts of the country. In addition there have been a series of violent incidents



Eviction Coldcut Road, Clondalkin 20th May 1993



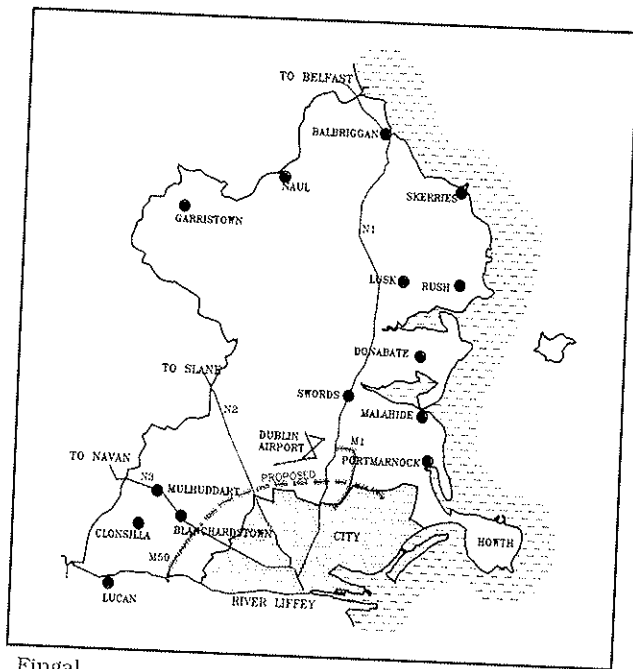
Coldcut Road 20th May 1993

involving attacks on Travellers carried out by unknown groups. These vigilante type activities are related to the failure to meet accommodation needs. The continued crisis in appropriate Traveller accommodation especially in the Greater Dublin area convinced D.A.C.T. of the need to update the survey carried out in 1992 and published as *No Place to Go*. D.A.C.T. welcomes the current Government commitment that all Travellers should be accommodated by the year 2,000. We also strongly endorse the recommendations in the Interim Report of the Task Force on Travelling People 1994, that a national accommodation agency should be established and that one of the functions of this agency should be to monitor the provision of appropriate accommodation for Travellers country wide.

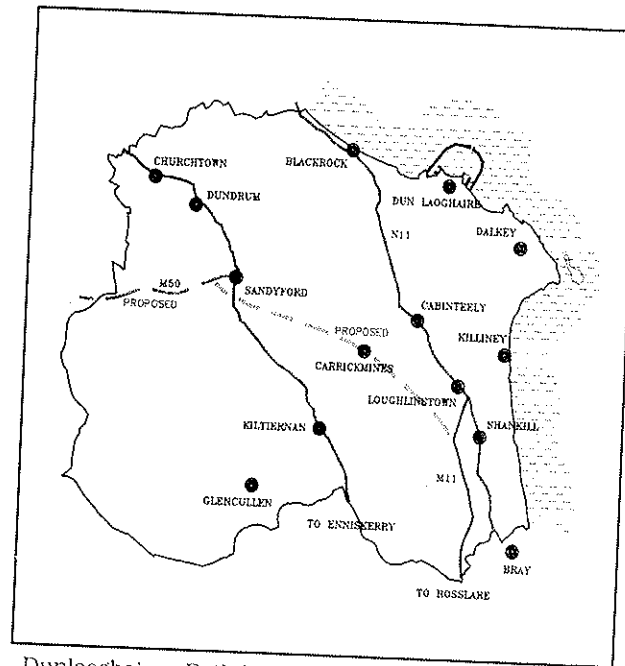
This current survey was carried out on the 14th and 15th of March 1994 and covered all of the sites official, unofficial, serviced and unserviced in the greater Dublin area. It also includes group housing schemes. A standardised questionnaire was used in the survey. The survey was carried out by the members of the voluntary groups affiliated to D.A.C.T. There was a good response to the questionnaire and information was received from every site in the area. This was an independent survey which was carried out to highlight the continued crisis in Traveller accommodation in Dublin and to identify trends in the type of accommodation solutions being promoted by the four Dublin local authorities. Families in standard housing are not included in this survey.



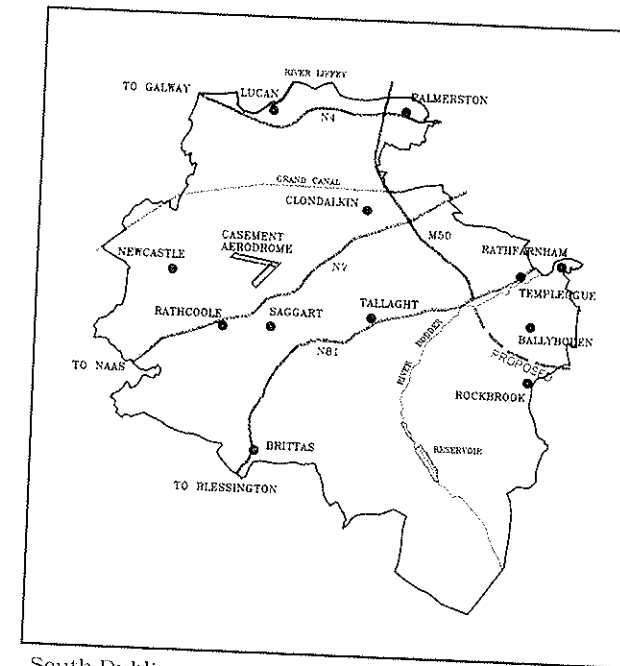
Coldcut Road 20 May 1993



Fingal



Dunlaoghaire - Rathdown



South Dublin

2. New Dublin Local Authorities

Since the publication of *No Place to Go*, in 1992 Dublin County Council has been split up into 3 new local authorities. They are: Fingal County Council on the Northside, South Dublin County Council taking in Tallaght and Clondalkin and Dunlaoghaire / Rathdown which includes Rathfarnham and Dundrum in their administration area. The survey findings are broken down according to the local authority responsible for each site. Dublin Corporation is the fourth local authority in the greater Dublin area.

