



 EXCHANGE HOUSE IRELAND
National Travellers Service



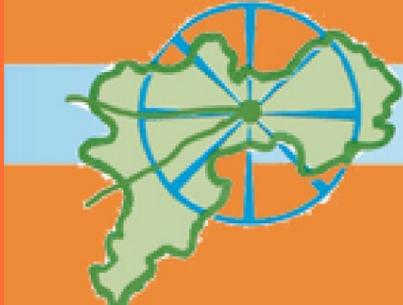
 An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthai Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

ANNUAL
REPORT

2017



Offaly Traveller Movement



Message from the Chairperson

2017 has proved to be another demanding and exciting year, offering both new pathways and obstacles for Offaly Traveller Movement. We have continued to work towards our mission to empower Travellers and build partnerships with the wider community and services to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers, both nationally and locally in county Offaly.

On the 1st of March 2017, the Irish state conferred official recognition on Travellers as an ethnic group, after momentous effort by Traveller organisations nationwide, and pressure from a range of international human rights organisations. This included the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, the Ombudsman for Children, various UN committees and the European Commission, who had threatened legal proceedings against Ireland for how Travellers are treated. This recognition has been a long struggle and is a significant opportunity and success for Travellers in Ireland. However, it is largely symbolic in acknowledging and valuing the uniqueness of Traveller culture and identity, and does not create any new rights. It means naming Travellers as a protected group in Irish equality legislation as well as inclusion in state anti-discrimination and intercultural initiatives. I travelled with OTM to Dail Eireann and we were present as the Taoiseach formally recognised Travellers as a distinct ethnic group within the Irish nation. He acknowledged that this was a historic day for our Travellers and a proud day for Ireland. This was a major high point for us, in the context of our work and experiences of the societal disregard of our people. We hope that recognition of our ethnicity is merely the beginning of things to come, and OTM will continue to endeavour to work towards full equality ,and highlight the need for legislative and political change.

2017, also saw many projects and continuing work with Travellers in Offaly. OTM undertook a review of the Horse Project to inform future planning and delivery. This outlined the significant value of the project from the perspective of the Traveller men involved, despite the distinct and blatant challenges of its continuation. The review was presented in October as part of our event for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty which also showcased the OTM Youth Project short film. This project saw the involvement of young people, making

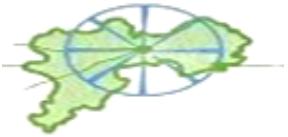
a short video about suicide, and achieving QQI certification in Media Expression.

OTM's departments, including the primary health care project, mental health social work, mens health, youth work and accommodation continue to work tirelessly on a myriad of projects consistent with our strategic plan. Despite challenges and constraints of limited funding, OTM consistently achieve much success in terms of interventions, progress and outcomes. Throughout 2017, a huge amount of interventions have been recorded by OTM which demonstrates the commitment of staff led by dedicated Managing Director Emma Gilchreest. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our board of management, staff, our local Traveller communities and the local and national organisations who liaise with us and support our work. May this work continue and excel in the coming year, as we continue to strive for equality in society for Travellers and work in partnership.

Lily Ward: Chairperson



Chairperson Lily Ward with her husband Willie at the St. Patricks day parade.



Contents



Emma, Sandra and Catherine presented OTM's report *My Geel Glorying, A Report of two years of systemic psychotherapy work in collaboration with a mental health social worker from within Offaly Traveller Movement to the Annual Conference of the Association for Family Therapy & Systemic Practice UK, in Dunblane, Scotland, September 2017.*



OTM youth project recording their short video as part of a QQI Media Expression in October 2017

Introduction	4
OTM Consultation and Strategic Plan	
Priority Work Areas	
i) Horse Project Review	5
ii) Accommodation	6
iii) Health	7
iv) Mens Health	8
v) Mental Heath	9
vi) Youth	10
vii) Culture and Ethnicity	11
Staffing	12
Board of Management and Sub Groups	13
Organisational Chart	
Representation & Networking	14
Financial Report	15



OTM staff development day 2017

Introduction

Offaly Traveller Movement has developed from Tullamore Traveller Movement Ltd, a community development organisation response to the needs of Travellers in Tullamore and its environs. Established in 1991 TTM was launched in 1996 and we have since evolved into Offaly Traveller Movement (OTM). We continue to work for Traveller rights and social justice in partnership with the wider community throughout Offaly. We are an ever expanding non profit organisation with dedicated staff members offering programmes responding to various needs such as health and mens health, mental health, accommodation, youth, education, and human rights

Vision

The vision of Offaly Traveller Movement is for full equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly.

