

Essex Countywide Traveller Unit

Joint Committee Report – 19th June 2014

The following report covers ECTU operations to date, including the updated position from the last Joint Committee presentation in January 2014.

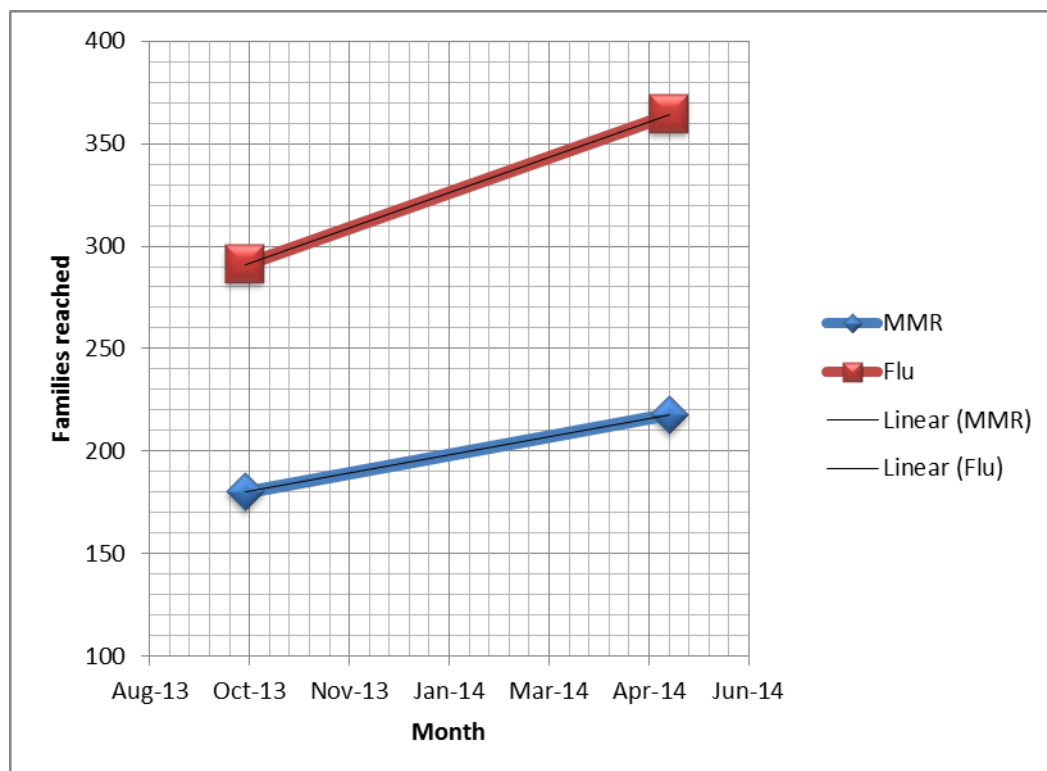
Health

Health outreach will continue to work on a 3 stream approach:-

- Direct one to one work with families
- Utilising national campaigns for focus/resource support
- Utilising existing resources – SOS Bus, Essex Young Peoples Drunk & Alcohol Service Bus, Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service bus (Thurrock) as a focal point to promote campaigns/issues.

Inoculations/Immunisations (October 2013 reported figure in brackets)

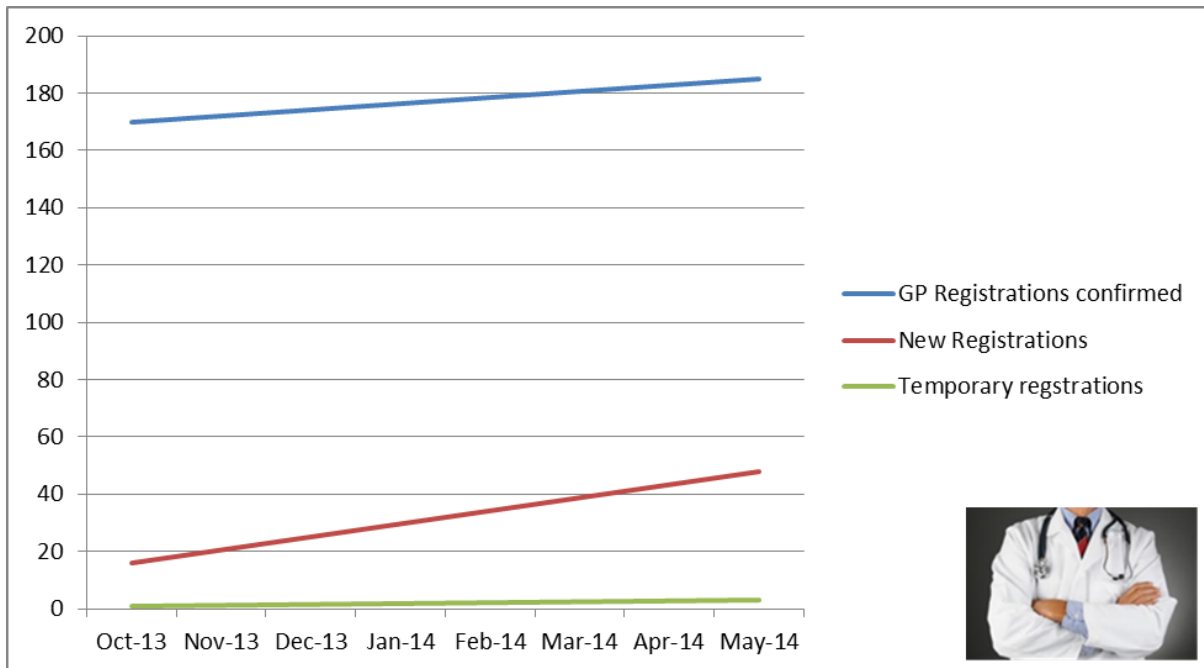
- MMR outreach to 218 (180) families 6 refusals - advising families specifically regarding accessing immunisations for the children and concerns re combined vaccinations
- Flu - outreach to over 40 sites, 364 (291)