No Place to Go made reference to these local government changes which were proposed at the time and expressed the hope that the creation of these three new local authorities would not result in a situation where

each of these authorities attempt to deny responsibility for Travellers' accommodation needs and even attempt to move them from one local authority area to another. Unfortunately, there is some evidence that this type of thinking has already surfaced with suggestions that each of the new authorities should have a fair quota of the problem. This is a continuation of the concept of "Spreading the Burden" referred to in *No Place to Go*. It is worth re-stating the serious problems this concept gives rise to.

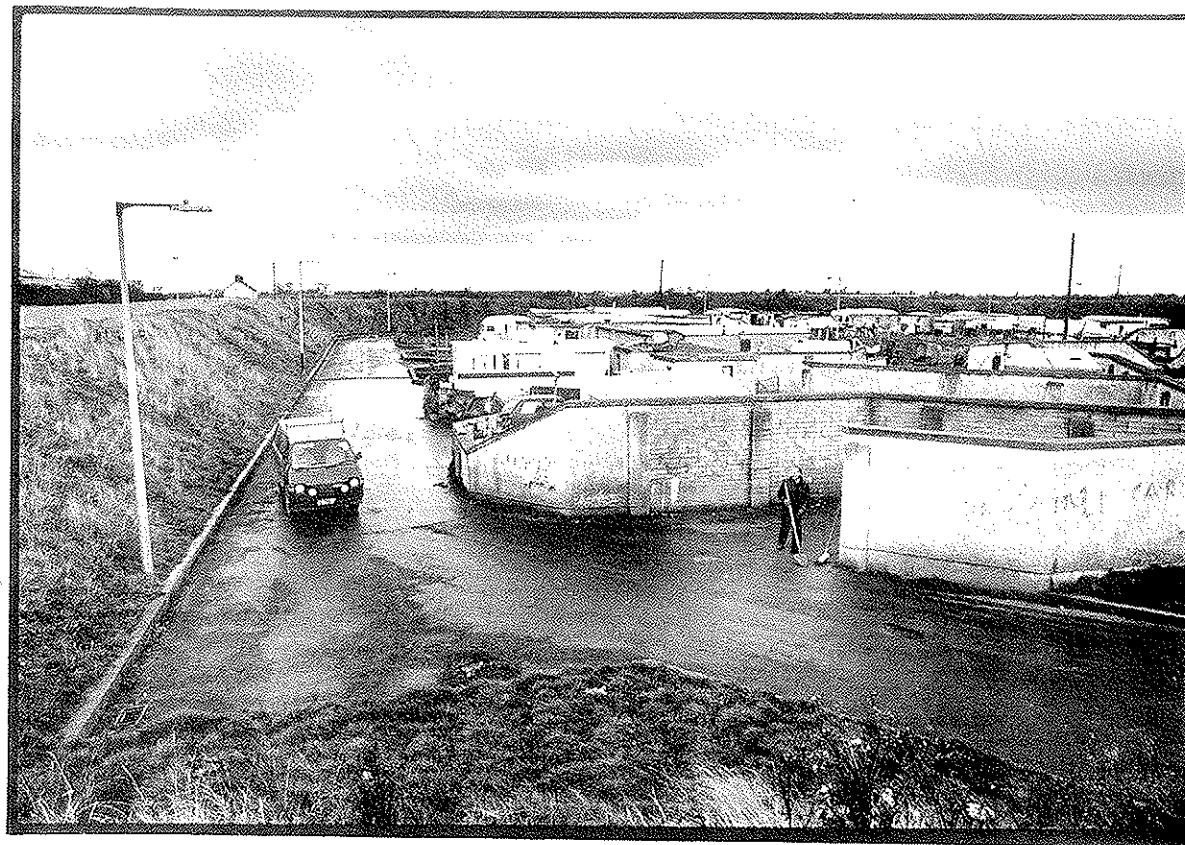
D.A.C.T. is aware that the new local authorities are in the process of drawing up strategic plans in relation to Travellers in their areas. Consultation with D.A.C.T. and Traveller support groups is essential if these plans are to be effective.

3. "Spreading the Burden"

This concept refers to local authorities policies of "spreading the burden" of Traveller sites evenly between electoral areas and now between adjoining local authorities. Official local authority policy in the Dublin area, adopted in 1986, by the then Dublin County Council is that there should be no more than two small sites per electoral ward. Although we believe that electoral wards with no site provision need to be challenged, this policy is problematic. It views Travellers as a problem to be spread out among the "normal" population. It encourages racist attitudes and anti-Traveller agitation and also gives rise to a number of practical problems.

- Sites are frequently located in an isolated area to "hide" them from the settled population. They are situated at a distance from shops, schools and all community services. The disgraceful temporary sites in Finglas at Cappagh Field and Cruiserath in Blanchardstown are prime examples of this policy. This policy greatly increases the cost factor in serviced site provision because basic infrastructure services have to be brought to isolated areas.

- The Travellers strong preference for small extended family sites in traditional camping places is more often ignored than respected in order to appease the prejudices of the majority population. Sites are proposed in areas where Travellers have never camped and the "quota" policy means that provision lags far behind the need in areas such as Clondalkin, Tallaght and Blanchardstown.



Ballycoolin official halting site November 1994

- It creates divisions between residents in different areas; each area stating that they have taken their share of the burden. It also encourages racist and anti-Traveller attitudes by portraying Travellers as a problem to be shared out.

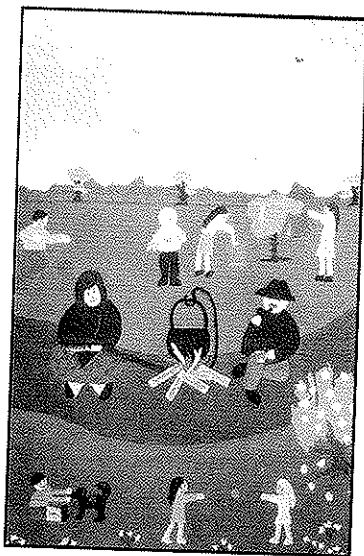
Travellers should be consulted about the location, size and design of the site and group housing schemes. Compatibility should be taken into account in allocating sites and bays to families.