Mission

The mission of OTM is to empower Travellers, and to work as a partnership between Travellers and settled people to achieve equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly.

Our Principles

The principles that underpin the work of Offaly Traveller Movement focus on equality and social justice. We are deeply committed to human rights using a community development approach. This encompasses empowerment, participation, partnership and challenging discrimination.

The OTM Annual report provides a snapshot for our work throughout the year, for more information please visit our website on www.otm.ie and join us on Facebook

Strategic Plan

Following an extensive, facilitated whole-team reflective exercise and two strategic planning meetings in 2015, it became apparent that the priorities emerging from the 2012 community consultation remain as valid and applicable to Travellers presently as they were three years ago, with many indicators that they are even more acutely pertinent now, given the continued deterioration in funding and socio-economic conditions. As such, it was considered inappropriate and unnecessary to undertake a further consultation process with members of the Traveller community in Co Offaly, but instead retain the strategic priorities as the basis of the present Strategic Plan (2015 – 2020), albeit with adjustments to reflect the ongoing development of the service.

The following areas form the basis of both the previous and current Strategic Plan, a number of OTM studies are used as well as policy statements relating to Traveller health & wellbeing.

Priority Areas

Cultural and ethnic identity

Health

Accommodation

Education & youth

Enterprise and work



Offaly Traveller Movement

Horse Project Review

OTM Horse Project began in 2011 as a pilot project to engage with Traveller men in Offaly through horses. Initially set up with no funding under the TMS, however, OTM applied for funding from the HSE and it was then set up as a mental health project.

Horse Project Review

In 2017 OTM undertook a review of the Horse Project to inform future planning and delivery. The purpose of the review was to capture evidence of 'what works' to inform recommendations for the future. A multidimensional well-being and health framework, known as The Capabilities Approach, was used to analyse the data and as a tool for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Horse Project in meeting the health and wellbeing needs of the Traveller men. The review concluded that despite considerable challenges and difficulties, the testimony of the men more than demonstrated its immeasurable value, outcomes and effectiveness across generations of Travellers. Offaly Horse Project Outcomes were mapped against Nussbaum's Checklist of Capabilities using quotes from interview the Traveller men who had participated.



"Quote: "It helped a lot. I had depression for years. I had a heart condition and when I had that pain it gave me something to do. Kept me busy."

"Quote: "It gave me hope that it would get our culture to be alive and to get young lads involved."

"Quote: "I felt more alive at that time and I felt more fitter than I am now. Compared to now, sure we do nothing only sitting down."

"Quote: "It got the horses registered with the department which we thought we would never do, to get them registered."



Participants of the Offaly Horse Project

Accommodation

Strategic priority 1.1: To achieve culturally appropriate accommodation for Travellers in County Offaly.

2017 continues to be an extremely challenging year for Travellers seeking accommodation .This situation is reflected nationally as Ireland experiences a serious housing crisis. An unprecedented number of Travellers are now residing in temporary and emergency accommodation, B&B's, on the side of the road and in overcrowded houses due to being homeless and without a long term housing tenure. Supporting Travellers in Offaly around the issue of accommodation is still one of OTMs most challenging areas of work.

Offaly Traveller Movement currently employs 2 part time accommodation workers who deal with a high volume of referrals for support regarding housing issues.

Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC)

In September, Offaly County Council housing staff, the Elected Members, as well as members of the LTACC and Traveller Representatives met to discuss the challenges to the delivery of Traveller specific accommodation.



OTM Accommodation workers Sorcha Lewis and Sarah O' Brien

The aim of the workshop was to enable a solution focused approach to progress the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Plan with regard to Traveller specific accommodation. The Joint Workshop was titled 'Understanding the Challenges of Delivering Traveller Specific Accommodation. The workshop showcased 2 insightful presentations, the first from, Ruth Gallagher, from the Irish Human Rights Equality Commission on the topic of Public Sector Duty as per Section 42 of the Irish Human rights and Equality Commission Act. The second presentation was delivered by Bridie Casey & Jack Keyes of CENA (Culturally Appropriate Homes), and Traveller led Accommodation Association (TVAA). The Workshop was facilitated by Dr. Johnson McMasters.



