



2020/21 ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT GUIDE

This report sets out all you need to know about Leeds GATE's work as a charity in the **year 2020-2021**.

INTRO TO LEEDS GATE!

We are a membership organisation for Gypsy and Traveller people living across West Yorkshire. We support our members to access the things they need and advocate for themselves and have their voices heard.

Leeds GATE has been working for 19 years to improve the lives of Gypsy and Traveller people.

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CHAIR'S REPORT



As you will see from this report, our team have had a busy year - returning to delivering in-person groups and services and maintaining and building relationships with our members. It's been a brilliant year for GATE with services expanding to West Yorkshire, new staff and new projects.

I am proud to see how many members use our services and space, especially how our youth groups are thriving. It's great to see how comfortable people are in our centre.

Huge thanks go to our staff, volunteers and our funders who all contribute to making GATE such a hub of activity for our communities. Special thanks to all our board members who work quietly in the background to keep everything running smoothly and safely, we really appreciate the time you give to us.

It has been especially great to welcome our new board members Sinead Price and Kathleen Connors who have taken to their roles so well and contribute a lot to our meetings. You are inspiring others all around you.

Finally, thanks to our members, you keep getting involved and pushing this organisation forward. I can't wait to see what we achieve next year.



ELIZABETH SPAVEN
LEEDS GATE CHAIR

CEO'S INTRODUCTION



Last year I ended my report by saying I was confident our future was full of hope and change and I am so happy that this past year proved just that.

We moved to deliver in-person groups and services again and were pleased to see old members return and new members engage. We have had many new staff join our team and are delighted with the skills, experience and passion they have brought with them. Members continue to push for change in their own lives, running campaigns against the Police, Crime, Courts and Sentencing Bill, producing training and resources for services and leading health needs assessments across West Yorkshire.

The big news for us is that in September 2021 we learnt our building was to be sold by auction in 6 weeks' time, never giving up hope we set to work with our members and our funders to secure our future. Using my mother-in-law's saying of "Shy Bairns Get Nowt" and our Leeds GATE value of creativity and bravery, we were able to work with our long-term funder Lankelly Chase and purchase our building outright. We are so excited about what the future holds.



ELLIE ROGERS
LEEDS GATE CEO

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Statement of Financial Activities shows net income for the year of £181,001 and funds on 30 November 2021 stood in total at £536,665, of which £421,563 were restricted. 2021 has seen the continuing impact of the global pandemic, which combined with other significant economic factors has led to very difficult working conditions for all organisations. Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange has maintained a flexible and positive approach to its work in these challenging circumstances and has continued to provide a responsive and high-quality service to its community members and others.

Helped by its strong relationships with funders, Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange has had a good year and remains in a strong position financially. Income (both restricted and unrestricted) has increased to £621,688, an increase of £161,994 from the previous year. This has helped the Charity to maintain its reserves and safeguard its future sustainability.

Expenditure in the 12 months to November 2021 has increased to £602,671. This is due partly to a gradual return to face-to-face working, but mostly to the increased level of project and partnership activities that Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange have been involved with; these include Moving for Change, a major Lottery-funded national initiative. Some project activities and advocacy services have still not returned to normal running, and the Charity has also faced some difficulties in recruiting new staff, hence expenditure is significantly below income for the year. However, Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange have continued to use digital technology to support its members and maximise community engagement throughout the period.

In many respects, prospects for the next 12 months remain uncertain, but Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange expects a continued return to all of its services running normally. The Charity has learned many lessons from its experience during the pandemic and has also proved its resilience whilst remaining true to its values. On behalf of the Charity, I would like to warmly thank the staff team, volunteers and funders for their dedication, perseverance and creativity over the 12 months of this report and beyond.

ANDY BAGLEY
LEEDS GATE TREASURER

OUR TEAM

Thank you to our incredible staff and board members who make everything Leeds GATE does possible.



STAFF

Angela Allen

Bernard Cunningham

Charlotte James

Cindy-Lou Price

Claire Ahmed

Ellie Rogers

Grace Cunningham

Heather Binns

Jacopo Rancone

Kari Griffiths

Kathleenanne Boswell

Kirsty Rourke

Mags Price

Mary Cunningham

Nicola Bowles

Rachel Cooper

Rachel Trafford

Savana Lowther

Sharon Hague

Teresa Birtle

Thomas Gaffney

BOARD

Elizabeth Spaven

Kathleen Boswell

Sinead Price

Andy Bagley

Sinead Cregan

Roxanne Nazir



A HUGE THANKYOU TO OUR FUNDERS!