4. The Move to Dublin.

The survey showed that there were 652 Traveller families with approximately 3,000 children under 18 years in the greater Dublin area. Families in standard housing were not included. This is an overall increase of 46 families in the two year period since the last survey. This is a tiny increase in total numbers and demonstrates that the Dublin local authorities' claims that they are being inundated by Travellers and that they cannot be expected to provide accommodation for them all cannot be substantiated by the facts. In the context of a greater Dublin population of over a million people, it can be seen that 652 Traveller families is an extremely small group of people.

While approximately a quarter of the Traveller population now live in the greater Dublin area, the fact is that over a third of the settled population have also chosen to live in this area too, for all of the acceptable reasons that attract people to a large city: work opportunities, leisure facilities and all the benefits attached to living in a city. Travellers gravitate to the city for the same reasons as settled people, aggravated in some cases by the lack of provision for them in other areas.

The important point is that the actual number of Traveller families in the greater Dublin area is tiny compared even to the numbers on the housing waiting lists of the Dublin local authorities. They could all be satisfactorily accommodated quickly and at the expense of the central exchequer if the political will was there.



"Campfires are not allowed on halting sites - we miss the campfires. If you started a campfire today on a site, you'd have every Traveller out of their trailer to gather around for a chat!"

Kathleen McDonagh

5. Temporary Sites are not the answer

The survey results show an increase of 64 families on temporary sites in the two year period. In addition, there are plans to open at least three more large temporary sites in the immediate future each catering for over 30 families. Work is already under way on these temporary sites in Tallaght and at Lynchs Lane in Clondalkin. A site has been identified for a third large temporary site in Blanchardstown.

The problems with these temporary sites were set out in *No Place to Go*. However they need to be re-stated strongly as it is clear from this survey and from the experience of Travellers here that the Dublin local authorities have decided to proceed with a policy of temporary site provision for large numbers of families which is unacceptable to Travellers and to D.A.C.T.

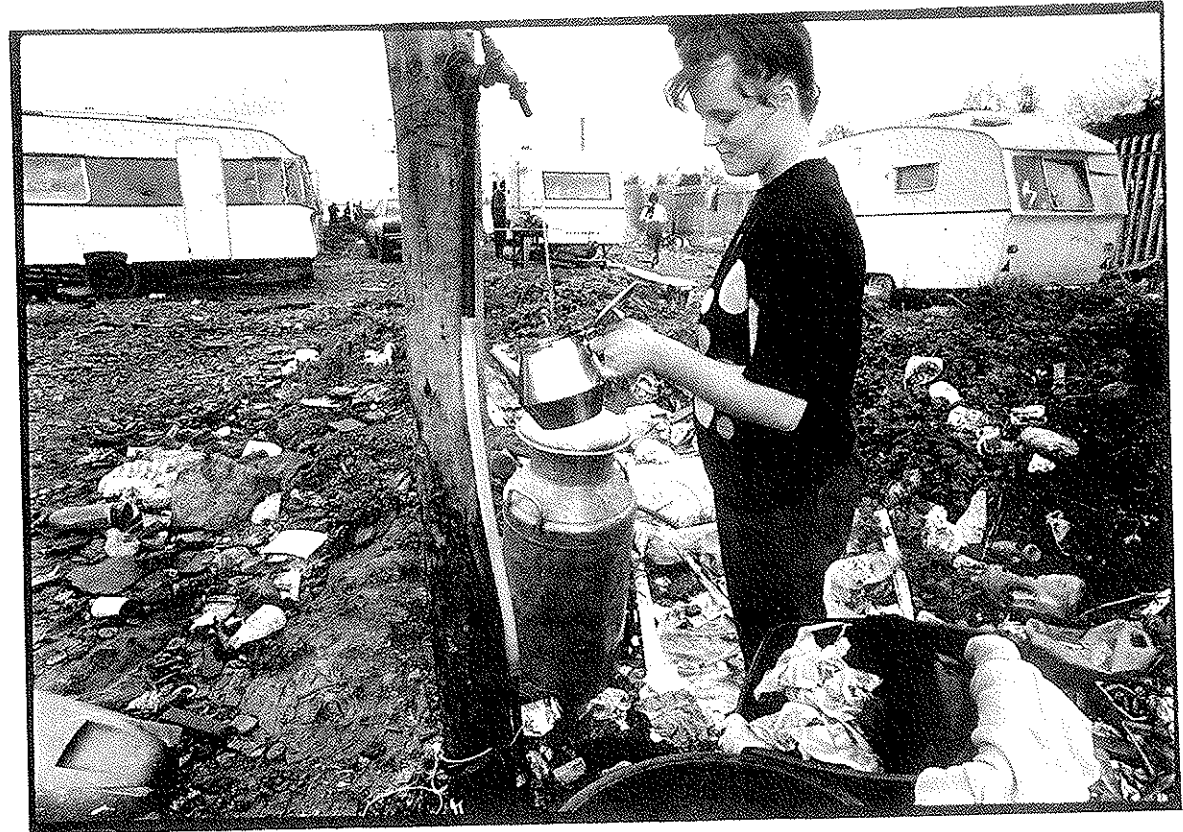
Temporary sites have minimal facilities, they do not have individual electricity supplies hence no hot water, showers or baths. They are usually surrounded by banks of earth and dirt. The large temporary sites at Deansrath Clondalkin and Cruiserath Mulhuddart and the Cappagh Field Finglas resemble badly maintained refugee camps with large numbers of children being reared in squalor and misery. They constitute a policy of building shanty towns with public money. There are no fire precautions on these sites despite the well-known fire hazards involved in living in trailers in cramped conditions and because there is no electricity, many families are forced to use candles to provide light

in their trailers which is very dangerous. In addition, there have been several incidents of both adults and children falling and injuring themselves in the dark fields. Temporary sites are not acceptable to Travellers for the following reasons:

- "Temporary" has a very strong tendency to become permanent where local authorities are concerned. Cruiserath site in Blanchardstown is a prime example of this tendency. It had a three year temporary time span by court order. This time limit is nearly a year over and no more permanent provision, or even plans, for such provision are in place by Fingal County Council.
- Providing sites without individual electricity supply is totally unacceptable in 1994. Because it means that none of these sites has showers or baths.
- Surrounding bays and sites with mounds of earth, as is the case in most existing temporary sites, creates dirt and muck and increases the rat infestation.
- Stones as hard surface are dangerous for children who injure themselves on them and they are destructive of footwear and vehicles.
- Large temporary sites almost inevitably become ghettos because of the poor standard of living which increases Travellers social isolation.
- Large numbers of unrelated families sharing such



Cappagh temporary site November 1994



Cappagh temporary site November 1994



Dunsink Lane October 1994

temporary sites leads to friction and inter-group fighting and consequent stress and hardship for individual families and reinforcement of negative stereotypes of Travellers.

- Such sites have the potential to become “no-go areas” which results in a situation where no auxiliary services (e.g. social and health services) are provided for the families who live on them.

6. Travellers Culture

Site accommodation needs to take account of Travellers' culture, lifestyle and ethnic identity. In practice, this means consultation with Traveller groups and families for whom they are intended about the location, design and size of sites which must have all the usual facilities necessary for decent living conditions in the 1990's. Specifically sites must provide:

- A water tap for each family.
- Individual flush toilets for each family.
- Showers or baths separate from the toilet area.
- Size of service units and houses to be adequate for use by large families.
- Sites not to be situated in isolated areas or surrounded by high walls or mounds of earth.
- Sufficient space in each bay or yard for parking lorries and vans.
- Fire precaution on all sites.
- Work space for Travellers' economic activities (heavy scrap should be catered for separately) on each bay or in the yard of each house.

7. Survey Findings

The Dublin Accommodation Coalition with Travellers Survey - Dublin City and County March 1994

Families in standard housing not included

Total number of families	652	
Roadside	173	26.5%
Group Housing	119	18%
Permanent Serviced Halting Site	161	25%
Temporary Official Sites with Minimal Facilities	199	30.5%

(Of these figures 52 families or 8% are doubling up on official serviced sites and group housing ie camped illegally.)

FACILITIES

Without flush toilets	231	36%
Without toilets	180	28%
Without electricity	345	53%
Without bath or showers	345	53%

Without Refuse Collection of any kind	60	10%
Cold Water only	345	53%
No Water Supply	101	16%
Total number of children under 18 (Just over 4 children per family)	2,686	(approx)
No public phone on the site	652	100%
Fire precautions on site in working order	66	10%
No fire precautions	376	58%
Space set aside for scrap trading	33	5%

The Dublin Corporation Area

There were:

- 171 families, 26% of the total in the greater Dublin area.
- 75 or 44% were in group housing schemes.
- 60 or 35% were on permanent official sites
- 31 or 18% were on a roadside or unofficial sites
- 5 or 3% were on temporary official sites.
- There were 20 families doubling up either on group housing schemes or official halting sites.

Fingal County Council

There were :

- 213 families, 33% of the total in the Greater Dublin area.
- No group housing schemes in this area. One is under construction at Ladyswell for 10 families.
- 27 families or 12.68% in permanent serviced halting sites.
- 109 families or 51.2% in temporary sites.
- 77 families or 36.15% on the roadside.
- 14 families were doubling up on the permanent official sites.
- It can be seen that the Fingal area has the largest number of families of the four local authorities and proportionally the least amount of permanent serviced site accommodation.

Dun Laoighaire/ Rathdown

There were :

- 67 families, 10% of the total number in the Greater Dublin area.
- 36 families or 53.7% in group housing.
- 11 families or 16.4% on permanent official sites.

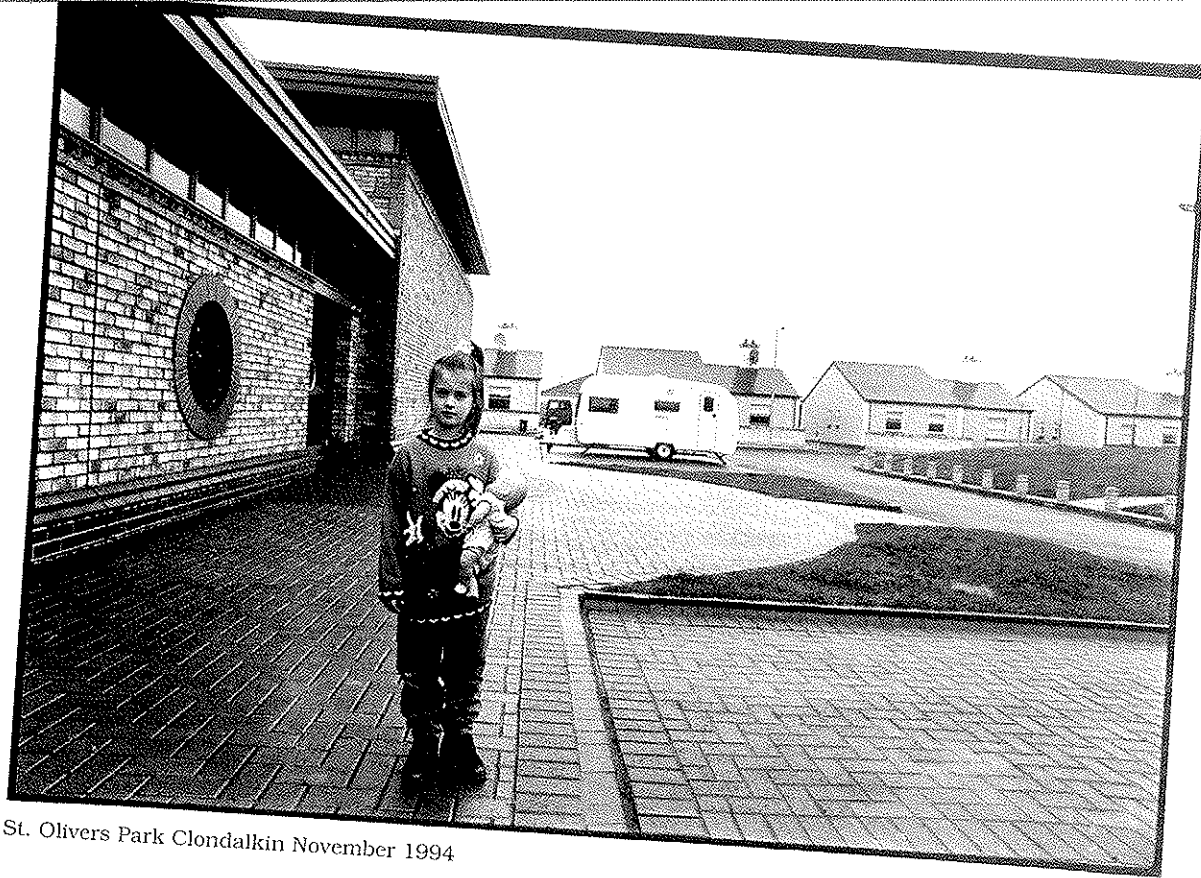
- 4 families or 6% on temporary sites.
- 16 families or 24% on the roadside.
- 8 families were doubling up on official sites or group housing schemes.

