

PR 4441

For Immediate Release

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## **Plan your journey to Appleby Fair using [www.applebyfair.org](http://www.applebyfair.org)**

Sent on Behalf of Multi Agency Strategic  
Co-ordinating Group for Appleby Horse Fair

The official website for Appleby Horse Fair - [www.applebyfair.org](http://www.applebyfair.org) - is up and running for 2011 with the latest information for people planning to attend Britain's largest horse fair.

The Fair annually attracts around 10,000 Gypsies and Travellers and over 30,000 other visitors to Appleby-in-Westmorland in Cumbria from 2 June to 8 June.

The Horse Fair has a unique build up which sees around 200 traditional horse drawn bow-tops and over 1,500 caravans travelling through Cumbria as Gypsies and Travellers make their way to Appleby. To accommodate this extra traffic safely for all the communities concerned certain road restrictions apply. For the welfare of horses, additional grazing areas and water supplies are provided at certain temporary stopping places and transit sites.

Gypsies and Travellers attending Appleby Horse Fair are being encouraged not to arrive in Cumbria too early. The public agencies who undertake the operational planning for the event (Multi Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group or MASCG) are asking those travelling to the Fair to arrive in Cumbria from the 23 May 2011 onwards, and to plan their journey using the transit sites and temporary stopping places provided.

MASCG Gypsy and Traveller representative, Billy Welch, said: "There are a limited number of temporary stopping places for motors available, so if you're travelling to the Fair by motorised transport, please don't arrive too early.

"The Appleby Fair website shows the organised temporary stopping places, so please use the details on there to plan your route and then please use and respect the temporary stopping places being provided.

"As well as this traditional roadside verge encampments can continue to be used where it is safe to do so by motorised vehicles unless signage indicates otherwise."

“We want to maintain the character of the traditional Horse Fair, and because of our commitment to the welfare of the horses most traditional roadside grazing, resting and stopping places for horses are not affected by these temporary restrictions.

“On some camps, verges and other sites, clear signs will be displayed which indicate to Gypsies and Travellers, and to residents and visitors, that the site is reserved for horses, bow-tops and other horse drawn turn-outs. We want all communities to have a positive, safe and enjoyable Appleby Fair.”

[www.applebyfair.org](http://www.applebyfair.org) contains information for local residents, visitors and Gypsies and Travellers. It includes details about public transport arrangements and an interactive map of car parks and where public amenities are located during the Fair’s duration.

For visitor information about Appleby-in-Westmorland please contact the town’s tourist information centre telephone 017683 51177 or email [tic@applebytown.org.uk](mailto:tic@applebytown.org.uk)

The website contains information on the transit sites and temporary stopping places and when they open. The main licensed encampments for Appleby Fair will not open until 4am on Thursday 2 June 2011. Any organised or planned encampments in a 1.5 mile zone centred around Fair Hill in Appleby must have planning consent and a site licence and cannot be occupied before Thursday 2 June 2011.

The temporary stopping places for the 2011 Appleby Horse Fair in South Lakeland and Eden are:

**South Lakeland:**

- Middleton Common, Sedbergh
- Devil's Bridge, Kirkby Lonsdale
- Rawthey Bridge, Sedbergh
- Scrogg Bank, Sedbergh

**Eden District:**

- Alston
- Cote Moor (Fell End)
- Melmerby
- Sandford
- Warcop (Horse drawn only, no motorised vehicles)
- Soulby (Very limited space for motorised vehicles)
- Watergate Bottom
- Brough

Please note that the temporary stopping places at North Stainmore and the Turning Circle in Church Brough will not be available for the 2011 Horse Fair.

**Notes for editors**

Background to Appleby Horse Fair

The Fair has been in existence for at least 300 years, and probably longer. It is the largest horse fair in Britain and amongst the oldest in Europe. Although traditionally the

main trading days were the Monday Tuesday and Wednesday, in recent years by far the busiest days are from the Friday to the Sunday. The event attracts around 10,000 Gypsies and Travellers and over 30,000 other visitors to Appleby. It transforms the town of Appleby for the week, as it normally has a population of around 2,500 people.

The fair has a primary connection with Fair Hill, which is in the ownership of Appleby Town Council. The Town Council leases the field for a fee to Travellers during Fair week for use as a caravan site and as a tethering ground for their horses. Much of the horse dealing takes place at the crossroads by Fair Hill, and on the Sands by the River Eden, where nearby roads are closed for periods to allow horses to be shown and traded.

#### Multi Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (MASCg)

In October 2007, the Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (MASCg) was set up to bring together and co-ordinate the work of the key public agencies that have a regulatory role at the fair.

The MASCg consists of representatives from the Gypsy and Traveller Community, Eden District Council, Cumbria Constabulary, Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, Cumbria NHS, North West Ambulance Service, RSPCA, Environment Agency, South Lakeland District Council, Highways Agency and HMRC.

The objective of the plan is to make the Fair a safer and more enjoyable event for residents, Gypsies and Travellers and visitors. The improvement plan has been adopted by all the agencies involved and will form the basis on which all MASCg partners will apply their resources.

**Media enquiries to Media Officer Chris Little on 01228 226335.**