

GYPSY/TRAVELLER DELIVERY PLAN – TRACKER

C. Better Incomes In & Out of Work

The table below sets out the progress that has been made in delivering the better incomes actions in the Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan. The COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in delays in progressing some of the actions. We are therefore reviewing the actions, with the intention of continuing them for a further 18 months.

Action	Activity	Progress
<p>18. Developing and delivering appropriate training and guidance to ensure that Social Security Scotland provides the best possible service to Gypsy/Traveller communities.</p>	<p>Local Delivery staff are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering an accessible and person-centred service by providing a local presence across Scotland to meet people’s needs • Enabling our Local Delivery staff to be mobile and work flexibly, travelling to and operating from locations across their local area • Giving clients a choice in how they access our local delivery service by offering support in outreach locations, prisons and home visits 	<p>Due to Covid19 it became impossible to continue with the original plans for training.</p> <p>This is one of the actions that will benefit from the extension of the Action Plan through 2021/22, allowing us to catch up to where we hoped to be at the close of 2020.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing one to one support and helping people to understand what devolved benefits they are entitled to and help them to complete applications <p>Local Delivery colleagues are working with Local Authorities and local organisations to reach out to Gypsy/Traveller communities to advise on benefits being delivered by Social Security Scotland.</p> <p>Colleagues are working to build trust in the community recognising that consistency will be one factor critical to building successful relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholder engagement around recruitment is also going to help define the approach to these actions as well• There will be a focus on whether or not we need any additional learning/development of the suite of equalities training staff already get	
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	<p>(Siobhan Toner is contact for this and looking further into it to help keep tracker update every 6 months.</p>	
<p>19. Working in partnership with the third sector to maximise the take-up of benefits administered by Social Security Scotland amongst Gypsy/Traveller communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government is committed to maximising the take-up of social security. In designing payments and processes, much work has been done to ensure that the process of accessing benefits is as straightforward and person-centred as possible. This work has been driven by collaboration with stakeholders and people with experience of social security. • We do not underestimate the role of third sector organisations, local authorities, and health boards in driving the take-up of financial assistance. We are clear that the Scottish Government and Social Security Scotland have a responsibility to encourage and support this. 	<p><u>Financial Resilience Telephone Support Line</u></p> <p>Although the pandemic also disrupted intended work in this area, things did begin to progress with MECOPP's Financial Resilience Support Line.</p> <p>This was a number community members could call for advice and support to find out their rights and entitlements specifically related to financial matters – and get help to claim them.</p> <p>This was particularly beneficial during the pandemic, when many families who had never had need of social security support before were reaching out.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders have been very supportive in getting the message out and to aid them with this, we provide a suite of resources that can be accessed digitally or ordered in print. Social Security Scotland also supports the creation of bespoke communication and marketing products to target specific audiences. Examples to date are partnership working to create materials for Gypsy/Traveller community and work to reach parents who have been sadly lost a child to promote Pregnancy and Baby Payment and Funeral Support Payment. 	
<p>20. Delivering proactive and focused work to enable Gypsy/Travellers to benefit from services provided by Skills Development Scotland. This will include careers information, advice and guidance, work-based learning and employability programmes as well as</p>		<p>It has unfortunately been impossible to continue with the original plans for skills development and training, due to Covid19.</p> <p>This is another action which will strongly benefit from the extension of the plan.</p>

<p>promoting the opportunities offered through Scotland's Enterprising Schools.</p>		
<p>21. Providing paid work experience opportunities for Gypsy/Travellers within the Scottish Government and its agencies (for example Social Security Scotland).</p>	<p>See no18.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>22. Offering tailored support to Gypsy/Traveller communities to encourage people to consider and apply for permanent jobs in Social Security Scotland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development is underway on the engagement plan for the range of vacancies coming up in 2021. Work will be undertaken with stakeholders, to offer support/advice for raising awareness within the community • Consideration is also being given more generally to how potential Internships could 	<p>See above.</p>

	encourage people from underrepresented groups to join our organisation – however, we cannot fully commit to that at this stage	
<p>23. Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) will offer key worker support for Gypsy/Traveller parents, as part of our wider strategy to address child poverty. This targeted support helps parents to access employment. For those already in jobs it helps to develop their skills to ensure they can sustain and progress in employment, increasing their income and lifting them and their families out of poverty.</p>	<p>Early implementation and delivery of PESF support commenced in February 2020, jointly managed by Scottish and Local Government. Local Government colleagues have reported that COVID-19 and the resultant measures in place to control the pandemic has affected implementation, delivery and participation levels. Local Government has moved to mitigate the impacts by switching service delivery to web and telephony approaches, with plans to return to face to face engagement when it is deemed safe to do so.</p>	<p>February 2020 Grant offer Letters issued to all Local Authority areas.</p> <p>Work was then also paused as a result of the pandemic.</p>
<p>24. Working with Gypsy/Traveller women and local authorities to ensure access to free sanitary products, whether in fixed locations on sites or in mobile units. This will be supplemented by training provided by the</p>	<p>SG have met with STEP to discuss what could be done within Social Justice Delivery Unit policy to make sure that period products were made available to gypsy/traveller girls not attending school. At that point we signposted STEP to Hey Girls to access training for the teaching staff who form TENET and</p>	<p>March 2020 – Social Justice Delivery Unit evaluating this and more information will become available.</p> <p>During the pandemic, local authorities focused on provision of sanitary products to women and girls within the Gypsy/Traveller community.</p>

<p>“Hey Girls” Education Officer to key staff who work with Gypsy/Traveller communities.</p>	<p>also said that the TENET staff should approach their authorities to make sure they had a supply of products either to carry with them when visiting sites, or to leave at sites.</p> <p>Since that meeting we have given additional funding to local authorities to roll-out access to free period products across their communities with a particular focus on those on low incomes, and I expect in at least some cases authorities will have taken specific action around gypsy/traveller communities</p>	
<p>25. Working with Gypsy/Traveller communities to develop a pilot “community larder” project and promoting the Fair Food Fund amongst Gypsy/Traveller networks.</p>	<p>£45,000 of Scottish Government funding will support the delivery of a project to reduce food insecurity among Gypsy/Travellers through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engaging Gypsy/Travellers in identifying how food insecurity affects them and the solutions that would help - improving access to social security and wider public sector support - developing connections between Gypsy/Traveller sites and local community food initiatives 	<p>December 2020</p> <p>Funding was approved for the project, and the grant offer letter issued.</p> <p>January 2021</p> <p>The recruitment process for the Project Officer post has now began.</p>

	<p>- working with Gypsy/Traveller communities to resident-led models such as community pantries</p> <p>The yearlong project will be delivered in two areas – Edinburgh and Argyll – working closely with the Local Authority and local food organisations.</p>	
<p>26. Providing initial support/training to increase digital participation on sites.</p>	<p>COVID19 Digital Participation Work with Article 12, MECOPP and STEP</p>	<p>The pandemic has shone a spotlight on the very real disadvantage of digital exclusion for the Gypsy/Traveller community.</p> <p>To combat this, we have funded several third sector partners to procure digital tablet devices, MiFi units and online data cards for families. While their primary use is for long distance education, they can also help older family members applying for jobs and support people socially to keep in touch.</p> <p>112 digital tablet devices will have been handed out to Gypsy/Traveller families in the last 12 months, along with routers and data plans covering from 6 months to a full year.</p>