

EXCLUSIVE: HELLISH REALITY OF BEING A DELIVEROO RIDER



'Attacks leave us seriously on edge'

By MICHAEL DOYLE

DELIVEROO drivers have put together a danger map of the capital, highlighting the areas they have found to be risky.

Rider James* says he "agrees and disagrees" with some of the areas on it but it is an indication of the mainly foreign workers' experiences.

He told the Irish Sun: "Riders are seriously on edge at night and sometimes during the day. 'I've had rocks thrown at me recently by a gang of youths standing at the flats just off Pearse Street, luckily I blocked them with my bag and kept cycling as they chased me for a bit. 'Last Monday a van tried to run me off my bike when I was cycling to a customer in the middle of the day and last week I was picking up an order from Bunsen on Dame Street. We have to go into Temple Lane South and ring the bell to pick up. In the lane two men in their 30s were beating the life out of a homeless guy sleeping in the door of Molly Malone's pub. 'I had to shout at them to leave him alone while calling the Gardai. 'There's not a day goes by that there isn't at least one incident and Deliveroo seem to be deaf to complaints."

James added: "The only thing it seems Deliveroo have done recently is let us order a rape alarm with Deliveroo branding for 'free'."

"It was €5.99 if you include shipping, so basically it wasn't free."

"If you take longer on a few occasions you'll get an email threatening to permanently lock your account for being in breach of the supplier agreement."

Another rider, Frank*, received an email from bosses telling him "we've noticed that a number of orders delivered on your rider account took significantly longer to reach customers than we expected".

Warning the Dutchman that he must complete deliveries within a reasonable time period, they concluded: "We ask that you keep this in mind when you work in the future to avoid any breach of your supplier agreement, as this may result in you no longer being able to work with Deliveroo."

Frank told us: "I get the shorter deliveries under 2.5km done in one to five minutes. I always get these done on time. 'The problem is the longer rides which are 7.5km and up. I complete these in 20 to 30 minutes. Google Maps says a 7.5km cycle from Dublin city centre to Raheny should take around 27 minutes. But Frank said: "They say you should have arrived at a specific time and are late otherwise."

The Irish Sun understands a rider taking consistently longer to deliver orders will be informed at

least twice before the firm takes the decision to end their contract. Some Dublin workers went on strike in January over working conditions, security and delivery fees. Discussions took place last week to discuss an end to 'platform working' across the EU, a system which offers the likes of James and Frank no protection in law. Tanaiste Leo Varadkar wants drivers to be employed by the company, which has faced legal challenges around the world from couriers requesting basic rights. In the UK, a November report by the Police Federation claimed "the

intense pressure to complete jobs quickly... contributes to a culture of profit over safety."

The company's flotation on the London Stock Exchange in March was the largest in a decade, but it was also a disaster. Plagued by workers' rights concerns, shares slumped by 26 per cent on its first day, dubbed "Floperoo" and 'Deliveroo's after 70,000 small investors were left with losses. Deliveroo revealed prior to launch that it had set aside €130m

to cover potential legal costs from employment challenges by riders. And Fine Gael Senator Mary Seery-Kearney told the Irish Sun: "This company has actually told me that Ireland has not caught up with the rest of Europe when it comes to employment law so they are entitled to operate like this. 'The labour laws are being examined in Ireland and I know the Tanaiste is in favour of employing them." The Senator - who is an employment lawyer by trade - added: "The EU are

also in favour of ending this type of platform working so hopefully we'll see an end to this very soon. 'Sick pay and holidays should be the minimum all workers are entitled to and I'm urging them to change their approach. If they don't, the laws will hopefully soon be changed for them. 'The problem is you're dealing with a global company who will make you jump through hoops before any laws are changed."

James told how a year ago the average fee for a journey was about €3.90 but is now about €2.90, with riders often getting more in tips.

He added: "I would generally work from about 4pm to 12pm and on a good day could make €100 to €120 and on a bad day about €60, that's well below minimum wage for eight hours' work. 'More consistently we've been getting lower and lower fees. In fact lately the customers have been giving tips that equate to more than what Deliveroo are actually paying us to deliver the orders. 'The customers are subsidising a multi-billion euro company in paying couriers, paying for their food, delivery and then a tip."