Health

Strategic priority 2.1: To Increase life expectancy for Travellers in County Offaly.

1066 interventions with women, 640 men

These include:

1197 Emotional support

1305 Mental Health Support

916 Bereavement support

496 Child Safety Awareness

346 Child Development

161 Breast Screening information

120 Bowel screening information

248 Cervical Screening information

403 dental health promotion

500 Smoking cessation information

662 Nutritional information

538 Diabetes information

191 Asthma information

447 Vaccination

575 Elder care

Referrals: 8 external referrals made to GP's, dental services and social workers. 43 internal referrals to the Mental Health Social Worker and 120 accommodation referrals

Primary Health Care Project

(PHCP) is a health promotion initiative designed and delivered by Travellers within their own community. It is based on a community development peer led approach and promotes ownership and participation by Travellers in matters affecting the health and wellbeing of their own community. The PHCP commenced in Tullamore in 1999 and following a comprehensive training period, became fully operational in 2003. The programme is a partnership between OTM and the HSE and employs 7 peer Community Health Workers (CHWs).

The heart of the Community Health Worker's work is to deliver healthcare information and carry out outreach work with local families. In 2017 the PHCP provided healthcare advice and information to over 900 Travellers. The CHWs play a vital role in ensuring that Traveller families receive and understand healthcare information. The health workers are trained to deliver culturally appropriate information across a wide selection of topics. These include: cancer screening, antenatal care, mental health supports, dental care, child safety, healthy eating, asthma and diabetes.

In 2017 CHWs delivered workshops on dental health, managing asthma and diabetes. In partnership with the Irish heart foundation and the men's health worker, they organised health check-ups which included cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure and carbon monoxide testing. In partnership with the Irish Heart foundation the CHWs hosted a talk on good nutrition, getting active, avoiding stress and watching blood pressure and cholesterol levels .

Day out in Bunratty



The CHWs are also actively engaged in supporting the work of the mental health social worker and the RPHN for Travellers, Nuala Hogan. They took part in training around self-harm. 3 of the CHWs completed the full ASIST course (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) which helps participants to support people at risk of suicide.

During 2017 the CHWs helped to organise St. Patrick's day, the Traveller Pride event in Charleville castle, trips to Croagh Patrick and a social club outing to Bunratty Castle. They delivered Cultural Awareness training to 5Rivers Foster agency, to Jigsaw and to staff at the Community Training Centre in Tullamore.



Trip to Croagh Patrick in June 2017

Traveller Men's Health

Mens Health continues to be an important area of work for OTM. In 2017 Frank Kavanagh took up post as the Traveller Mens Health Worker. Throughout 2017 Frank worked tirelessly in successfully engaging men, empowering them in their health, both physically and mentally, and worked with Leslie Jones on the Horse Project.

Men's Social Group

Given the alarming rates of suicide and poor mental health of Traveller men, providing a social forum was seen as particularly important. The aim of establishing social groups was to create a safe space, getting men out of the house and discussing health and mental health. This included a quoits group, handball group and several soccer groups. These men took part in health checks and mental health workshops throughout the year. This has significantly increased the engagement and participation of Traveller men in Offaly, allowing them to take ownership of their health and well being. Following on from this, was the development of the Men's Health Network, which will continue its work in the next coming years.

Travellers Pilgrimage

This Pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick took place in June 2017 and was hugely successful. The interest in the pilgrimage was such that two group trips were organised in order to accommodate everyone. Although climbing Croagh Patrick is no easy task, a total of 43 people took part on the first day and 37 on the second day.

Physical Health

The mens health work focuses on a range of initiatives to improve health including physical health. In November 2 mens groups took part in "Get fit month", 10 men from Birr and 12 from Tullamore. Both groups took part in a fundraiser for Temple Street Childrens Hospital in Dublin. A charity fundraiser was also held for the hospital whereby the men, and Frank himself grew beards over November and had them shaved at the public event. Some even braver men opted for having their chests or legs waxed too!

The All Ireland Traveller Health Status Study (AITHSS, 2010), highlights the life expectancy gap between Traveller men and settled men has widened to 15 years. Traveller men have six times higher suicide rates than the settled population and heart disease and stroke account for 25% of deaths.