Ambasáid na hÉireann
Embassy of Ireland



West Yorkshire
Health and Care Partnership



Public Health
England



Leeds
Clinical Commissioning Group



Sir Ken and
Lady Morrison
Fund





CHANGES FOR INDIVIDUALS

We work with individuals and families to address issues affecting their lives and make positive choices. We build confidence and ensure members have access to the services and support they need. We encourage members to participate in personal development and learn new skills. We help to improve physical and mental health.

LEEDS GATE SERVICES TEAM

11

Using Income Maximisation checks our advocates helped members access: **£25,355** including help to set up new benefits claims- e.g. UC and monthly payments, successful appeals and back dates of money owed- e.g, for PIP

1800
ADVOCACY
APPOINTMENTS
DELIVERED

Our team now covers mental health support, suicide prevention, criminal justice, and health. During this reporting period, our advocacy and services team has gone from strength to strength, gaining four staff members! We have extended our work across West Yorkshire, including Wakefield, Bradford and Kirklees and expanded the services we offer.

While providing key advocacy support around benefits, accommodation and health, our team of advocates now specialises in multiple areas to provide high-quality support on more issues that matter most to the community. We recruited a Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Worker, a Criminal Justice Advocate and an Advocate to work across Wakefield and Bradford.

Two members (pictured below) took on 12-month traineeships in the Services Team as Mental Health Support Worker and Hate Crime Support Worker, enabling them to develop and share their skills at GATE. Helping to support the most members with poor mental health is often linked to experiences of racism and trauma.

Cindy-Lou
Admin Assistant



Bernard
*Mental Health
Support Worker*



CARE OF POST SERVICE

“Without Care of Post I wouldn't have any way of receiving letters. I know GATE keep them safe until I am able to collect them”

147

FAMILIES REGISTERED FOR THE CARE OF POST SERVICE

“I wouldn't know about my hospital appointments if I didn't get my post at GATE. Staff read my letters to me over the phone when I am not able to get to the office to collect them”

OUR FAVOURITE MOMENTS

Some of our staff team's favourite moments from 2020-2021.



"Buying our building!"



"Recruiting health champions and seeing them grow in confidence sharing their story to make change in health systems"



"Getting back to supporting people face to face during outreach visits."



"Having our first Men's group."



"Seeing a nine-year-old child who could not read and had never been to school, attend a science lesson we had arranged through the university."



"Members enjoying our flower sessions."



"Every day working with our young people is great, but I think taking the young people on a summer residential was the best. They loved every minute of it."



"Taking members on a treat day and baking in the women's group with some members who had never baked before."



"Having time when members and staff all get together in person again. There's a lot of laughter as well as shared understanding."

MEMBER'S STORIES

We build trusted relationships and are led by what our members want to work on.

DEBBIE

Debbie lives on a caravan site alone and has long-term mental health and respiratory issues. She accumulated a significant debt both for gas and electricity bills. After working to maximise her income and referrals were made to specialists, all debt was eventually cleared and left Debbie feeling able to make affordable payments to keep on top of her finances moving forward.

Debbie shared she feels far less stressed and very happy with this outcome. Debbie shared news of this outcome with others which in turn, led to several other Leeds GATE members feeling able to come forward with advocacy requests and ask for support around energy bills and debt.

Chloe moved onto a Bradford site following the breakdown of her family with no financial

means and poor mental health. With the support of the Health Advocate, Chloe disclosed she was struggling following past trauma she experienced and was connected to support from her GP.

