



ARTICLE 12 IN SCOTLAND

Petition PE1364: Petition by Phyllis McBain calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to review all guidelines relating to trespass and encampments for Gypsies and Travellers to ensure their intent is clear and that they are being applied.

What is your response to the points made by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (PE1364/C)?

As the general debate around petition PE1364 has focused on the North East, where tensions between the two communities have been particularly acute over the past two years, we believe the geographical focus of the points made by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is appropriate.

We are in agreement with the EHRC in that we believe the key barriers to a positive outcome, that meets the needs of both communities, are:

The lack of fixed and temporary sites (rather than a need for new (re-active) law, policy or practice)

The tone of public debate particularly, but not exclusively, as played out in the media

Finally, we welcome the EHRC's clarification of the term 'Occupational Traveller' and where the term 'fits' within the wider Travelling community definitions.

What action(s) will you take to address these?

Via the recently established Gypsy/Traveller Working Party we are engaging with the Scottish Government, Local Authority staff and elected representatives and the Police to develop a strategy that will aim to address the above mentioned and other related issues and concerns.

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