

## **Appendix A4:**

### **Establish a permanent Vehicle Dweller site.**

Although the previous section on meanwhile sites recommended that their use be changed to a place from which residents can move forward to mainstream accommodation, it is worth considering that a minority of vehicle dwellers know no other way of life.

Case study: “Jim” is a current meanwhile site resident. Jim was born in a horse drawn living vehicle in the mid 1960’s to parents who were early members of the hippy movement. As someone who has known no other life, standard bricks and mortar accommodation may not suit Jim who has had nearly 60 years living in a vehicle and knows no other life. He admits that living in mainstream housing frightens him and he has no experience of living in shared accommodation or with neighbours. Jim has two children who also live in vehicles and visit him when travelling to Bristol.

#### Recommendation:

One or more permanent sites are established to support long term vehicle dwellers. Sites would not need to provide additional services other than those offered on meanwhile sites (chemical toilets, fresh water, waste disposal), although a purpose built, shared amenities building could be considered, depending on costs. Pitch fees on permanent sites would be higher than meanwhile sites, exact figure to be calculated.

The existing Kingswear Road and Rudgewood Close meanwhile sites would both make suitable permanent sites.

#### Potential benefits of providing a permanent site:

- Provides stability for long term vehicle dwellers.
- Allows a different housing option.
- Suitable for people with no bricks and mortar experience.
- Act as an “anchor point” for family support.
- Recognising cultural identity.
- Provides site users with a recognised postal address.
- Enables an additional tier of support.
- Demonstrates commitment to all citizens.
- Enhance the reputation of BCC for supporting an emerging community.
- Increases credibility of team to support vulnerable people.
- Shows that BCC can be trusted.

#### Potential challenges/concerns of providing a permanent site:

- Possible high demand for the site(s).
- Challenges of being able to define who is a long-term vehicle dweller.
- Difficulties in point scoring need for pitch allocation.
- Sites may become magnets for visitors.
- Costs of site improvements and maintenance.
- Pitches will be made available for individuals, not groups.

Further considerations:

- Issues and delays around the planning process.
- Public reaction to the sites may not be positive and a consultation process will be needed even if changing an existing site from meanwhile to permanent use.
- Sites may be seen as disadvantaging the Gypsy Traveller community. There is a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in place that states that we should provide additional pitches for Ethnic Travellers. Should the requirements of the GTAA be satisfied before we consider the needs of cultural travellers?
- Will access to local infrastructure be affected by new permanent sites?