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| Institution: De Montfort University | | |
| Unit of Assessment: 17 | | |
| Title of case study: Accommodating Difference: Providing Sites for Gypsies and Travellers | | |
| Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2004– ongoing | | |
| Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit: | | |
| Name(s): Jo Richardson | Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Housing and Social Inclusion / Associate Dean Research (Business & Law) | Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 1 December 2000 to present |
| Period when the claimed impact occurred: January 2014 to December 2020 | | |
| Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No | | |
| 1. Summary of the impact | | |
| <p>Professor Richardson's pioneering research into Gypsy and Traveller site provision has supported key initiatives resulting in increased accommodation, new approaches to unauthorised encampments and a more open public management debate on the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. Her research since 2004 has led to the building of new sites (for example in Leicester, housing approximately 300 people), and improved management of existing sites and has been central to new ideas on land-use for temporary sites (negotiated stopping). Richardson's work has provided an evidence-base of need and a critical reframing of the planning and public policy debate nationally.</p> | | |
| 2. Underpinning research | | |
| <p>Community conflict over land-use results in homelessness for marginalised minority ethnic groups, including for up to 300,000 Gypsy, Traveller and Roma people who live in the UK, with hundreds of Gypsy and Traveller families displaced annually, largely due to an insufficient supply of appropriate sites. Professor Richardson's research has engaged with hundreds of Gypsy and Traveller residents on sites and hundreds of housing professionals and elected officials, across the UK. Richardson was the first to find that conflict mapping and negotiation approaches are necessary to navigate contentious planning debates and provide much needed accommodation. The distinctive contribution of her public management research has been the development of inclusive research methods for this marginalised group, provision of an evidence-base of need, and a strategic understanding of the impact of negative discourse on planning debates. This case study focuses specifically on the benefits of a long-term programme of co-production research [R1] on housing, homelessness, identity and home [R2] focusing particularly on accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers [R3–6], undertaken at DMU and published since 2007.</p> <p>Richardson's body of research since 2004 has identified that negative political and public discourse about Gypsies, Travellers and Roma leads to a hostile environment within which to consider site delivery and management as part of local planning debates; and that this conflict needs to be negotiated. Her original Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) funded study from 2005–2007 [G1, R3] found that conflict mapping was a key tool to navigate planning for Gypsy and Traveller sites, which were seen by local politicians and residents as contentious spaces. Professor Richardson has applied these findings in co-production research for Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) in Somerset and Leicestershire [G2, G3] to provide the local planning authorities with information on the precise need for sites in their area. More recently, for example, her research published in 2014 [R4], examined conflict in public debate, including a particular episode of anti-Roma discourse and the implications for national community cohesion. This was followed in 2017 [R5] by a further research article presenting analysis of how negative discourse creates liminal and marginalised spaces for Gypsy and Traveller sites, rather than places to call home.</p> | | |

In response to this undercurrent of hostility, Richardson continued her research to centralise Gypsy and Traveller voices in strategic discussions on planning for sites. In Leeds [G4] the focus was on asset-based community development which found that negotiated stopping produced financial and social benefits. Housing providers seeking to provide more and better sites funded Richardson to undertake research on site management principles in Cornwall [G5] and in Devon [G6]. Richardson's study found key barriers and facilitators to the inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller sites in wider housing development plans.

Building on the first (JRF) funded project [G1, R3] and on previous research to understand the power and limitations of co-produced methods [R1, Richardson was funded again by JRF to lead on co-produced research (GBP123,328) in 2014–2016 [G7, R6] across 54 sites in the UK, including 122 Gypsy/Traveller residents and 95 professionals, which provided evidence of accommodation need and recommendations for a renewed approach to planning, building and managing Gypsy and Traveller sites. The published report [R6] was launched at an event hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma (APPGGTR) in December 2016. Following this, Richardson led research, with the organisation London Gypsies and Travellers, funded by the Greater London Authority [G8], to further explore her key finding on the need for a negotiated approach through the conflict debate on planning for sites, and examine the potential for a pan-London approach to negotiated stopping for Gypsies and Travellers [G8]. Richardson has found that it is vital to provide sites – secure and affordable accommodation underpins people's ability to 'feel at home' and this is at the heart of a more equal society [G9].