South Dublin County Council

There were:

- 201 families, 31% of the total.
- 8 families or 4% were in group housing.
- 63 families or 31.3% in permanent official sites.
- 81 families or 40.3% on temporary sites.
- 49 families or 24.4% on the roadside.
- There were 12 families doubling up on official sites.

The number of families doubling up on official sites is already included in the number given for respective sites. It is included to illustrate the extent of the demand for site accommodation and also to point out the pressure on facilities this overcrowding causes.



St. Olivers Park Clondalkin November 1994

Analysis of Findings

There was an overall increase of just 46 families in the Greater Dublin area in the two year period from 1992 to 1994. Almost all of this increase can be attributed to natural increase.

There has been a slight decrease in the number of families in unofficial unserviced roadside camps from

208 families in 1992 to 173 families in 1994, a drop of just 35 families on the roadside in that period.

There has been a sharp increase in the number of families on temporary official sites with minimum facilities from 126 families in 1992 to 199 families in 1994. This is a most disturbing finding and confirms that the Dublin local authorities now have a policy of providing this kind of unacceptable accommodation.

Although there has been a small number of new sites built in the two year period such as Porterstown in Clonsilla catering for five families and a five family site on the Naas Road, and St Oliver's Park in Clondalkin, other older sites such as St Margarets Ballymun and Dunsink halting site in Finglas are being re-furbished and some of the families from Ballymun had to go back on the roadside in the interim. Because of this there has been an actual increase of only eight families in proper fully serviced accommodation either in group housing schemes or permanent official halting sites from 272 families in 1992 to 280 in 1994.

This points to the urgent need to greatly increase the pace of appropriate site provision given the commitment by the Government that all Traveller families would be accommodated by the year 2,000. Unless there is a dramatic improvement in the pace of permanent site and group housing provision, there is no possibility of this commitment being fulfilled in the Greater Dublin area.

8. Current Local Authority Plans for Sites in the Greater Dublin Area

The break-up of Dublin County Council into three new local authorities which took place officially at the beginning of this year has cast some doubt over the site programme which had been adopted by Dublin County Council. The new authorities are carrying out a review of Travellers' accommodation in their areas. It is still not clear whether the new authorities consider themselves bound to deliver on the agreed programme. Even if this agreed programme is adhered to it will fall short of current needs and does not allow at all for the projected population increase which although very small comparatively needs to be provided for.

The Programme for Government adopted in 1993 makes a commitment to have all Travellers' accommodated by the year 2,000, less than six years away. The Minister for Local Government has also announced that the local authorities who do not make provision for Travellers' in their housing plans will have their housing budget cut. It remains to be seen how effective this will prove as a strategy to persuade reluctant local authorities to carry out their statutory duties in relation to Travellers' accommodation needs.

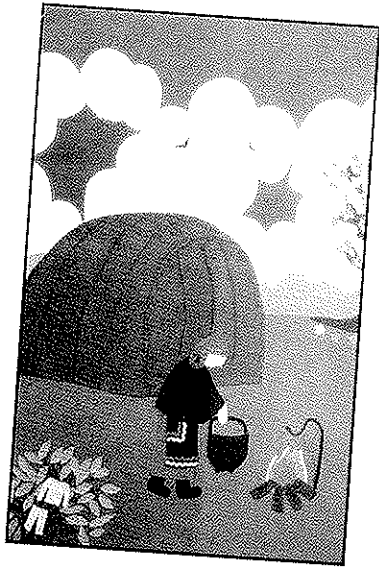
The danger, which this survey points to, is that local authorities in Dublin especially will increasingly resort to the provision of large temporary sites. The level of proposed official site and group housing provision is



Avila park Finglas November 1994

nothing like enough for the needs in Tallaght, Clondalkin and Blanchardstown.

Dublin Corporation is refurbishing a number of its official sites such as St Margarets Ballymun, Labre Park Ballyfermot and Avila Park and Dunsink both in Finglas. There are plans to do the same at Belcamp halting site. However, it should be noted that these plans have been in existence for over three years without any work being done despite the appalling state of the Belcamp halting site in particular. There are also plans to build a further ten houses at Cara



"You'd travel all over the country - summer and winter. You'd never be done travelling and one of the nicest parts of staying in the tent was listening to the noise of the rain hitting off the canvas at night."