The tragic death of Brazilian rider Thiago Cortes - knocked down while cycling on North Wall Quay last year - sparked an outpouring of grief among fellow delivery workers and well-wishers. It is a danger all the riders face and the Pandemic Unemployment Payment rescued James last year. He said: "I was knocked off my bike by a car when on a journey and I couldn't work for two or three months. I badly injured my wrists and ankles. 'I received nothing from Deliveroo while I was off. Thankfully the PUP had just been introduced and I had that to live off until I

could get back to work. This saved me being stuck with bills piling up and potentially becoming homeless. Because of the way Deliveroo works I'd have had no income and no ability to work for months if it wasn't for the PUP. Being self-employed, the Government makes it near impossible to claim any social welfare for whatever reason. 'And James says he is being forced to compete against some contractors who have Deliveroo work accounts on a number of different phones and deliver multiple orders in their cars. He explained: "You often hear complaints from

people about the food being cold when it arrives. 'This is usually because people have multiple work accounts and go around delivering a number of orders because they could have four phones on the go. 'They're essentially robbing work from others. I've to work harder and harder and longer and longer to make any money at it. 'It is understood Deliveroo does not permit one rider to have multiple work accounts and it investigates where this issue arises. 'Labour employment affairs rep Senator Marie Sherlock met with Deliveroo chiefs earlier this year. She told us: "In reality they are hiding behind Irish employment legislation. A lack of sick pay, no assistance from the company if a rider is injured in the course of their work, pay as low as €2.90 per delivery, wholly inadequate protective clothing and the lack of an emergency alert function on the app are among some of the major concerns articulated by the Deliveroo workers I have met." She added: "It has become completely cut-throat. It's about time Deliveroo's model was challenged. 'Rider names have been changed."



Tough gig... riders can earn a pittance

● Drivers 'earn under minimum wage' after cuts

● Given no help if they're injured delivering order

STRIKE CYCLE



Deliveroo gave me nothing after car hit me

Tragic... Thiago and, above, vigil after he was killed while cycling



Workers can earn €13 an hr says firm

By IRISH SUN REPORTER

A COMPANY spokesperson said: "Deliveroo is proud to offer flexible, self-employed work to more than 1,000 riders in Ireland who deliver great food from more than 1,800 restaurant partners across Ireland. 'The vast majority of riders tell us that they value the total flexibility they enjoy while working with Deliveroo, alongside the ability to earn over €13 at busiest times. 'Only this month we ran a survey which found that 88 per cent of riders said they were happy with the company and flexibility was their priority. Riders are at the heart of Deliveroo and we have a dedicated rider engagement support team in place to help riders with any concerns that they may have and to make sure they feel supported at all times. 'Riders are entirely free to decide how they deliver food, and to take any route they want. However, as set out in the rider contract which every rider signs, they are expected to complete any orders they choose to accept within a reasonable time."

Rider Rodrigo de Oliveira added: "I like working with Deliveroo as it means I have complete flexibility over my day and is a good way to make money. 'The rider customer service is also good and the app is the most user friendly compared with other companies."

Deliveroo provided some examples of positive rider feedback. One said: "The flexibility of working when you want is one of the greatest things offered."

Another said: "From my experience and comparison with competition, Deliveroo is by far the best and fairest company."

'Cut-throat'... Sherlock



ISOLATED TRIO FLEE

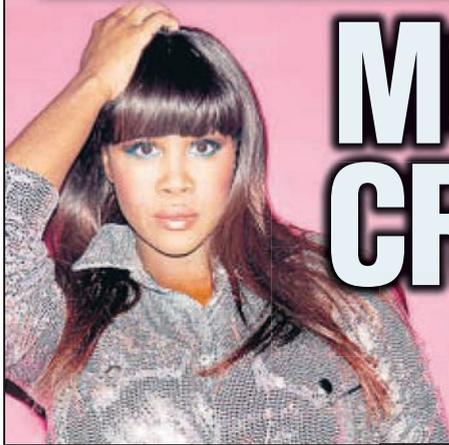
By **BARRY MORAN**

A SEARCH was under way last night after three people fled a mandatory quarantine hotel. One of the trio is understood to have returned yesterday.
Full Story — Pages Six and Seven

