

## CONSULTATION ON DRAFT RACE EQUALITY SCHEME Replies from external consultees

**Haslingfield Parish Council** (31 March 2006):

“Travellers - This seems to be the major issue here in Cambridgeshire. As legislation has been piecemeal over the years, it would be helpful to know what the rights and entitlements on non-UK Travellers are. Otherwise a very comprehensive document.”

**SCDC comment:** ODPM Circular 01/06 (“Planning For Gypsy And Traveller Caravan Sites”) states that “The Government believes that Gypsies and Travellers have the same rights and responsibilities within the planning system as every other citizen”.

It also makes clear that “Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers have been recognised by the courts as being distinct ethnic groups covered by the Race Relations Act 1976. Under the general duty, there is a requirement that local authorities seek to promote good race relations between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community. This is important in the context of Gypsy and Traveller site planning.” The Circular includes good practice criteria and guidance both for councils and Gypsies and Travellers.

More details can be found at: <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1163380>.

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**Rampton Parish Council** (4 April 2006):

“The Parish Council wishes to make the following two points:

1. They support the comments in Appendix E (CRE guidance for journalists), requiring more responsible reporting on race issues by the media.
2. They consider that there appears to be too great a bias in the report towards one ethnic minority - specifically, Gypsies and Travellers.”

**SCDC comment:** The Council is working with the media to remind them of the need for responsible reporting of Traveller issues, and has included the CRE’s guidance in its new media pack, which was distributed last month.

The Council recognises its responsibilities to promote race equality and good race relations in respect of all ethnic minorities. However, as Part 4 of the Race Equality Scheme points out, “Financial constraints will continue to be a big issue. This will inevitably affect the extent to which we can strengthen our approach to race equality – no extra funding is available for actions in the Race Equality Action Plan for 2005 - 2008. In these circumstances, priority has had to be given to actions relating to Travellers, as the biggest ethnic minority in the district.