- CPD- Cervical Cancer for girls. Tetanus and Meningitis for boys and girls – promoted to 40 families, 15 confirmed as needing the jabs, 2 girls went to the bus for both jabs and 1 identified 2 others to be done at a later date

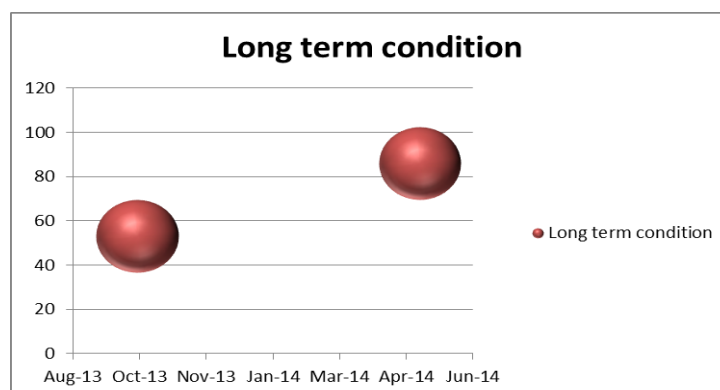
GP / Dentist Registrations (Oct 13 reported figure in brackets)

- 185 (170) families have been confirmed registered with GP
- 48 (16) new registrations
- 3 (1) temp registration with Long Term Condition



- 8 (6) families referred to Health Visitors re health and ante natal care issues
- 9 (4) new families registered to dentists.

Long Term Conditions



86 (53) identified to date with LTCs including diabetics, asthmatics, arthritics, heart, cancer etc. There are high levels of stress/depression in the community, although these figures only identify more extreme cases.

Healthy eating

Providing support/information on healthy eating at client's request: 7 families

5 families referred to food bank

Health – other

Supported 6 families escaping violence

Supporting 9 families re mental health issues

Delivered/discussed stop smoking information to 19 families

Case Study 1 – Notified by a Health visitor that an expectant mother was not attending her appointments with the Mid Wife. We did a home visit and found that the mother's personal circumstances were very difficult. We were able to support the mother who does not read or write by going through her maternity book, discussing the different appointments she had to attend and agreeing to ring her the day before the appointments to remind her. We had regular contact with the health visitor and was able to support the mothers' attendance at the clinic. There was ongoing concern about this pregnancy and the baby was born prematurely. We have maintained contact with all concerned regarding the welfare of mother and baby

Case Study 2 – Working with and supporting one family with two adults and one YP, both adults having long term health conditions.

Liaised with Social Care for assessment re requirements in the home /possible adaptations.

YP given support re college application, application made to sports course for September, (having been out of school for over two years).

Whilst I was working with the family one adult was diagnosed with early onset dementia.

Liaised with Health services, also contacted Alzheimers Society (AS). Discussed possible support with family, arranged joint visit with the outreach worker from the AS, met with the whole family plus extended family and all were offered support, counselling, practical advice re diet, taking medication etc, they are also to be supplied with device to keep track of adult with memory loss to help keep him safe, and with medication dispensers for both adults with automated release/reminder. Family will also be able to access day centre for day care in specialist centre for people with early onset memory loss where the adult with condition can do carpentry etc, also partner will be able to attend for support, after speaking during our visit, both adults felt confident to use this service.