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MOTSI CRISIS

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WORLD CUP QUALIFIER

IRELAND.....0
LUXEMBOURG..1

IT LUX BAD FOR KENNY

NIGHTMARE GAME AS SHOCKING EFFORT KILLS OUR HOPES



TEEN'S BODY SHAME HELL

She's dying before my eyes

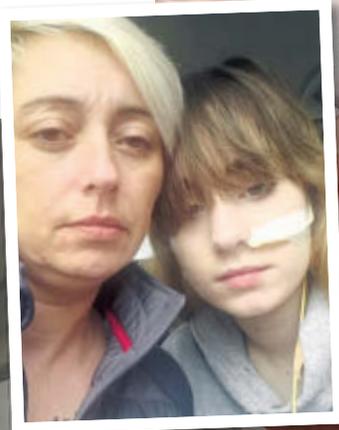
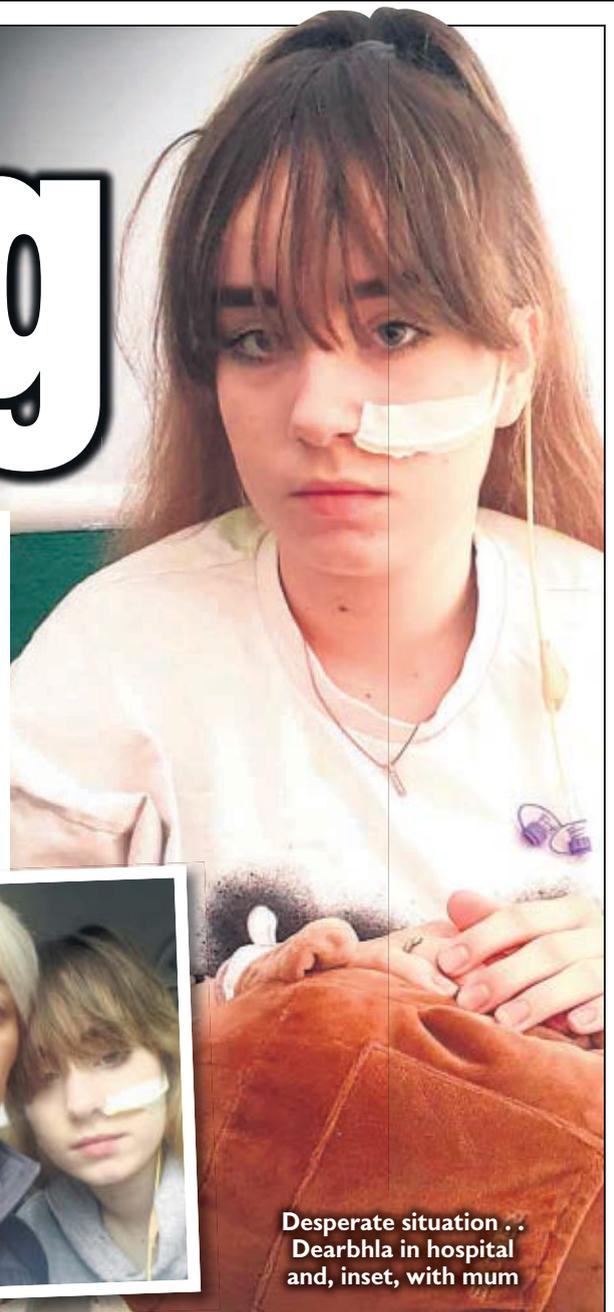
EXCLUSIVE by **MICHAEL DOYLE**

THE mum of a girl who refuses to eat after being trolled online has pleaded for help, saying: "She's dying before my eyes."

Dearbhla McCrave, 13, is being fed through a tube in hospital in Drogheda, Co Louth, after she stopped eating due to being called fat on social media.

Mum Elizabeth begged: "She needs to see a specialist — but there's literally no one to see her."

Full Story — Pages 4 & 5



Desperate situation . . . Dearbhla in hospital and, inset, with mum

DEARBHILA STOPS EATING AFTER ONLINE ABUSE

DESPERATE MUM BEGS FOR HELP

FOR TEEN WITH EATING DISORDER

I'm at the end of my tether, I'm losing her and I don't know how to help her



EXCLUSIVE by MICHAEL DOYLE

THE mum of a 13-year-old girl starving herself after being called fat on social media has begged for help saying: "She's dying in front of my eyes."

Dearbhla McCrave – who told her mum all she wants is to be pretty and skinny – is being fed through a tube in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda with medics fearful she could slip into a coma at any moment.

She had her phone seized last week after making a TikTok video from her hospital bed in which she said: "Not recovering, only dying."

Distraught mum Elizabeth McCabe, from Dundalk, Co Louth, says her child urgently needs to see a psychologist but they can't get in touch with one and the hospital doesn't have any for children.

She's terrified she's about to lose Dearbhla, who has taken an overdose, and has nowhere else to turn.