3. References to the research

- [R1] Beebeejaun, Y., Durose, C., Rees, J., Richardson, J. and Richardson, L. (2015) 'Public harm or public value? Towards coproduction in research with communities', *Environment and Planning C*, 33(3): 552–565; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1068/c12116>
- [R2] Richardson, J. (2019) *Place and Identity: The Performance of Home*, Abingdon: Routledge; ISBN 9780815352044
- [R3] Richardson, J. (2007) *Providing Gypsy/Traveller Sites: Contentious Spaces*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation; <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/providing-gypsy-and-traveller-sites-contentious-spaces>
- [R4] Richardson, J. (2014) 'Roma in the news: An examination of media and political discourse and what needs to change', *People, Place and Policy Online*, 8(1): 51–64; DOI: 10.3351/ppp.0008.0001.0005 <https://extra.shu.ac.uk/ppp-online/roma-in-the-news-an-examination-of-media-and-political-discourse-and-what-needs-to-change/>
- [R5] Richardson, J. (2017) 'Precarious living in liminal spaces: Neglect of the Gypsy-Traveller site', *Global Discourses*, 7(4): 496–515; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23269995.2017.1389232>
- [R6] Richardson, J. and Codona, J. (2016) *Managing and Delivering Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Negotiating Conflict*, York JRF / Coventry CIH; <https://dora.dmu.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/2086/13665/Travellers%20Gypsies%20text.pdf>

AWARDS/GRANTS

- [G1] Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2005–2007) 'Providing Gypsy and Traveller sites: Contentious spaces' (PI) GBP47,000; <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/providing-gypsy-and-traveller-sites-contentious-spaces>
- [G2] Somerset County Council (2011) Research for the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (PI), GBP78,900; <https://www.mendip.gov.uk/media/1029/Somerset-Gypsy-and-Traveller-Accommodation-Assessment-January-2011/pdf/somersetgtaafinalreport14jan2011.pdf?m=635005989368600000>
- [G3] Leicester & Leicestershire (2013) Research for the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (PI), GBP44,765; http://www.melton.gov.uk/downloads/file/1784/llr_gtaa_final_report_may_2013pdf

- [G4] Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange Research (2014–2017), Analysing asset-based community development (PI), GBP26,408; https://8b3e9f1e-b95b-458a-9870-cf9267a6d69e.filesusr.com/ugd/f0e4bf_9745f82b4ecf4795a6d9de32d118eb9d.pdf
- [G5] Cornwall Council (2019) Evaluation of Site Management, applying the ten ‘ingredients’ from the JRF study (PI), GBP7,000, unpublished report for use by the council and its housing association partner.
- [G6] Mid-Devon Planning Authority (2019–2020) (funded by the Local Government Association Housing Advisers Programme) national research on planning for Traveller Sites (PI), GBP7,000 <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/gypsies-and-travellers/lga-funded-research-on-gypsy-and-traveller-sites-completed-for-the-council/>
- [G7] Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2014–2017) ‘Co-producing conflict resolution methods for Gypsy and Traveller Sites’ (PI), GBP123,328; https://www.jrf.org.uk/file/37363/download?token=_q_l642_&filetype=full-report
- [G8] Greater London Authority and London Gypsies and Travellers (2019) An examination of the possibility of Negotiated Stopping in London (PI), GBP17,664; http://www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/LGT_report_28Nov_web.pdf
- [G9] Equalities and Human Rights Commission (2017–2018) Research into site provision for Gypsies and Travellers (Co-I), GBP9,000; https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/190909_gypsy_and_traveller_site_s_-_impact_of_the_revised_definition_-_final.pdf

4. Details of the impact

DMU research on Gypsy Traveller accommodation has achieved national impact through co-produced, applied research with communities, plus engagement with policymakers and practitioners. Richardson has built and developed relationships with key influencers who are able to lever the research as evidence to drive change and a renewed approach to planning and managing sites. This has led both to more accommodation being built, and a pathway to improved local authority approaches to planning and managing sites (for example G5 was a specific result of a local authority wanting the ‘ten ingredients’ from the JRF study [G7] applying to their own sites so that they could improve their planned approach [C1]).