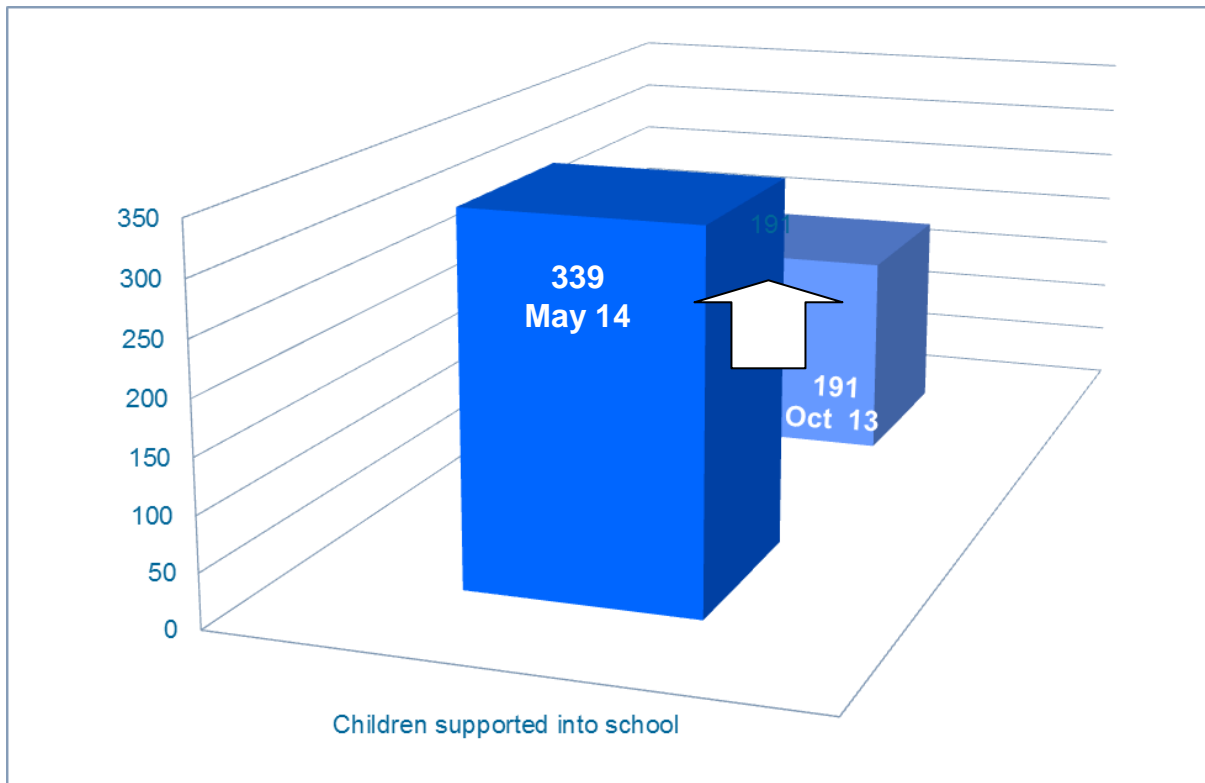
Health checks etc – as the health bus methodology is a spring/summer activity, these will be scheduled for the coming months. An early visit to Thurrock promoting healthy eating and diabetes identified 2 x new diabetes sufferers, promoted healthy eating to 22 families, with 5 committing to a healthier eating program.

Buffy Bus project - play bus sessions delivered to site joint working with Children's Centre and Local Charity – 13 children and 5 adults accessed, adults utilised to discuss issues around health, behaviour, education and benefits, and support was given on these issues.

