

# Best Practice in Sustainably Upholding the Right to a Nomadic Life

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Improving Outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities 2022



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Negotiated Stopping

## Background

- Right to nomadic life;
- Existing regulations threaten Gypsy and Traveller culture;
- Cultural erosion leads to further social issues;
- Pressures on local authorities and police – lose-lose situation.



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## Context – Part 4 PCSC Act

- Part 4:
  - Criminalises trespass – offence punishable by imprisonment, fines and seizure of vehicles and belongings.
  - Broadens police powers.
- In context of a national accommodation crisis



## Why travelling is so important

- Travelling is important to Gypsies and Travellers as it gives them a sense of belonging to their community and is an opportunity to live and experience their culture.
- G&T not having this opportunity will come with great impacts. This will be for all who currently live this way of life and others who don't practice this anymore.



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## Definition

“Where an agreement is reached between a local authority and members of the Gypsy and Traveller community. The agreement may apply to a location that Gypsies and Travellers have chosen themselves to pull onto, or it may be applied to another piece of ground that the local authority itself suggests. The agreement is a temporary ‘social contract’ which outlines the terms under which families may stay on a particular piece of ground, without being evicted by the authority, for a defined limited period for up to 28 days.”



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## Negotiated Stopping

- Tolerated Stopping existed for a number of years;
- Negotiated Stopping pioneered in Leeds;
- Asset based problem solving on the roadside.



## In Practice

- Cooperation between local authority and Leeds GATE;
- Signed Agreement which involves a commitment by both parties, including:
  - Leaving land as found;
  - Agreements regarding use of land, behavior and length of stay;
  - Provision of toilets and rubbish collection.



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## Case Study

- Long term residents of Leeds;
- Daughter with cancer, living roadside was vital for their mental health;
- Through Negotiated Stopping Leeds Council:
  - Provided extra toilets and cleaned them regularly;
  - Allowed family to stay for extended periods of time;
  - Regular Health Needs Assessments



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## Best Practice

- Put health and wellbeing of family first;
- Flexible;
- Allowed for proper access to health care services;
- Regular communication with Leeds GATE;



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## Benefits

- For families who are long term residents get more consistent support, the impacts of which are seen through our work at GATE.
- For those passing through being allowed to stop and not treated like a problem is a breath of fresh air and gives families a sense of belonging



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# Other Benefits

Social
Supports nomadism
Fosters good relations
Improves quality of life
Breaks eviction cycle
Increases access to health and education
Reduces complaints of nuisance and ASB
Spreads out encampments
Economic
Cost savings
Decrease in unauthorised encampments
Reduced Enforcement, eviction and clean-up costs
No need for permanent/transit sites
Savings on police time and costs
Environmental
Promotes the use of previously developed land
Less impact on environmentally sensitive areas
No permanent impact

*(adapted from Leeds City Council Site Allocation Plan, 2017)*



## Practical Difficulties

- Identification of suitable land;
- Lack of transparency in decision making;
- Attitudes of broader community and local councilors;
- One part of a multi pronged approach.



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## Call to Action

- Visit the website  
<https://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk/>
- Contact your local Councillor to encourage the adoption of negotiated stopping in your area

