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| |  | | --- | | https://gallery.mailchimp.com/35672c7b3352d7293a040a6af/images/098e9c4f-e087-4bec-8208-057229032a7f.jpgIt is with great sadness that we announce the passing away of Anne Wilson the Vice Chair of the Surrey Gypsy Traveller Communities Forum. Anne was a colleague, a friend and a founder member of the Surrey Gypsy and Traveller Communities Forum which was set up in 1994. Born and brought up in Surrey she was part of the landscape having lived her entire life here. As a young child Ann, had a natural talent for sport and reading and recalled writing letters for her family and community at the tender age of six. She recounted stories of attending the races with her Dad and picking up betting tips and reading the boards for him. In those days there was a great deal of open negative stereotypes about the Gypsy & Traveller community.  Ann challenged these stereotypes when she had her own children, battling with schools and authorities to get a fair deal for her daughter. Ann’s children stayed in school up to the age of sixteen acting as role models for other children on the site. This passion for education and her community was recognised in 2014 when she was included in the Queens Honours list for her services to the Gypsy and Traveller Community, the MBE title was well deserved and was a proud moment for all of us in the SMEF community. Ann was also a committed Christian and part of the ‘Light and Life Church’. Ann and her husband Michael did a lot of good work going to London every Sunday to help homeless people. I will remember Anne as a striking, strong, dignified woman with a passion for her people, knowledgeable about her culture and a firm commitment to challenge the inequalities that beset her people. RIP Ann, we will miss you. | |