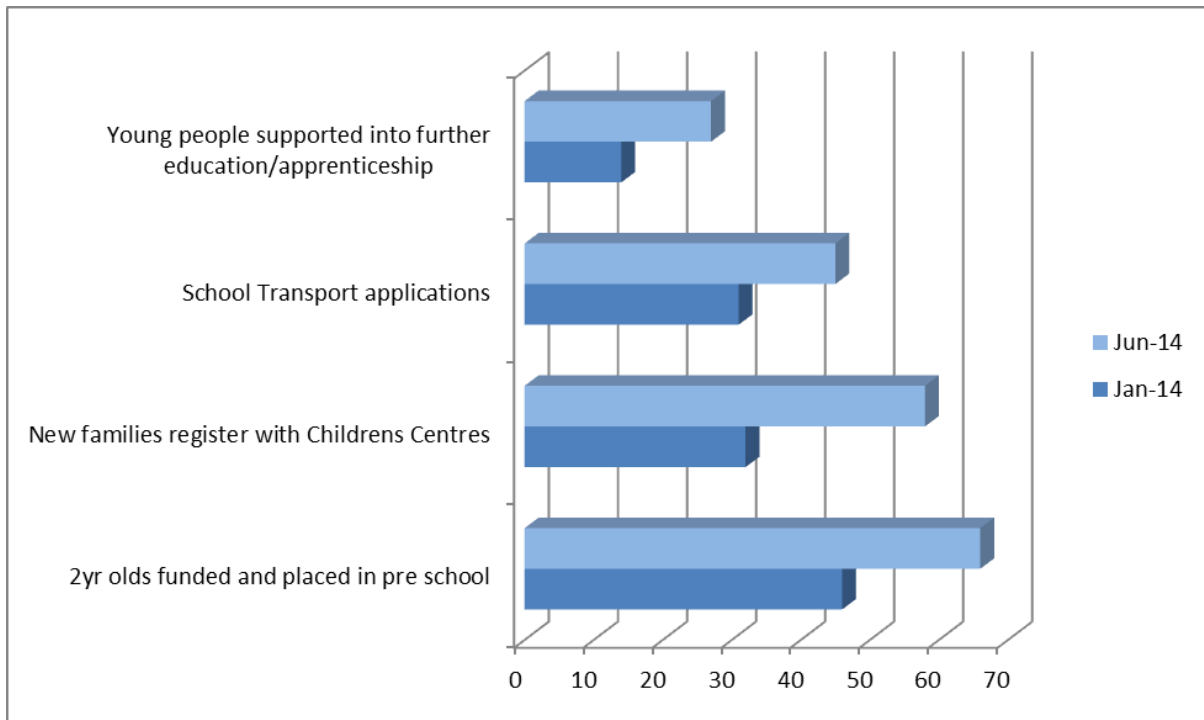
Indicator	Sub Division	May 13	Oct 13	May 14	Total
Facilitated to received primary Immunisation		50	130	38	218
	Through domiciliary team	11*	20	0	31
Facilitated to receive the flu jabs		291	n/a	73	364
Pregnant women facilitated to access Ante-Natal	Under 12 weeks	Not reported	0	1	1
	Over 12 weeks	Not reported	4	16	20
Identified as having Long Term condition (LTC)		8	45	33	86
LTC's receiving flu jab		5	n/a	na	5
Number assisted to register with GP	Permanent	13	3	32	48
	Temporary	1	0	2	3
Health checks facilitated		Not reported	26	0	26
Number referred to stop smoking		Not reported	6	14	18
	Pregnant		0	0	0

* 11 referred to domiciliary, but were unable to fulfil due to lack of availability of domiciliary service

Education is cyclical, in that there are certain time frames for completing various school applications. In addition to the main figures below, work is carried out around school appeals, working with Educational Welfare Officers around attendance issues and child protection issues.



339 (191) children supported into school



66 (46) 2yr olds funded and placed in pre school

58 (32) new families register with Childrens Centres

45 (31) School Transport applications

27 (14) young people supported into further education/apprenticeship

Home Education Data

HES/EMTAS stats 01/09/2013 to 09/05/2014

Number of children referred to HES during the above period	Number of children	% of total
Total new referrals	476	
1 Gypsy / Roma (WROM)	9	1.89
2 Traveller of Irish Heritage (WIRT)	17	3.57
3 Referral from EMTAS no ethnicity recorded	2	0.42
4 Total 1,2,3	28	5.88

Number of children registered as Home Educated on 09/05/2014

	Number of children	% of total
Total number of children	804	
1 Gypsy / Roma (WROM)	32	3.98
2 Traveller of Irish Heritage (WIRT)	21	2.61
3 Referral from EMTAS no ethnicity recorded	6	0.75
4 Total 1,2,3	55	7.34

It is preferable for Gypsy/Traveller to attend schools in terms of receiving appropriate level of education, and integration. Home education is often not the ideal solution as parents may not be literate themselves, hence low rates are preferable.

Indicator	Sub Division	May 13	Oct 13	May 14	Total
Number of Children accessing pre-school /school 2 – 16		162	29	148	339
Number of children transferring from primary to secondary		na	33	na*	33
Number of young adults accessing further education		9	5	13	27
Number/%of children referred to Home Education		0	76 (7%)	28 (6%)	

*number of ascribed GRT students currently in secondary education 41

Case study 1

A family moved back into the North Benfleet /Basildon area and asked a school if they could take the children. The school agreed to take the 2 younger children but not the eldest even though the school had spaces. This was due to the child having some problems. I supported the mother to fill out an application form but the school took a very long time to reply to admissions. When the offer came through the mother was told, by the school, that this child could only have **one hours** schooling a day. I have liaised with the Education Welfare Service and the Special Needs Team to address this problem. The child is now attending for **three hours** a day and the mother has been told that the child can go full time in two weeks' time. Without support this child would not be in education.

Case study 2

A young person had not been in school for over three years, not been receiving any education and would be a current year 11. We discussed options, the young person not confident in school environment following bullying incidents when in school in year 7. Explained we could try and support with alternative education provision if school could be found to fund this. Made application to school, liaised with Hard to Place within school admissions to recommend that should be through that route. Attended with young person and mother for admissions interview at school, discussed alternative education provision, young person wanted to access Hair and Beauty course.