The impact from Richardson’s public management research is most evident in the communities in England for whom the research has direct relevance, and it also has national impact as noted by the co-chairs of the APPGGTR: ‘Your research evidence, examples and recommendations have made it possible to scrutinise the impact of some of the legislation and policy which result in inequalities around Gypsy and Traveller accommodation’[C2]. This impact from Professor Richardson’s research is evident in five key areas of Gypsy and Traveller life:

(1) INCREASED AND IMPROVED ACCOMMODATION PROVISION

Richardson’s most recent JRF research findings [G7, R6] were used to lobby government and to plan and deliver Gypsy and Traveller sites. For example, in a consultation on the powers for dealing with unauthorised encampments, the professional body, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH), wrote to the Minister for Housing as part of the 2018 consultation on unauthorised encampments, citing five recommendations quoted from the report: ‘CIH would strongly recommend such an approach... We strongly believe that this is not only a more equitable way forward, but also one that will bring quicker results, help reduce conflicts and improve living and safety conditions for Gypsy and Traveller families’ [C3]. Richardson’s JRF [G7, R6] findings are included in detail in the House of Commons Briefing Note on Gypsies and Travellers [C4] for MPs to consider in their public-policy decisions. DMU research has resulted in increased provision: ‘Even more significantly for us in Leicestershire, directly resulting from your research in the county, we have been able to deliver new sites (77 pitches) which are home to approximately 300 people who would otherwise not have had secure or sustainable accommodation’ [C5].

(2) NEW APPROACHES TO UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS

Richardson's research on unauthorised encampments in Leeds [G4] analysed the benefits of negotiated stopping. Following publication of the report, the Leeds Gypsy Traveller Exchange CEO said: 'It is so refreshing to have a report which (a) teaches us something new and (b) is going to be incredibly useful in furthering our work to improve the quality of life for Gypsies and Travellers.... Strategically the report has been incredibly helpful in backing us up to highlight the things that we do already know, and will redouble our efforts to hold local authorities to account...' [C6]. The findings from the studies [G4, G7] led, first, to a multi-stakeholder workshop in November 2017 with the (now) London Deputy Mayor for housing, police, local authority professionals and the organisation London Gypsies and Travellers and, second, to a research project with London Gypsy Travellers, speaking with officers, elected members and Travellers in London council areas, to explore the potential for a pan-London approach to negotiated stopping [G8]. The resulting report was debated in an APPGGTR Roundtable in November 2019 which published a roundtable summary report in February 2020 written by Richardson, leading to a parliamentary question on 12 March 2020 by Kate Green MP (Co-chair of the APPGGTR) [C2]. The London Deputy Mayor wrote that 'The findings from the research have enabled the Greater London Authority (GLA) to understand in more detail how a negotiated stopping approach might work in London and my team is working to identify next steps in this area, including how we might approach implementation of this approach on GLA-owned land and options for promoting the sharing of best practice and joint working between local authorities' [C7].