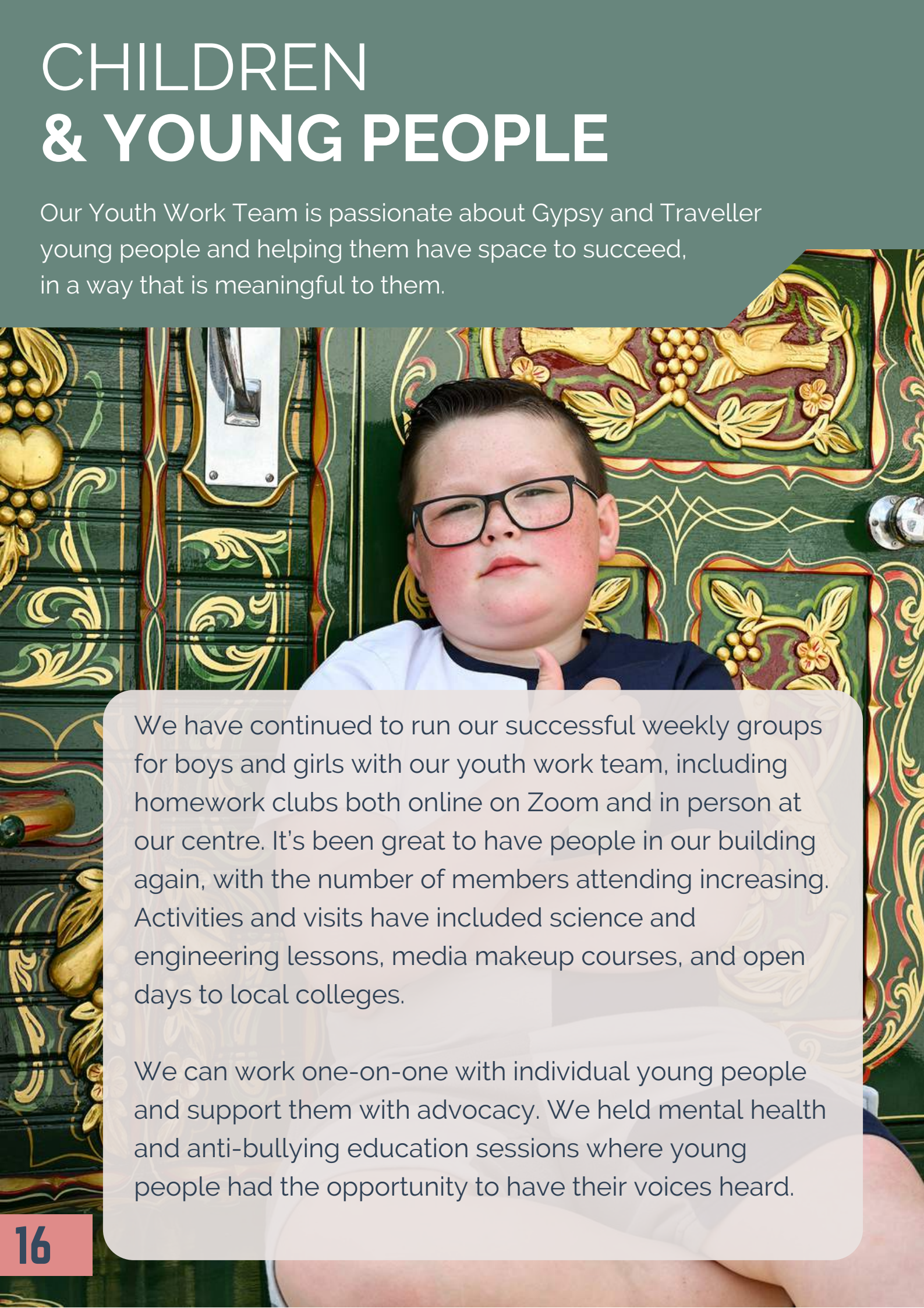
CHLOE

The idea of talking therapies was openly discussed and Chloe is now enrolled with the Wellbeing College to learn strong coping strategies. She is also working towards Maths and English qualifications. As a member of our steering group and Health Champion, Chloe is passionate about addressing poor mental health in teenagers.