Mens Worker Frank Kavanagh having his beard shaved for the Movember Fundraiser for Temple Street Childrens Hospital



On the peak of Croagh Patrick June 2017

Mental Health

Strategic priority 2.2: To improve Traveller mental health and wellbeing.

Travelling to Wellbeing

Travelling To Wellbeing continues to offer professional and culturally appropriate, individual support, family support, crisis intervention, advocacy and referral pathways to other services for Travellers. Sandra worked with a range of services and values partnership working. She promotes positive mental health training and local community mental health initiatives. Using a collaborative approach, Sandra, with RPHN Nuala Hogan provide ongoing support for Travellers. the Travelling to Well-being social worker, primary healthcare, men's health, accommodation and youth workers, work together on an integrated mental health initiative.

2017 saw a significant increase in Travellers engaging with the 1:1 service, with 120 service users compared to 68 in 2016. As well as this work community and partnership was also prioritised and this included: Weekly peer support group (Mincéars Táirien) in Birr & Tullamore. This year both groups were co facilitated in partnership with Shine. Working closely with the Shine Regional Development Worker, workshops focused on education and awareness programmes with a focus on mental health and recovery.

17 women in Birr met weekly to engage in a range of educational & health promotion workshops. They have completed a number of QQI level 2 modules and are due to be awarded a major QQI award in 2018. 16 women participated in Tullamore. Both groups were offered support and training specific to their interests and needs.

In conjunction with the National Traveller Women's Forum Sandra launched a poster in March identifying key issues for Traveller Women's Mental Health, following consultation with Traveller groups and presented at the 7th World Congress on Women's Health.

Working collaboratively with the local Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention and the HSE, OTM are in the process of developing a Crisis Response Plan in Offaly. OTM in partnership with a range of local organisations has delivered a varied programme of talks and activities to promote a positive understanding of mental health and reduce the stigma associated with it.



Mental Health Social Worker Sandra McDonagh with John Connors



Sandra McDonagh pictured with Karen Boylan from Shine

RESEARCH

Sandra carried out a research project "Family Based Interventions: Advancing Recovery for the Traveller Community in Ireland" exploring Traveller specific mental health services, policy developments, barriers and opportunities. This demonstrates that delivering a family tailored culturally sensitive service for Travellers has a positive impact on their mental health. It will be published in the Irish Association of Social Workers Journal in Spring 2018.

Youth & Education

Strategic Goal 4: To support Traveller youth and education.

OTM Youth Project

OTM Youth provides young Travellers with informal, social and educational support and a platform for youth development. Weekly drop in clubs are an imperative social outlet and a safe space for young Travellers from the ages of 10 and over. Throughout 2017 a total of 830 interventions were made through a variety of activities such as : Homework support & Maths tuition with OLDC.

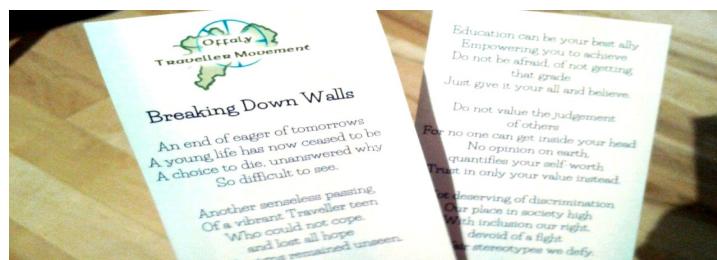
Drop in club for secondary school age & a 2nd drop in for primary school children.

Soccer tournament for boys.

Youth and Education Summer Project with OLDC.

Seasonal events such as at Halloween, Christmas and summer trips, etc.

Various activities throughout the year including fitness classes, swimming, art and crafts, pool and xbox, team building and group development, games, make up and skincare classes, nail art, drama, media expression and other targeted projects.



OTM Youth Project pictured with Pierre Klein of the UN Eradication of Poverty committee at the launch of the youth short film

Easter 2017: Youth trip to "Zip It" in Lough Key Forest Park.

Summer 2017: OTM in conjunction with OLDC ran the week long Traveller Youth and Education Summer Project held in Puttaghaun centre in July, for those in Junior cycle of secondary school. This project focused on helping young people adapt to secondary school and provide them with coping strategies, as well as fitness and drumming workshops. Summer trips for all groups included a team building trip to Lough Crew adventure centre in Oldcastle, Meath.