(3) MORE ROBUST EVIDENCE-BASE TO INFORM PLANNING PRACTICES

The Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) research in Somerset, led by Richardson [G2] continues to influence planning practice, with the report held up as robust, and an example of best practice in the field. An independent planning consultant who works on applications across the country, reported that: 'I have also used the Somerset GTAA as a benchmark by which to assess other GTAAs, in particular on the subject of community involvement. [I] would suggest that there has been considerable real-world impact of this piece of work in addressing the inequalities faced by Gypsies and Travellers in Somerset' [C8]. By working with the community, the research findings were rooted in a robust evidence base, and this has been the case in the Leicestershire research [G5], which built on the Somerset co-production methodology, where the Head of the county Gypsy and Traveller Unit said: '[The Leicestershire GTAA] was successfully tested in a number of local plan examinations where the evidence-base was found to be sound' [C5].

(4) HIGHER QUALITY SITE MANAGEMENT

As found in discussions with housing providers, as part of establishing a national housing providers' advisory forum, there is only a small number of housing associations managing sites, with suggestions from some that it has traditionally been seen as 'difficult'. This is starting to change, and the JRF [G7] study involved housing associations new to this field. The Chief Executive of Rooftop explained: 'Your 2006 book (*The Gypsy Debate*) and more recent research for JRF (2016) has helped to inform and accelerate Rooftop's current and future approach to both policy and practice.... From my interactions with others in the housing industry I can also say it appears to have had impact more broadly.... This has encouraged us to explore setting up a national advisory panel... on which we hope you will continue to influence and advise' [C9]. Another beneficiary of Richardson's research, Cornwall County Council, said her work had led to plans for site improvements: 'The findings from Prof Richardson's study for us here in Cornwall have framed a clearer understanding of working relationships and management practices for the council and the ALMO Cornwall Housing Ltd. This has resulted in plans for site improvements and better places to live for our Gypsies and Travellers' [C1].

(5) INCLUDING GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN RESEARCH

Alongside influencing strategic and practical decisions, Richardson's approach has created opportunities to amplify the voices of Travellers during the co-production research process itself. The advocacy charity *One Voice* said: 'Without your research Jo, we would not have the evidence we need for planning inquiries on site delivery, and we would not have voices from the community embedded so strongly throughout the research process to enable Gypsy Traveller

people to feel the benefits of your work through the provision of more, and better managed, accommodation' [C10]. The Head of the Multi-Agency Gypsy Traveller Unit in Leicestershire said of the accommodation needs research [G3]: '...we knew that your co-production methods would involve meaningful engagement with the communities and a robust evidence-base of need' [C5].

There is international interest in Richardson's research: for example, an invitation to deliver a keynote lecture for Harvard University's Program on Negotiation (12 May 2016) on the basis of her emerging findings for the JRF [G7] study and her pivotal use of conflict resolution and negotiation framing of the debate dating back to the first JRF [G1] project.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [C1] Letter from Cornwall Council (16 December 2019) on the Cornwall study which applied the ten 'ingredients' of site management in the JRF research.
- [C2] Letter from APPG Gypsies Travellers and Roma co-chairs (11 May 2020).
- [C3] Chartered Institute of Housing submission to government consultation on unauthorised encampments, submitted May 2018 and copy sent to me by email by policy adviser John Perry, because it makes heavy reference to the JRF study Richardson led.
- [C4] Cromarty, H. (2019) House of Commons Library Briefing Paper on Gypsies and Travellers (Number 08083, 9 May 2019) Two detailed references to the JRF research.
- [C5] Letter from Leicestershire County Council (25 January 2019) on the impact of the Leicestershire study and the JRF research.
- [C6] Letter from Leeds Gate CEO (13 May 2020) on the impact of JRF research and the Leeds study on asset-based community development and the evaluation of negotiated stopping approaches.
- [C7] Letter from London Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development (8 December, 2020) on the impact of findings from the negotiated stopping research.
- [C8] Letter from Ruston Planning (1 April 2016) on the impact of research evidence from the Somerset accommodation study.
- [C9] Letter from the Chief Executive of Rooftop Housing (31 January 2018) on the impact of the JRF research and co-written blog for the National Housing Federation on 11 December 2019.
- [C10] Letter from *One Voice* (12 May 2020) on the inclusion of and benefit for community members in the research.