Mary O'Rourke

group housing, it is doubtful if such a concentration of families in one small part of Coolock is the best way of meeting this need.

Since the survey was done in March 1994, building has started on the sites at Avila Park, Labre Park and Dunsink. This development is welcomed by D.A.C.T. The re-development of St. Olivers Park, Clondalkin by Dublin Corporation is also very welcome because of its excellent design and standard of facilities. The design owes much to Clondalkin Travellers Development Group who assisted the women from St. Olivers Park to design a model for the re-development of their site as far back as 1990. The Group received an award in the President Robinson award scheme in 1993. This is a clear example of the benefit of involving Travellers in the design of sites and group housing schemes.

Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown have inherited three small sites and two group housing schemes from Dublin County Council. There are plans to develop a small two family site at Monkstown and also plans for two more small sites at Clonskea and Blackrock. Despite the very small number of Traveller families in it's administrative area, there is still insufficient site accommodation for the 25 plus families who need it.

Fingal County Council now has the largest number of families at 213. There are no group housing schemes at all in this area. One is now being developed for 10 families at Ladyswell, Mulhuddart. The temporary site at Cruiserath where there are 21 families is past the legal time span and there are no plans either to

upgrade it and make it permanent and official or to provide alternative official sites for the families there. There were 46 families on the roadside and fourteen doubling up on the sites in Fingal at the time of the D.A.C.T survey for whom there is no permanent provision planned. In addition, some of the existing temporary provision in this area especially the Cappagh field, is far too minimal.

There were 201 families in South Dublin County Council 49 families were on the roadside and 12 were doubling up on the site. Again, the nature of the temporary site provision at Deansrath is totally unacceptable. Two more temporary sites are currently being developed in South County Dublin in the Tallaght field and at Lynchs Lane Clondalkin. Unless the facilities are greatly improved beyond existing temporary sites, these sites will also prove to be unacceptable and raise questions about resource allocation to such inadequate provision.

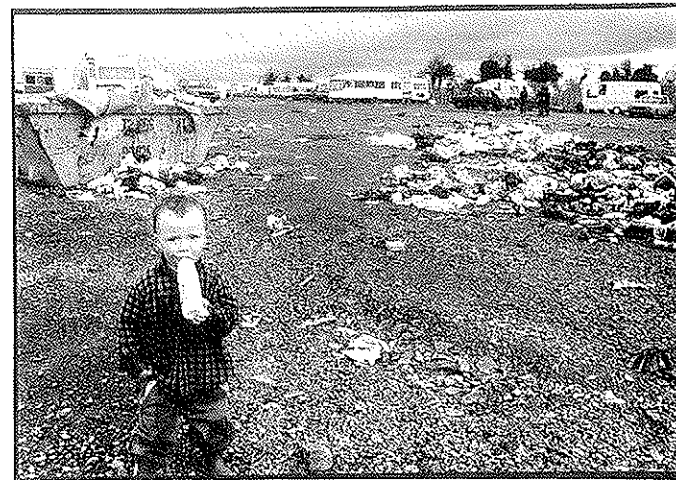
Permanent site and group housing scheme provision is lagging a great deal behind need in the Clondalkin and Blanchardstown areas in particular. There are extended family groups in both of these areas who have lived in Dublin for twenty or thirty years who find themselves being hounded from one unofficial site to another with no prospect of secure accommodation. They are undoubtedly in a crisis situation with all the anxiety and stress associated with such a situation. Frustration and anger at the injustice of their treatment are now emotions commonly expressed by these families.



Belcamp halting site April 1994



Cara Park Group Housing April 1994



Cappagh field November 1994

9. Projected Population Increase

All surveys over the past decade of the Traveller population have indicated a continued rise in the population and a continued rise especially in the Dublin area. The Monitoring Body Report 1990 notes a national figure of 34% increase in the number of families on the roadside between November 1988 and November 1990. This population increase is due to a number of factors.

- High rate of natural increase with an average of 8 children per family. (E.R.S.I Report July 1986) (There is some evidence of a decrease in average family size but it is still very much higher than that of the settled population).
- The fact that over 50% of the Traveller population are under 15. (E.R.S.I Report July 1986),
- Evidence of some small movement back from England for a number of reasons.
- There were 26 marriages in the Dublin area alone in 1993. This means that at least this number of new families, will be seeking accommodation on sites and group housing schemes.
- Very few Travellers in the Dublin area are either

opting for or getting local authority housing. The fact is that there is a housing crisis in Dublin with over 3,000 people on the housing waiting list. In these circumstances, standard housing cannot be seen as a realistic alternative except for a tiny number of Traveller families in Dublin.

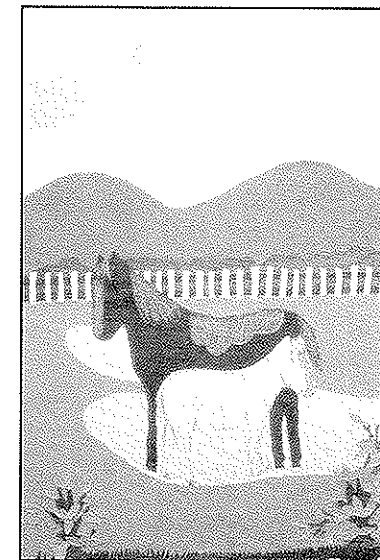
10. Slow Rate of Progress in Site Provision in Dublin

The slow rate of progress in site provision identified in *No Place To Go* has not improved substantially. In the two years since the publication of *No Place To Go*, Dublin Corporation has re-developed the halting site and group housing scheme at St Olivers Park Clondalkin catering for twenty five families. Fingal has built a halting site for five families at Porterstown and South County Dublin have built two five family halting sites at Belgard Road Tallaght and Turnpike on the Naas Road. Dun Laoghaire /Rathdown have built a two family site at Sallynoggin. This accounts for forty two families in two years, four families less than the increase in numbers in the Greater Dublin area in the same period. All other provision in this period has been of a temporary nature with minimal facilities, which should not be counted as site provision. There has been an increase in this temporary type of provision but it is of little or any value in meeting Travellers' accommodation needs in an acceptable and responsible way.