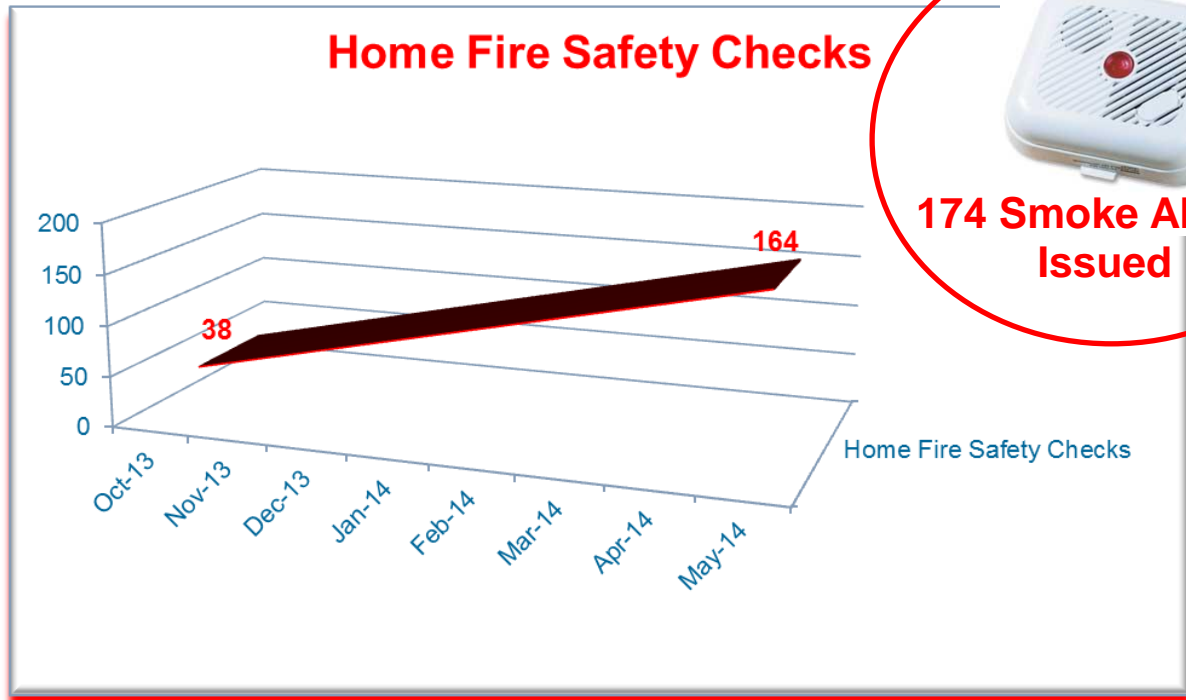
Liaised with alternative provider, re days etc visited alternative education provision with young person, who has been attending now since January.

Visited college provision with YP, made application for Hair and Beauty course for next September.



Fire Safety (Oct 13 reported figure in brackets)

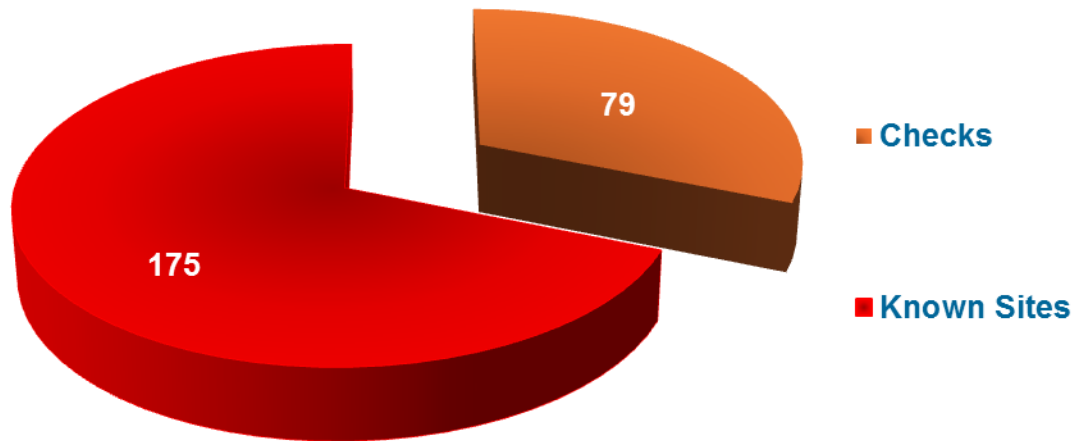
Home Fire Safety Visits



- 164 (38) Home Fire Safety visits completed across 28 sites. Total site approx.175
- 42 revisits to install smoke alarms
- 174 smoke alarms issued

Site Fire Safety Inspections

Site Fire Safety Checks



- 79 (40) Site Fire Safety checks carried out of 175 known sites

Indicator	Sub Division	5/13	10/13	5/14	Total
Home fire safety Visit	by ECTU	2	36	126	164
	Referred to ECFRS	0	1	10	11
Smoke alarms issued					174
Site Fire Safety Visits incl. access, water supply, spacing, Gas Cylinder storage, Hazardous Materials	by ECTU	24	16	39	79
	Referred to ECFRS	na	24	tba	
Note: Referrals are all concerns over location of/distance to nearest hydrant.					