The emotional mum-of-four told the Irish Sun: "I'm at the end of my tether now, I don't know what to do because I'm losing her. She's literally dying in front of my eyes."

She's in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital and she's being fed through a tube, but they're only giving her enough calories to keep her body functioning.

"The nursing staff there are absolutely amazing but they can't send her home. She could fall into a coma at any moment such is the seriousness of her condition."

"She needs to see a specialist who can get inside her head and find out what's going on – but there's literally no one to see her and Lourdes is not a mental health hospital. She's only a baby."

Elizabeth, who has two autistic children, including Dearbhla's twin sister Cayla, said the problems all started in February last year when an anonymous person called her daughter fat on Snapchat.

She added that following this, Dearbhla's eating habits completely transformed. Since then she has deteriorated, resulting in major mental health issues, regular hospital visits, a stint in child treatment centre Linn Dara and an overdose.

Elizabeth explained: "Dearbhla is such a beautiful child. She has eight distinctions in musical theatre and has so much going for her."

"And she hasn't got a pick on her, she's beautiful but this has affected her so much."

"It all started right at the beginning of the pandemic, about February of last year."

"After it she said she wanted to be a vegetarian, then she went vegan and then she stopped eating altogether."

"There wasn't any weight there to begin with but she has literally faded away. I've been in and out of hospital with her for months. Then she got a place in Linn Dara, which is a specialist facility for children in Dublin."

"She was in there for five weeks. She found it very difficult, she self-harmed and I was told I'd be able to take better care of her at home."

"She came home on a Sunday night and the following Thursday she overdosed."

"She was rushed back to Our Lady of Lourdes, where she's been for over a week."

"In that time, she's seen no psychologist and no psychiatrist and that's what she needs. She was under a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services consultant when she was in Linn Dara."

"The hospital has been emailing her and all she's saying is she's trying to see if there's another place for her in Linn Dara – when they told me before that she would be better off at home."

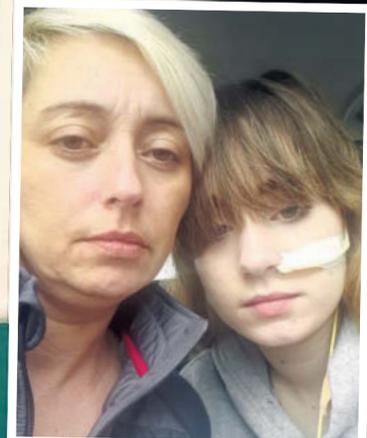
"Meanwhile, my daughter is dying in front of my very eyes and I don't know what to do to try and help her."

Elizabeth also revealed that Dearbhla made a TikTok video from her hospital bed last Sunday night in which she said, "Not



She said, 'all I want is to be pretty, be skinny'

MATTER OF LIFE & DEATH
Dearbhla is fed through tube to keep her going



Distraught mum... Elizabeth with daughter



Healthy and happy... teenager before

● DEARBHLA, 13, CALLED 'FAT' ON SOCIAL MEDIA

● NOW A FEEDING TUBE IS KEEPING HER ALIVE

recovering, only dying", which has really distressed everyone.

She added: "Her phone was taken off her in hospital after she made this video."

"It has really upset everyone because it's clearly where her mind is at and no one can do anything to help her."

"The school contacted me about this because a number of other parents in the school had seen the TikTok and were really concerned about their own children."

"She had said to me that 'all I want is to be pretty, all I want is to be skinny'."

"And she's all those things any-

way – but that's all she thinks about, it is awful that this has taken over her life."

"Her head is gone and I just don't know what to do anymore. She needs help desperately."

In a statement to the Irish Sun, the HSE said: "The HSE cannot comment on individual cases for privacy and patient confidentiality reasons."

"However, the HSE is committed to providing a child and family centred service. All cases are needs assessed

and treatments are tailored accordingly to needs."

Meanwhile Sinn Fein's Mental Health spokesman Mark Ward said the main problem faced by people with eating disorders is the lack of services in their own communities.

He told the Irish Sun: "When people receive treatment for eating disorders, a lot can depend on where they live in terms of their access to services."

"Linn Dara is a specialised facility for children but it is in Dublin and nowhere

else in the country has something that's similar."

"When children are discharged, they don't have any after-treatment care facilities in their own communities. Sadly, when this girl left Linn Dara she overdosed. It's a common story and a vicious cycle."

"There are only three hospital beds for adults with eating disorders in the country and they are all in Dublin."