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

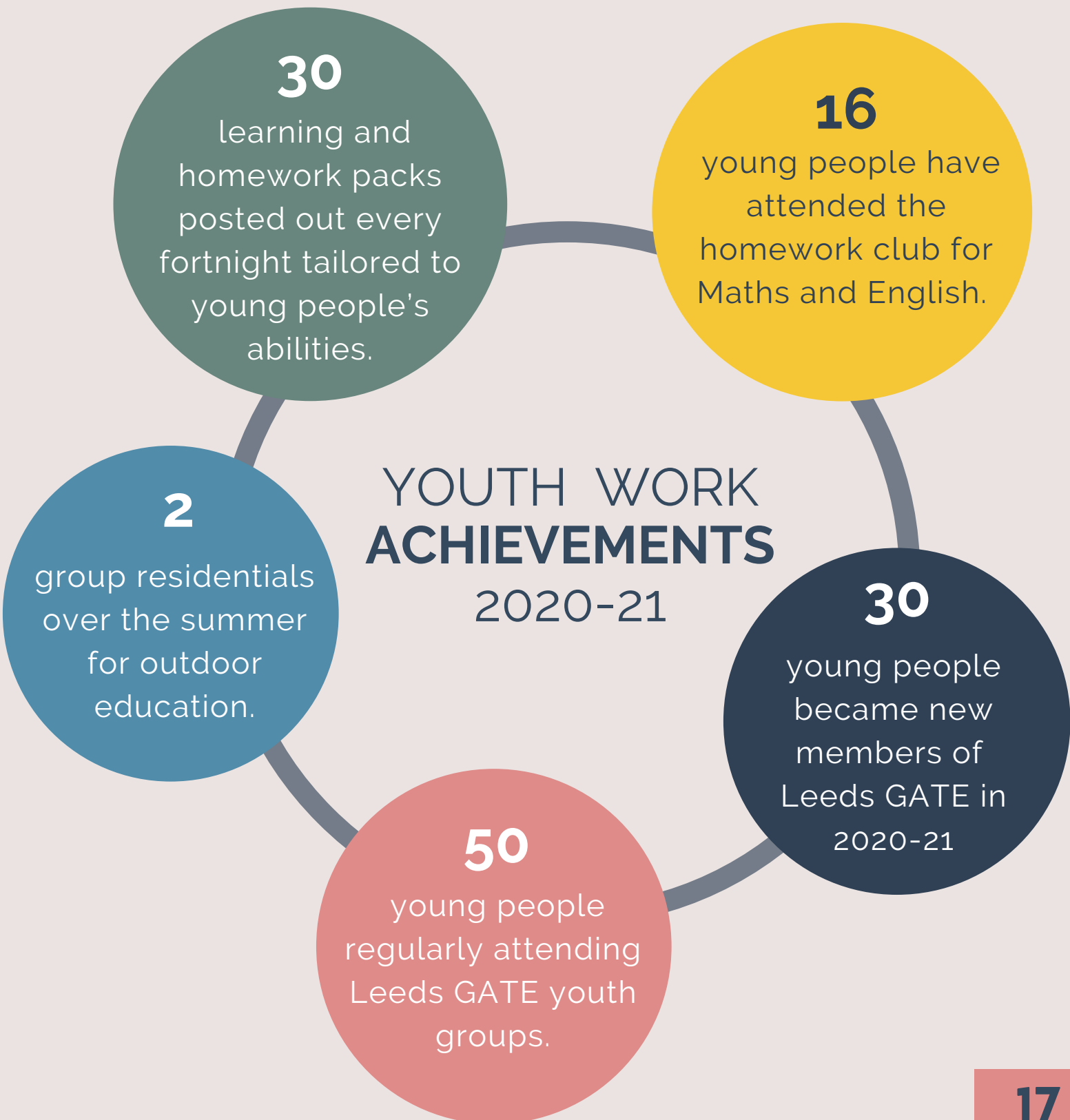
Our Youth Work Team is passionate about Gypsy and Traveller young people and helping them have space to succeed, in a way that is meaningful to them.



We have continued to run our successful weekly groups for boys and girls with our youth work team, including homework clubs both online on Zoom and in person at our centre. It's been great to have people in our building again, with the number of members attending increasing. Activities and visits have included science and engineering lessons, media makeup courses, and open days to local colleges.

We can work one-on-one with individual young people and support them with advocacy. We held mental health and anti-bullying education sessions where young people had the opportunity to have their voices heard.

Strength to strength – after being successful in a funding application, we are now able to extend our youth groups to Bradford. Sessions will include confidence building, making connections to peers and wider networks, relationships, staying safe, criminal vulnerabilities, healthy eating and other areas as directed by the group.



YOUTH WORK STORY

655 VIP

One young person, who lives far away and cannot attend the homework group in Leeds, attends weekly zoom lessons. She has health problems and is home-schooled because she was bullied and felt discriminated against at school. She lacked confidence and was behind with her learning. During lockdown restrictions, I sent her weekly homework packs. Her granny informed me that she looked forward to these and loved all the story-writing projects I sent out. She has made steady progress throughout the year, gained confidence and is now ready to take mock Functional Skills exams in preparation for when she attends college.