11. Deteriorating Relationships

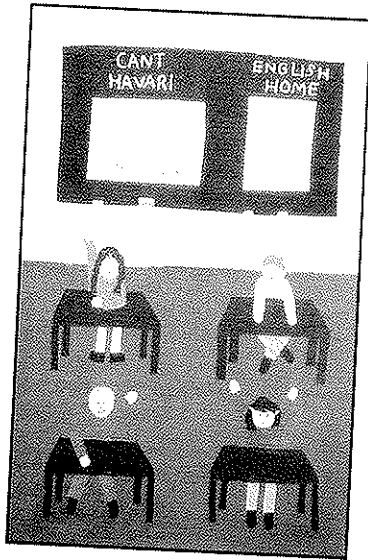
In many areas relationships between Travellers and the local authorities in the Dublin area have deteriorated over the past number of years because of the continued failure of the local authorities to provide acceptable and appropriate accommodation. Local authority officials dealing with Travellers in Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown and on some sites in South County Dublin and Fingal will now only visit these sites when they are accompanied by the employees of a private security firm. This is clearly a very expensive way of delivering a service and raises questions about the use of public money to pay private security firms to act as bodyguards to Council officials. Resources allocated to this security arrangement means less resources are available for sites, accommodation and development

This whole issue illustrates the urgent need for training for local authority staff in interpersonal relations and in anti-racist work. Moving large numbers of families into badly serviced ghettos, usually against their will, has contributed greatly to the poor state of relationships which exists in several areas at present. Where Travellers are camped unofficially or in large 'ghetto type' temporary sites there is evidence of frightening vigilante incidents and deteriorating relationships between local residents and Travellers.



"Horses have always been part of Travellers life. To some Travellers horses are still as important today as they were years ago. But today there are no places for horses on sites. Travellers who still keep horses have to find a field for them."

Margaret O'Rourke



"If children are taught from an early age to respect different cultures, then as adults they will be able to recognise and celebrate difference. That will make for a better future for us all."

Bridget Ward

12. Recommendations

- The Government should publicly acknowledge the crisis in accommodation for Travellers revealed in this report and should establish an emergency fund for the immediate provision of good quality permanent halting sites, group housing schemes and transient sites throughout the country.
- A National Plan for a network of sites throughout the country is needed immediately. The responsibility to provide these sites needs to be made mandatory.
- A Traveller Accommodation Agency should be established without delay to monitor the provision of accommodation nationwide, as recommended in the Interim Report of the Task Force on Travelling people in February 1994.
- Transient sites with good quality facilities are needed for more nomadic families.
- The Department of the Environment should give grants for the maintenance and upgrading of permanent sites and group housing schemes.
- The Department of the Environment should refuse funding for further temporary sites as such sites are unacceptable to Travellers because of the poor standard of facilities.
- Existing temporary sites should be upgraded where appropriate to permanent site standards in consultation with Traveller residents.
- A moratorium on all evictions and forced movement of families should be declared immediately in keeping with the U.N. Commission on Human Rights Declaration against forced evictions.
- Emergency provision of basic facilities for families camped illegally is needed until permanent, adequate accommodation is provided.
- Contracts for site development need to include time-scales for the completion of sites. Financial penalties should be imposed for delayed completion. Ongoing supervision and monitoring is needed in the building of sites.
- Sites for Traveller accommodation should be integrated into the local environment and should be of good quality design. Proper landscaping should be an essential element so that the site is not only functional but also pleasant to look at and to live in.
- Financial penalties should be imposed on local authorities who fail to provide good quality, culturally appropriate accommodation for Travellers in their area. These penalties should be increased progressively up to the year 1999.

- The recognition of Travellers ethnic identity and nomadic lifestyle needs to be translated into practical action through genuine consultation with Travellers.

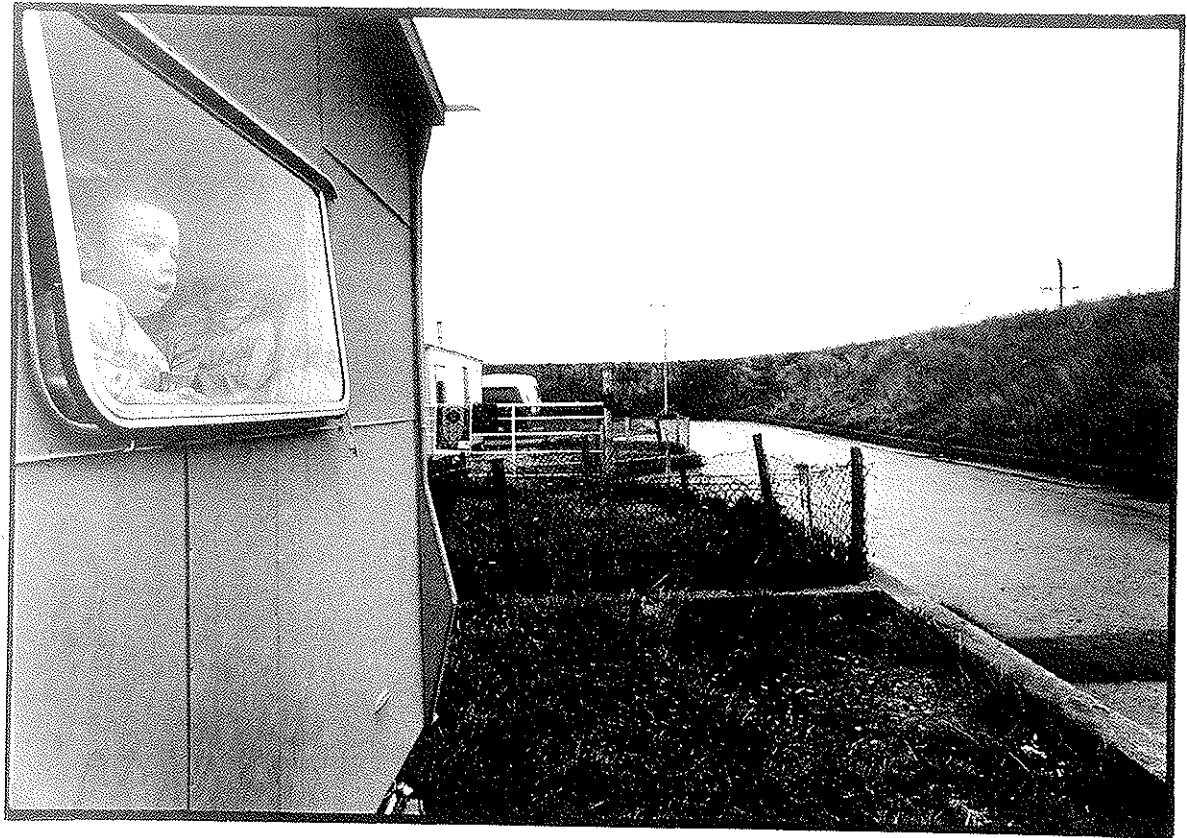
- Statutory bodies with responsibility for providing accommodation for Travellers should co-operate actively in a spirit of partnership with Travellers and Traveller organisations to ensure satisfactory outcomes.