"This means that when that girl turns 18, there are no services really at all for her. There are more beds for children with eating disorders than there are for adults. "We need to invest more in

mental health services and the services for children and adults with eating disorders."

"Overclosing is the most common form of suicide attempt among young people. I am in the early stages of bringing something to Government to try and limit the access to drugs for young people."

"If a 13-year-old is in need of such care and treatment at this age, it increases the chances of her requiring acute services when she becomes an adult."

"We need to do more and invest more to ensure the right services are available across the country."

Help's at hand to aid your recovery

By AOIFE FINNERAN

EATING disorders are complex psychological disorders that affect every aspect of a person's functioning.

It's estimated 188,895 people in Ireland will experience an eating disorder at some point in their lives, with approximately 1,757 new cases each year in the 10-49 age group.

Treatment options vary from patient to patient, from self-help methods to counselling, psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy or recovery programmes in hospitals or treatment centres.

Eating Disorders Association Bodywhys provides resources to help young people, parents, teachers and carers deal with body image issues. It also offers a guide to healthier social media usage.

The organisation states: "If you find that time online or on social media is impacting in a negative way, then it would be helpful to reflect on this and consider how to change your online behaviours to support your well-being."

It's important to be conscious of how content online is affecting us and to make changes to support ourselves in a positive way.

"It is important to try to stay mindful when you are online or using social media. Notice how the content you engage with online is affecting you."

"Try to limit exposure to content which is making you judge yourself more harshly or which makes you feel like changing yourself."

● Bodywhys offers face-to-face and online support. Contact them on 01 210 7906 or bodywhys.ie.

@IrishSunOnline



Concerns... TD Ward

TRAVELLER FAMILIES FORCED TO LIVE IN ABJECT SQUALOR

THE FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

EXCLUSIVE by MICHAEL DOYLE
RESIDENTS of these neglected halting sites are forced to go to sorting offices to get their mail as postmen won't even come in, it is claimed.

And one family of 13 say their social welfare payments have been stopped as Fingal County Council does not recognise their address at the St Mary's and St Joseph's sites in Finglas, Dublin.

Overcrowding, poor sanitation, no bin services and a dire lack of facilities for children are among the deplorable living conditions faced by Travellers living in these areas – which were set up as temporary solutions more than 25 years ago.

Mental health issues among adults are rife and most families in two sites the Irish Sun visited were struck down with Covid-19 at the height of the pandemic because large groups of men, women and children are forced to live on top of each other.

St Mary's and St Joseph's are home to close to 200 Travellers, who say they have been neglected by the Government, local authorities and Irish society.

Residents are pleading with Fingal County Council to improve conditions, with children playing in rundown dirty facilities, surrounded by burnt-out and dangerous cleaning units, overflowing drains and hazardous roads and footpaths.

Michael Collins, a youth worker for the Irish Traveller Movement, lives close by in the Dublin County Council Avila Park site but is constantly checking on the welfare of those living in the two neighbouring sites.

He said there are 40,000 Travellers in Ireland and little, if anything, is being done to integrate them into society.

He told the Irish Sun: "Living conditions are very bad in here. There's dirt everywhere and that's because there's no bins or sanitation services."

"Children are forced to play in these areas because there are just no facilities for them. It's like a Third World country when you drive in here and because it's just off the main road and no one can see it. It's an out-of-sight, out-of-mind kind of approach."

"There's complete neglect from Fingal County Council, there's no mediator to even go about improving facilities in here."

"St Mary's was set up as a temporary site in the early 1990s and it's been the same way and hasn't been touched ever since."

"There's a lack of opportunities for people and that all trickles down to every other aspect of life. The postman won't even come in, so people don't get any post and have to go to a sorting office."

He added: "Overcrowding is a major issue in these sites and when Covid-19 hit most people were in some way affected by it, they hadn't a chance of avoiding it."

Martin Doherty and his wife Shirley have three grandchildren and are expecting their 12th child.

They moved into St Joseph's halting site ten months ago and are willing to pay whatever rent the Council ask for – but they've had a constant battle to be allowed stay.

Martin told the Irish Sun: "We have a bay here and I'd pay whatever the Council want in rent but they won't take it."

"They'd rather get us out so they can develop this land. We're here not doing any harm to anyone."

"Our social welfare payments have stopped because we need an address and they won't recognise this address. It's a constant fight."

