

The Tharie Times

Issue 29, Summer 2021

Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of The Tharie Times newsletter. We had hoped that by the time we got around to writing this, we would be through the pandemic, but that is not the case. We have been busy to try and ensure that we can support people and keep them informed in relation to all the many changes that have taken place. We have been regularly updating both our Facebook page and the website with useful resources.

The pilot for the caravan preferential loan scheme is up and running in four regions and we are working closely with local MABS offices to ensure that we can support Travellers, if they wish to avail of these loans. We want to ensure that Travellers go to their local MABS to ensure that they are fully informed in relation to how this loan scheme operates.

We are excited to be involved in a pilot project looking at new ways to address Energy Poverty as experienced in Traveller accommodation, and are working with both Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, along with sustainable energy expert from Sligo IT to devise a model that will work for Travellers on sites. Both the Irish Traveller Movement and local Traveller groups are working with us on this pilot and we are hoping to persuade local authorities to engage with us in this pilot.

The Money Matters Facebook series – is a series of recorded interviews about money matters with our National Support and Development worker Denise Collins, where she addresses the questions which came from the Newcastlewest Primary Health care group, one of the various Traveller consultative groups that we work closely with to ensure that our work is relevant and addressing the needs of Travellers. This is

a valuable resource and could be used by other organisations to explain the work of MABS and how it can help. We have produced a series of videos which appear on our Facebook page to ensure that we keep people as informed and up to date as possible in the pandemic.

National Traveller MABS has been part of the steering group and organising committee for Traveller pride for more than a decade and Traveller Pride 2021 which begins on the 20th of September, and we give you some of the details on that.

Travellers are seeing an increase in suicide amongst the community and every Traveller organisation is touched by this issue. We are involved in the National Mental Health Network and we are aware that money worries can be a source of anxiety. We continue to work with this in mind to make both the MABS and Citizens information services as accessible as possible. We wanted to let you know about the collective campaign Travellers Preventing Suicide.

We hope to continue working with you all as we emerge from this pandemic. We know there continues to be plenty to be done.



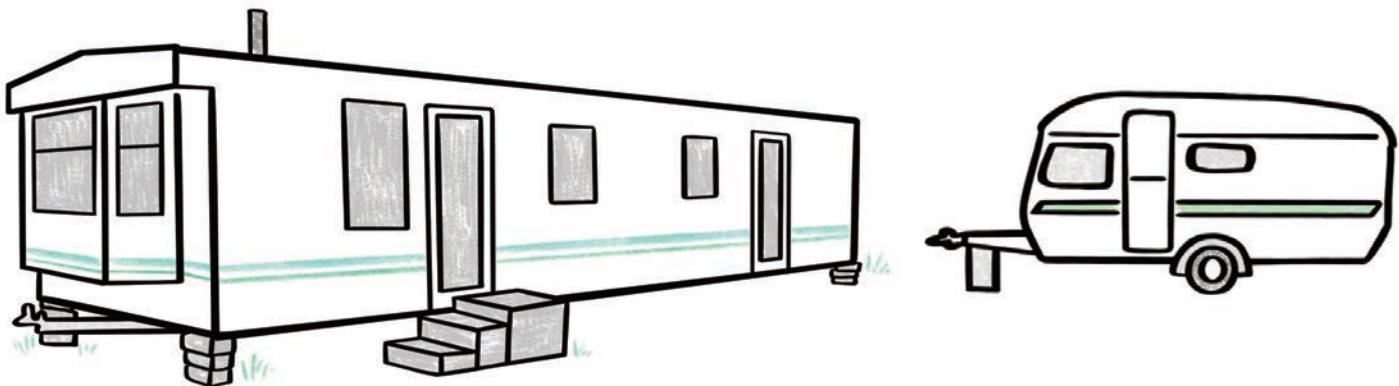
Dermot Sreenan



Nancy Power



Pilot Preferential Caravan Loan Scheme



The long awaited Pilot Preferential Caravan Loan Scheme is now up and running. It began on the 12th July in four local authority areas. Under the pilot, there are 10 loans available in each of the local authority pilot areas. The areas include, Cork City, Dublin City, Limerick City and County and South Dublin County Council areas. This scheme is a pilot that is an updated version of 'the National Scheme of Loans and Grants for the Purchase of Caravans by Travellers, 2000'.

The loan amount on offer is up to €30,000 and families will repay an amount that is calculated on the basis of their income and the expected lifespan of the mobile. If all loan repayments are made as per the loan agreement the balance of the loan outstanding will be written off at the end of the agreed loan repayment period. The pilot will run for six months at which time it will be evaluated. It is expected that

this scheme will be rolled out nationally following the evaluation of the pilot.

National Traveller MABS is a member of the working group on the 'Caravan Loan Scheme' that is hosted by the Traveller Accommodation unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. We have been working with other national and local Traveller organisations as well as MABS in the pilot areas to influence the terms of the pilot scheme. We are working to ensure that families who wish to avail of the scheme get budgeting advice and support from their local MABS prior to undertaking a loan.

For more information, contact Michelle Kearns at michelle_kearns@mabs.ie.