- All accommodation provision should be designed to facilitate Travellers lifestyle.

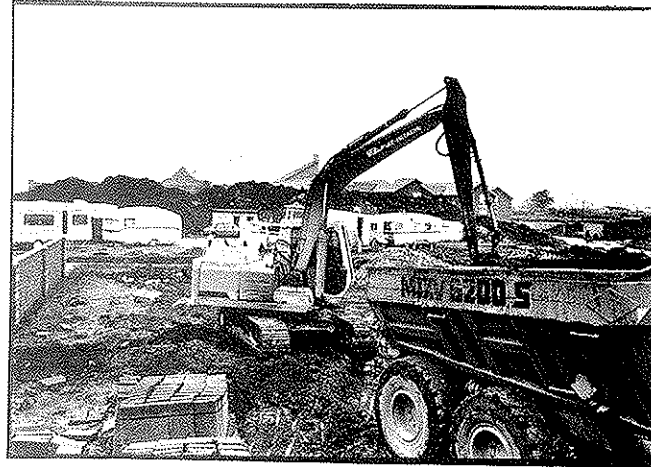
- Forward planning for future population growth in the Dublin is essential. This planning should be catered for without resorting to alarmist statements or solutions.

- Every effort should be made by statutory bodies to confront racist attitudes to Travellers whether these attitudes came from residents associations, politicians or their own workers.

- In parallel with government policy of tenant participation in estate management a committment should be given to Traveller participation in design, planning and maintenance of sites. This Traveller tenant participation should happen at national and local levels.

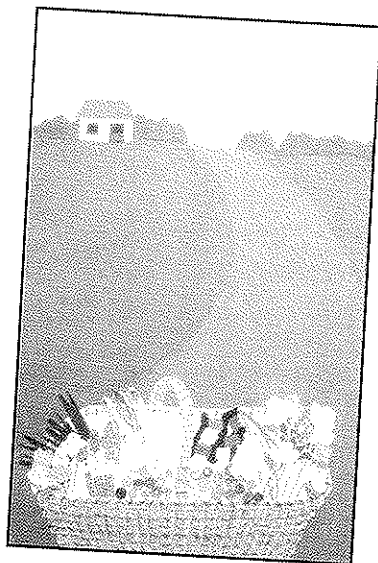


Ballycoolin November 1994



Tallaght November 1994

Accommodation Survey



"Then came along the super-markets, the pound shops and the plastic buckets - and that put an end to the Swag Basket, just like the plastic flowers have put an end to the paper flowers that the Traveller women made and sold".

Bridget Collins

- A Name & location of site:
 B Local authority responsible for site?
 Official,
 unofficial or temporary:
 How long?
- 1 Observe the location to see what surrounds it.
 Housing?
 Roads?
 Railways?
 Canals?
 Pylons?
 Dumps?
 Other?
 - 2 How far are the nearest:
 shops?
 pub?
 bus stop?
 - 3 What sort of walls or boundaries are around the site?
 - 4 Is there a caretaker on the site? Is it a Traveller?
 What responsibilities does the caretaker have?
 At what times is the caretaker present on the site?
 - 5 Is there construction work being carried out on the site/plans to develop it?
 - 6 Are there any empty bays/houses on the site?
 - 7 Is there any dumping on the site?
 - 8 What material is used to surface the site?
 - 9 How much is the rent for the site?
 - 10 Type of accommodation:
 How many?
 Made of what materials?
 In what condition?
 - 11 How many taps are on the site?
 Are they leaking?
 Hoses?
 - 12 What toilet facilities are on the site?
 What type?
 How many?
 - 13 In what condition?
 What washing facilities are on the site?
 What type?
 How many?
 In what condition?
 Hot water?
 Showers?
 - 14 Is there bin collections?
 Is there a skip?
 How often is it emptied?
 - 15 Is there electricity on the site?
 Are there meters?
 Cards?
 Unofficial?
 Are generators used?
 - 16 Is there public lighting on the site?
 Is there street lighting near by?
 - 17 Is there a telephone on the site?
 Payphone?
 Cardphone?
 Private?
 How many?
 Available all the time?
 - 18 No of Families
 Number of adults Over 18
 No of children Under 18
 How long on the site?
 - 19 Is there space set aside for trades (e.g. scrap)?
 Note the trades
 - 20 Are there procedures for leaving the site temporarily?
 - 21 How many trailers are allowed in each bay?
 - 22 What fire precautions are on the site?
 Hoses?
 Fire Extinguishers?
 Other?
- Comments:**
 Anything you would like to see changed on the site?
 Is there anything you would like to see added to the site?
 Any other comments?