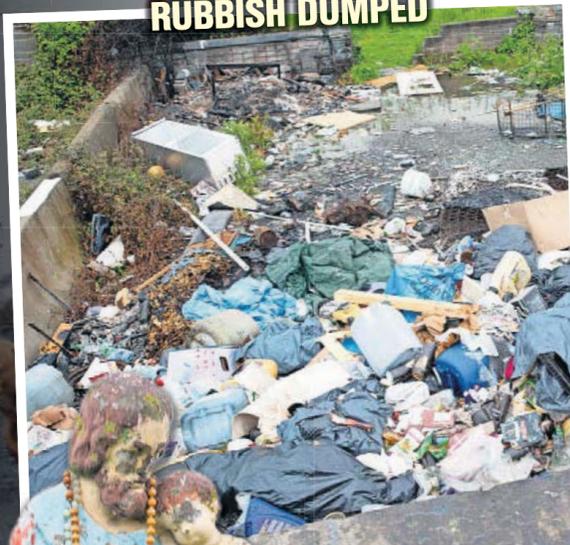
"Our payments were stopped because, although we're living here, there's no legal proof that we're living here. But we've been living here for nearly a year."

Shirley added: "There's seven of the children living here with us, and the one on the way."

"They won't sign the bay over to

● **Overcrowded sites, bad sanitation, no bins**

RUBBISH DUMPED



DISGRACEFUL

Families are forced to live in abject squalor because of neglect



No place for children... John, Isaac and David play in dirty and dangerous conditions

● **Mental health issues & struck very hard by Covid**

DECREPIT CLEANING UNIT



KIDS' PLAY AREA

Children are at risk in their own home at neglected halting site

It's like a Third World country in here

Witness to shameful state of halting sites... Michael Collins

us and that's all we want. We don't bother nobody. There's loads of children here and we could be thrown out any morning. They could come with the Gardai and try and get us out.

"We just want to be left alone to live normal lives and have basic things provided to us that other people have."

"They would rather we were living in the mainstream and don't want us living with our own. They don't want the bother of having to look after the sites. They won't sign

the bay over to us. There's no point trying to get a bigger caravan because we could be forced out of here at any moment."

Martin added: "They won't give us any bin services so we get a build-up of rubbish and we just have to burn it, we've no option."

"We just want a bit of living for the children. There's no human being in Ireland living the way we have to live."

Father-of-four John Mongan said he's willing to pay what it takes to have his bay signed over to him.

He said: "There's myself and the wife and four children and we'll pay whatever it takes, €30, €40, €50, just to be allowed stay and have a legal address."

"We need proper legal addresses so we can have all the rights we're entitled to. No one else in the world would get away with it."

"Then when Covid-19 we all got it and were very sick. Everyone is fine now but no medical teams or doctors even came in to check on us. We just want to live like normal human beings and just to be

treated like human beings."

Michael's aunt Kathleen Collins is also involved in the Irish Traveller Movement and is urging the Government to do something to save the mental health and the lives of so many families.

She said: "Travellers are losing their culture because they're not allowed travel anymore, there's huge issues with mental health, they're not allowed to work or just can't get work."

"Many will do their Leaving Cert and some might go a bit further

but they're still being discriminated against when they try to find work. Because of their accents, they won't be offered jobs."

"There's very little employment, if any, for Travellers. I've been talking to cousins and friends who live in England and they've been recognised as an ethnic group for years."

"The sites are well maintained and looked after, the trailers are changed every year." She added: "When young lads might be forced to leave school early they might straight away they're put into

apprenticeships."

Speaking about the conditions in St Mary's and St Joseph's, Kathleen said: "The Council are supposed to be looking after these areas."

And she insisted: "None of these areas are looked after, it's like people don't want to come in to look after it. It's hidden away."

"The living conditions are very bad and children are out playing in this and their physical health is very bad."

"It affects a lot of other areas of your life and mental health. People

in here would be very vulnerable, they don't trust anyone from outside their community because they have been discriminated against their whole life."

"There is so many jobs and businesses in Finglas village but there's not one young Traveller boy and girl working in any of those shops because no one will employ them."

"There's so much overcrowding that when Covid was at its worst most people got the virus. It was in an awful state."

"People were sharing toilets and

cleaning facilities. Men, women and children got Coronavirus."

"No one was even tested because there was no testing facilities available, everybody got sick."

"We want the Council, the Government and Traveller groups to come together to find a way to get Travellers out of living in such deplorable living conditions. There has to be a better way."

A report last week by the Children's Ombudsman on the Spring Lane halting site in Cork city found many kids suffered skin conditions