October 2017: Youth short video "Breaking down Walls" with QQI Media Expression Certification for the International day for the Eradication of Poverty. OTM Youth wrote a poem around young suicide and created a video. They filmed this for their QQI course and presented it as part of our Eradication of Poverty event. Also in October many young people received awards at the Exchange House Traveller Education Awards in Dublin.

Christmas 2017: Christmas activities included our annual visit from Santa and youth trip to Funderland at the RDS in Dublin.

Towards the end of 2017, OTM developed an exciting and dynamic new Youth Strategy will which inform our future work.



Ziplining at Lough Key Forest Park, April 2017

Culture and Ethnicity

Strategic priority: 6.1 To promote Traveller culture in County Offaly.



OTM Traveller Pride Festival & Family Fun day 2017

2017 saw the birth of the OTM Traveller Pride Festival, initiated by the granting of state recognition of the ethnic status of Travellers in March 2017. This additional dynamic of celebration aimed to showcase the vast array of positive aspects of Traveller culture and celebrate bonds amongst both the settled and Traveller community. The family fun festival attracted a large crowd of approximately 400 people, exceeding expectations. Entertainment included cultural history displays, live concert, games, quoits, and ghost tours of Charleville castle. Children were entertained with face painting, games, races and a circus workshop. OTM hosts an event to celebrate Traveller Pride week in June each year and we hope to make this very successful venture an annual event.

St. Patricks day Parade 2017

OTM participates in the St Patrick's Day parade in Tullamore each year and this year was as enjoyable as usual. The staff and students on placement put together a dynamic entry this year, appropriate to the theme of "Waterways" allocated by the parade committee. Our vibrant float was awash with mermaids and sea creatures and all sorts of colorful water symbols.



Staff Team of 2017

No	Name	Position	Profile
1	Emma Gilchreest	Managing Director	Full Time
2	Sorcha Lewis	Traveller Accommodation Worker	Part Time
3	Sarah O'Brien	Traveller Accommodation Worker	Part Time
4	Karen Guilfoyle	Finance Manager	Part Time
5	Bridget McInerney	Administrator	Part Time
8	Margaret Lovett	Health Manager	Part Time
9	Sandra McDonagh	Mental Health Social Worker	Full Time
10	Nuala Hogan	Registered Public Health Nurse	Part Time
11	Lesley Jones	Horse Project Facilitator	Part Time
12	Frank Kavanagh	Mens Health Worker	Part time
13	Mary McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
14	Lily Kavanagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time
15	Pinkie McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
16	Sarah McDonagh	Community Health Worker	Part Time
17	Brigid McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
18	Celine McInerney	Community Health Worker	Part Time
19	Geraldine Ward	Community Health Worker	Part Time
20	Saranne Lovett	Youth Team Leader	Part Time
21	Elizabeth Doyle	Youth Peer Worker	Part Time
22	Adrian Kavanagh	Youth NEETS Worker	Part time (until June)
23	William McDonagh	CE Placement: Receptionist	Part Time
24	Savanagh McInerney	Student Placement Sacred Heart Secondary School	Part Time ((Jan)
25	Janice O'Brien	Student Placement NUI Maynooth	Part Time (Jan-April)
26	Paul Casserly	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Full Time (March- June)
27	Jimmy Maher	Student Placement NUI Maynooth	Full Time (Jan - April)
28	Olanrewaju Adenloye	Student Placement NUI Maynooth	Part Time (Sept- December)
29	Elizabeth Doyle	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Part Time (October - December)
30	Lillian Banda Bwanga	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Part Time (Sept- December)
31	Karen Boylan	Student Placement Athlone Institute of Technology	Part Time (From Sept)
32	Clodagh Gallagher	Student Placement NUI Galway	Part Time (From Nov)
33	John Foley	Student Placement NUI Galway	Part Time (Until April)
34	Martina Shortall	Laois Offaly Education Training Board	Part Time (Until April)

Board of Management

Offaly Traveller Movement Board of Management oversees the strategic direction, financial management and staff development of the organisation.