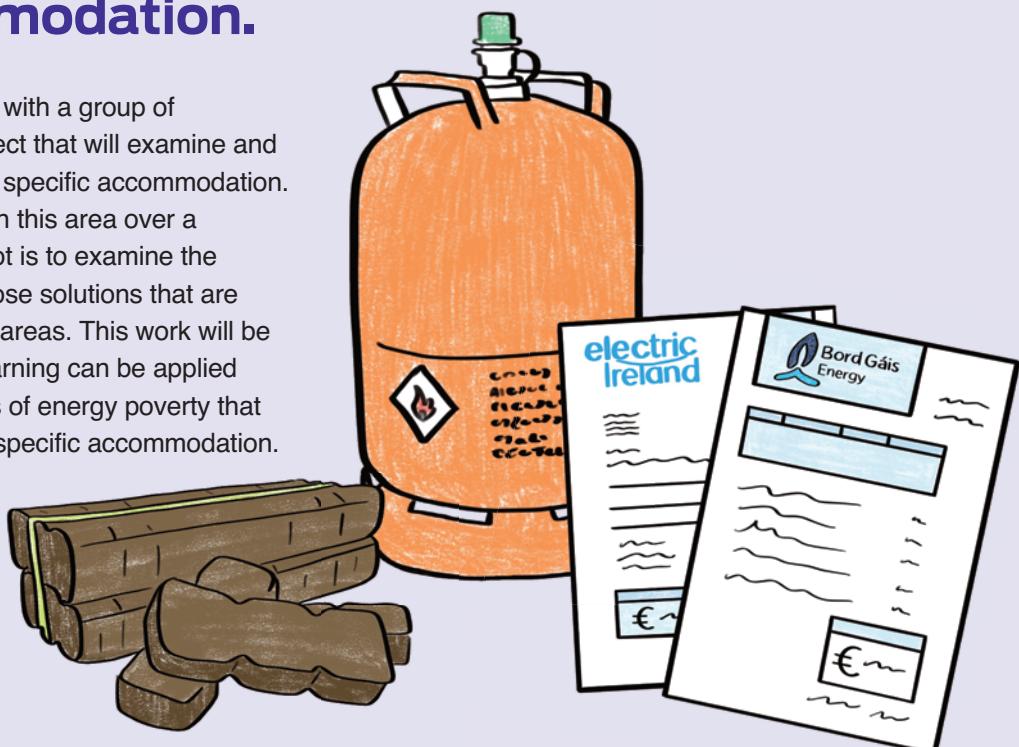
National Traveller MABS and Dublin South Region

Staff of Dublin South Region MABS met with staff of National Traveller MABS in February to discuss how we might work together to improve access to services for Travellers in the region and agreed to pilot a programme in the Dublin South Region. The aims of the pilot programme are to increase engagement of the Traveller community in

MABS in the Dublin south region, to increase cultural competency of staff in Dublin South Region MABS in relation to Traveller culture and to develop and strengthen relationships between MABS and local Traveller organisations in the Dublin South Region.

Pilot Project on Addressing Energy Poverty in Traveller Specific Accommodation.

National Traveller MABS is working with a group of stakeholders to develop a pilot project that will examine and address energy poverty in Traveller specific accommodation. This pilot follows on from our work in this area over a number of years. The aim of the pilot is to examine the causes of energy poverty and propose solutions that are implemented in one or several pilot areas. This work will be documented and it is hoped that learning can be applied nationally to address the high levels of energy poverty that occur for families living in Traveller specific accommodation. The agencies involved include, The Irish Traveller Movement, local Traveller organisations, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and Sligo IT and willing local authorities.



Money Matter Facebook Series

Together with the Traveller Primary Healthcare Team from West Limerick Resources Ltd in Newcastlewest we developed a 6 week Money Matters series on Facebook as part of their Wellness Wednesdays Campaign. The Money Matters series examined who National Traveller MABS and MABS are and what we do. It also looked at money matters and mental health, budgeting, saving and banking and borrowing. Each episode was developed with the primary

healthcare team and a member of the team presented each episode alongside our National Development worker Denise Collins. The series is available on the West Limerick Primary Health Care Project for Travellers Facebook page @WLPHCP and on the National Traveller MABS Facebook and YouTube channel.





Traveller Pride Week 2021

Traveller Pride Week will take place in September this year. Traveller Pride is a celebration of the contributions that Travellers make to their own community and to Irish Society as a whole. It celebrates the rich and unique culture, history and traditions of the Traveller Community. The theme for this year's Traveller Pride is "Stroger Together", celebrating how Travellers have held firm as a community and supported one another throughout the pandemic. The National Week kicks off on 20 September, while the local week events kick off on the 27 September. Keep an eye on @travellerpride2021 on Facebook and on your local Traveller organisation's Facebook and Twitter for event details.



Travellers Together Preventing Suicide

**TRAVELLERS TOGETHER
PREVENTING SUICIDE
2021 campaign**



**3rd of September 2021
Live Concert Recording**

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:
Sharyn Ward, Steo Wall, Trish Nolan,
The Feekers, Kathleen Keenan,
David Keenan, Joe Reilly,
David Collins & Musicians,
Nellie Hutchinson, Martin Mahon.
MC: Sharyn Ward & Pa Reilly

**Broadcasted on social media
on the 10th of September 2021
(World Suicide Prevention Day)
by local and national Traveller organisations .**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION Message Facebook
Page Travellers Together Preventing Suicide
or WhatsApp 087 377 050**

Travellers Together Preventing Suicide is a collective campaign taking place on the 10th September 2021 to highlight the issue of suicide amongst Travellers. This year a concert will be streamed online to voice the issue of suicide through the voices of Traveller singers, poets, actors and artists. If you are interested in taking part and would like more information visit the Travellers Together Preventing Suicide Facebook page @travellerstogether.