Staffing

The previous incumbent left the unit in January 2014 as she had come to the end of her secondment to the role. The substantive holder of the post returned to work to a different role within the dept, hence the position had to be re-advertised. There were additional delays in the process due to policy change which resulted in the post appointment made for a new constable to the position – Paul Downes, who currently works within the ARU – and we are awaiting confirmation of the start date.

Essex Police's unauthorised encampment policy

The revised policy was published at the beginning of the year and the summary of changes states "*This document has been amended to make reference to ECTU constable instead of sergeant, and the author details have been updated.*" See appendix I and II for full document is embedded below.

Presentation to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex



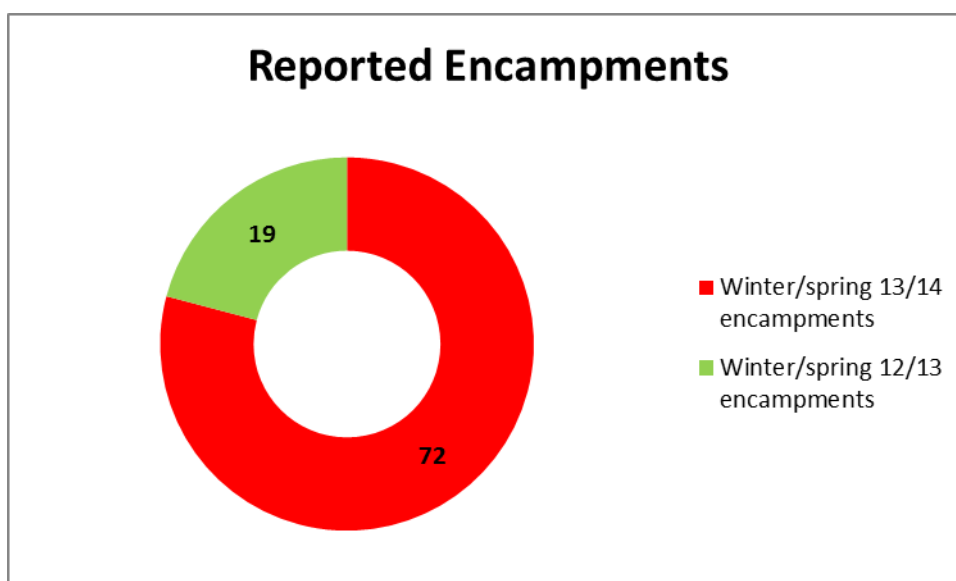
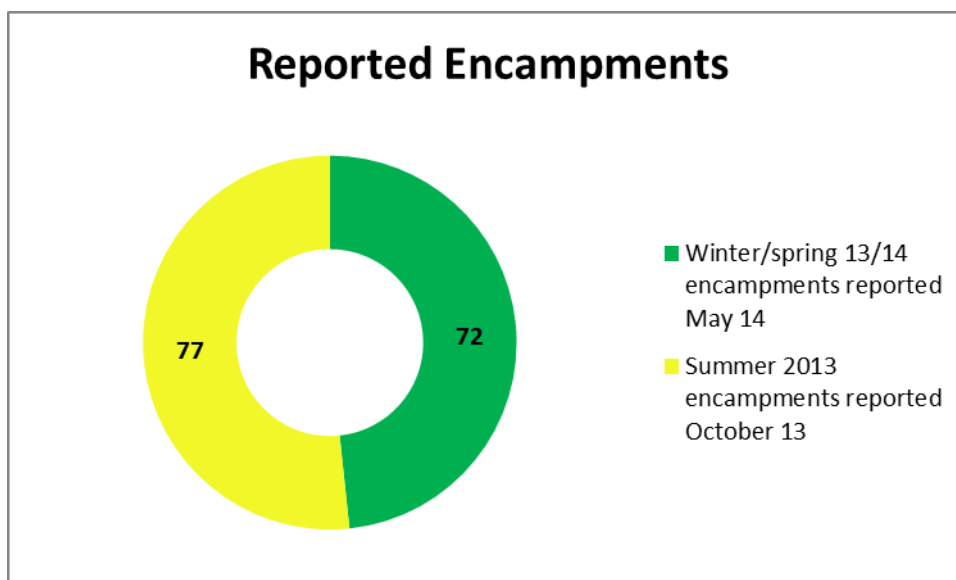
Following supporting him at a public meeting in Rochford in 2013, I was invited to present to Nick Alston, the PCC, Lyndsay Whitehouse, the Deputy PCC plus the full support team on the 27th May, on the Gypsy/Traveller culture/community, and the work of the ECTU partnership. In addition to finding it an enlightening experience in terms of increasing their knowledge and understanding of the Gypsy/Traveller community and the issues they face, they were also looking to working more closely with ECTU in terms of addressing these issues going forwards.