The OTM AGM took place on 6th June 2017

Board Members for 2017 included

Lily Ward – Chair
 Mary Rose Kerrigan – Vice Chair
 Marrianne O Shea– Secretary
 Liam Rodgers– Treasurer
 Thomas McDonagh

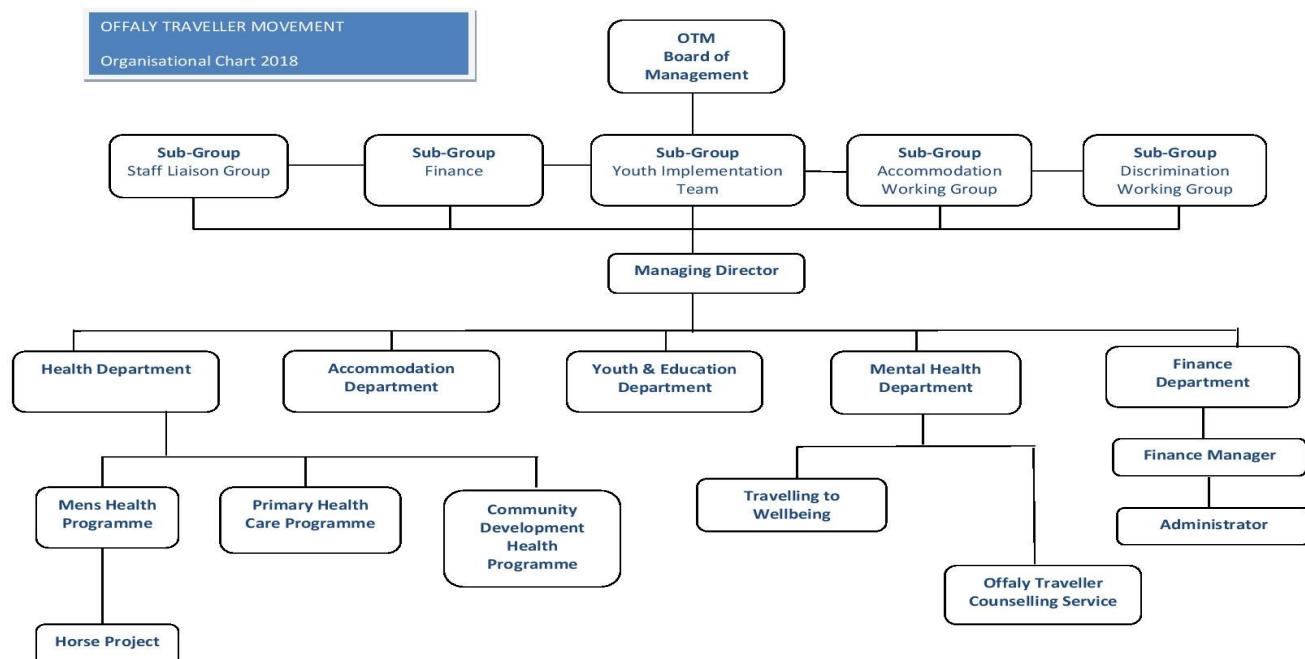


Saying goodbye to long standing Board of Management member Marina O'Malley

The OTM Staff representative for OTM is Sarah Joyce O'Brien.

In 2017 we said goodbye to board members Marina O 'Malley and Graham Kavanagh.
 We are grateful for their significant contribution and wish them well in the future.

Organisational Chart 2017



Representing and Networking

During 2017 OTM was represented on the following external bodies

National Traveller Partnership, both as a Board member and on operations committee (NTP)
 European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
 European Anti Poverty Network
 Committee for the International Eradication of Poverty
 Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC)
 Irish Traveller Movement Central Group
 Irish Traveller Movement Accommodation Sub Group
 Public Participation Network
 Offaly Mental Health Talk Week Committee
 Offaly Traveller Interagency Group (TIG)
 Regional Traveller Health Unit and finance sub-committee (THU)
 National Traveller Women's Forum
 National Traveller Health Network (NTHN)
 Offaly Domestic Violence Support Services (ODVSS)
 Tullamore School Completion Programme Board of Management
 Midlands Regional Drugs Task Force Education and Prevention Sub Committee
 Midlands Region Health Network (MHN)
 Midlands Regional Mens Network
 National Traveller Suicide Awareness Project Steering Group
 National Traveller Health Network
 Travelling to Wellbeing Steering Group

OTM are members of:

National Traveller Partnership
 Irish Traveller Movement
 European Network Against Racism
 European Anti Poverty Network
 Community Workers Cooperative



OTM supporting the UN day fro the Eradication of Poverty

Financial Report