There were queries raised as to why certain authorities had not signed up to the unit, and specific reference was made to the current spate of Harlow encampments and also whether there was a countywide multi agency strategy which would demonstrate how we are seeking to address the issues around the community. Outside of the Joint Committee agreement, and performance monitoring based on partner requirements, there is no separate strategy, so I would ask the Committee if they would see any merit in/would like such an overarching strategy developed.

Indicator	Sub Division	October 13	May 14	Total
Increased knowledge and understanding of Gypsy/Traveller Communities	N/A	Qualitative data previously reported. Plus 10 sessions of cultural awareness have been held	No report	N/A
	Number of hate crimes reported by Gypsy/Traveller community	1	23	24
Number of UE's recorded	S61 applied	21	2	23

Unauthorised Encampments

From the 1st October 2013 to current date. This is not comprehensive list of all encampments in Essex, as we may not be advised of encampments on non-partner or private land. There will also be occasions where we have made an initial visit to establish location/position but not pursued if found to be non-partner/private land.



72 unauthorised encampments recorded by ECTU for what should normally be the quieter winter period. When compared to the figures reported in October 2013 covering the busier summer period of 77, and the figures for the equivalent period the previous year, it confirms an exceptionally busy and unprecedented winter period.

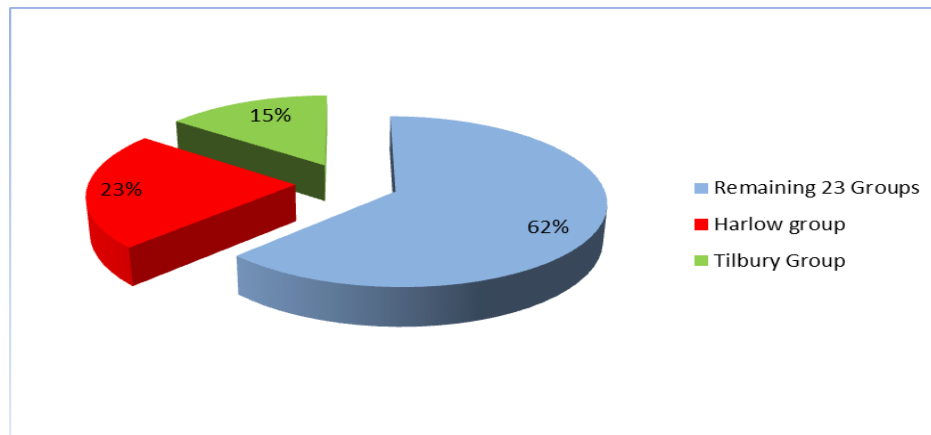
Of the 72 reported encampments

- 65 managed/visited by ECTU

- 5 non partner sites
- 10 private sites

There were **25** separate identifiable groups of Travellers involved.

There have been 2 x very active groups, 1 in Harlow accounting for 17 separate encampments, and 1 in Thurrock representing 11*



- 2 moved after direction to leave under section 77
- 16 moved following the issue of a court order under section 77
- 32 negotiated / other departures.

* It is unprecedented over the past 10 years to have any group of substance stay in one area for a protracted period of time. We are now experiencing this with 2 x separate groups. The Harlow group has been more problematic based on size and chosen stopping places. The Thurrock group is considerably smaller, has, in the main been more sensible in their stopping places, and have left the sites clean and clear on departure. They do appear to have strong local connections. We are currently assessing the viability of a pre-emptive injunction to break the cycles, although in reality this is only likely to move the issue on to an adjoining area.

Impact

Part of the objectives of ECTU in managing unauthorised encampments is to reduce the impact of the encampment on the land and adjoining community. It will always generate a degree of unrest, simply because there are Travellers camped without permission, but in promoting the required behaviour, it reduces post encampment costs, and in the longer term will ease tensions and perceptions around encampments. The current group in Tilbury, although a persistent group, have displayed good levels of behaviour, including attitude to our officers, compliance with orders/directions, behaviour towards local community, and the condition the vacated sites are being left in etc The following pictures show one encampment which when vacated, had only small piles of domestic waste gathered and ready for collection



Encampment in situ



How it was left – small piles of rubbish awaiting collection

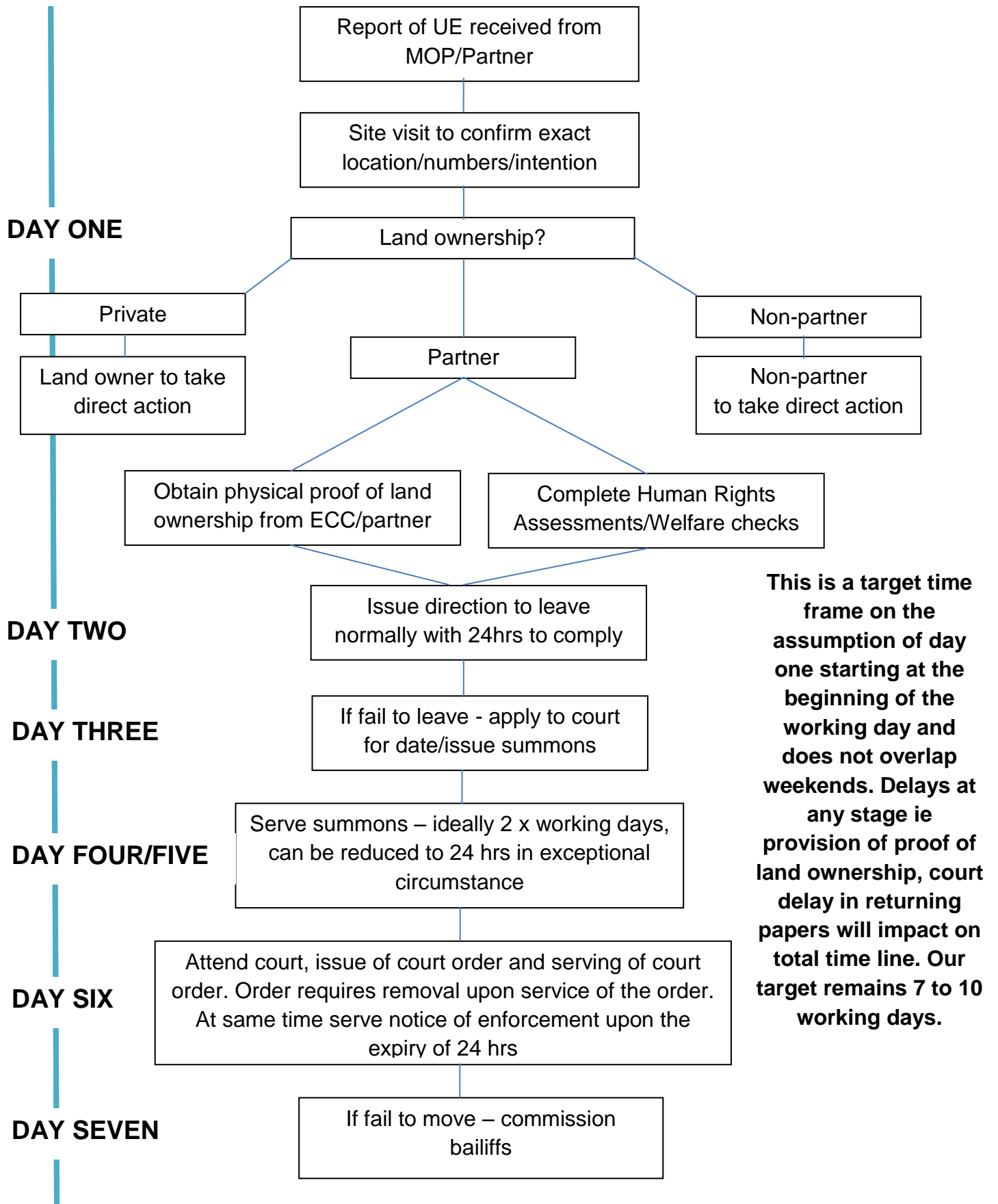


Apart from the above, field left clear.

Process

There has been some interest expressed reference the time frames involved in taking action against unauthorised encampments. The Essex Countywide Traveller unit will always ensure it acts in a lawful manner primarily using the powers granted to local authorities under Section 77/8 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. The application of this power required notice periods built in to ensure a fair and robust process which ensures we are not open to legal challenge. The flow chart/time line is :

TIME LINE



Indicator	Sub Division	May 13	Oct 13	May 14	Total
% of encampments where ECTU are involved		54%	66%	77%	
% visited within 1 working day		100%	97%	96%	
Number of encampments	Partner land	7	44	50	103
	Non-partner land	2	15	10	27
	Private	4	5	5	14
Number of encampments resolved	Through negotiated departure	7	41	32	80
	Through section 77 enforcement	0	3	16	3
% s77's completed within 10 working days		n/a	n/a	87%*	n/a
Number of pt 55's issued		0	0	0	0

* 2 encampments exceeded the 10 days, both where there was continuing movement between private and partner land on the same site.

General Liaison/Site Management

Horse issues – there is often an expectation that all things Gypsy/Traveller fall to the unit, including criminality, environmental health et al, and of course the control of horses. As mentioned before this is a specialist service which will require a secure and robust process and contractor in place in order to take direct action. Our colleagues in Norfolk and Suffolk have developed a policy, which could be adapted for operation in Essex, but it will need to be appropriately funded and resourced. The draft policy will be submitted to the joint committee for consideration.

Site licencing –discussions ongoing with Epping with reference to Site Licence monitoring/enforcement, which may be of interest to our other partners