She said, **“I love doing the lessons, they help me so much and I really look forward to them every week. I am definitely more confident now.”**

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

READ WITH ME

The Read With Me project provided books to parents and children in Bradford on the Mary Street Caravan site. Each month different books and resources were provided to families. We started up a Whatsapp support group for our members so they knew which books were coming, and to give inspiration and ideas of activities to do each month. We've made cardboard villages, cress eggs, and art competitions - you name it, the group has done it.

"I didn't know he was interested in books before this project. It is really helping him to learn colours and shapes. For Christmas I'll be ordering him a set of books and looking into making him his own bookcase."



COMMUNITY ASSETS

We provide groups and activities for our members to come together. We help people to work together to make changes to their health, homes, education and inclusion. We run a community centre in Leeds and provide resources for our members across West Yorkshire.

LEEDS GATE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Our community of staff and members have shown so much resilience and leadership during difficult times and especially through periods of transition.

1048

Welfare
calls
made.

293

People
engaged
through
outreach.

5

Adults
learning
to read.

67

Group
Activities.

Using a mix of digital skills, as well as engagement face to face and over the phone, they kept members in touch with Leeds GATE with hundreds of calls weekly. During the summer when we could bring our members back to our building, the team made sure people were safe and welcomed. From flower arranging to woodwork and cookery, our members decided what they wanted to see and do. Outreach visits resumed, with extra emphasis on broadening our membership to include more men.

We tailored our outreach to our members, keeping up with phone calls for those worried, isolated and medically vulnerable. We also provided packs with activities and things to keep well.

TOGETHER WE CAN

After a successful bid to the National Lottery, we started an extensive three-year project in June 2021, which centres on the experiences, talents and skills of West Yorkshire's Gypsy and Traveller communities in wide-ranging community development work across the region. Inclusive and innovative, the project provides opportunities for personal development, resourcing community action and widening and deepening our network of partners and allies – all co-produced and led by members.





DIGITAL INCLUSION

Through support from Lloyds Foundation, we were able to provide devices to our members who had limited digital access. We also delivered monthly digital awareness sessions with members in partnership with 100% Digital Leeds to make the most of their devices.

We interviewed one member who received a device for their thoughts on digital inclusion, this is what they told us:

- **What do you feel the main challenges are for the Gypsy and Traveller community in terms of digital inclusion?**

Not many of us are able to read and write and we just don't know where to start because we are not used to it.

- **What things have you been able to do since getting your laptop/internet access that you couldn't do before?**

Download zoom, do online shopping and look up information about certain things like covid, and doing homework.

- **How confident were you before at using digital technology? (out of 10) 7.**

How confident are you now? (out of 10) 9.

Gave away
64
devices.

34
Laptops &
Tablets

30
Phones

HEALTH INCLUSION

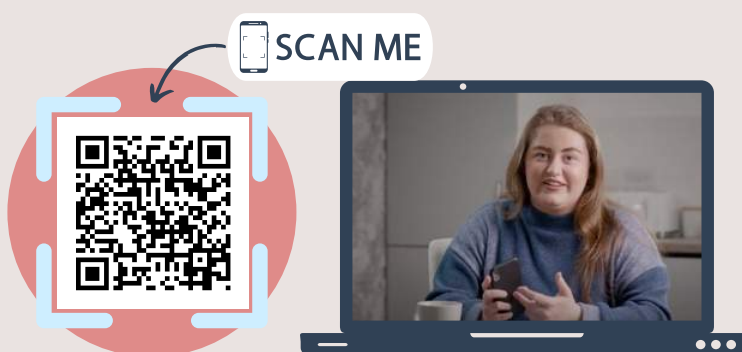
From focusing on providing key health messaging and crisis management at the start of the pandemic, team members have worked tirelessly to keep pace with what members need in response to Covid-19. Our members have also displayed adaptability, resilience and care for each other – using their community assets to get through together.

Our work has included setting up clinics across West Yorkshire for people to receive information and their vaccine.

We ran **9 vaccine clinics** in Leeds and outreach in Bradford and Wakefield.

We vaccinated over 41 residents.

We also produced a video to educate communities on the vaccine and increase uptake. Our work also focused on supporting families living roadside with a vaccine bus visiting camps. **Watch it here -->**



OUR COMMUNITY CENTRE



Following a period of uncertainty, due to our building being put up for auction, Leeds GATE successfully purchased our community building outright in October 2021. This space had previously been rented for 14 years but thanks to the long-term support from our funders Lankelly Chase, we can proudly say that we have fully secured our future here.

We believe we stand as the first Gypsy and Traveller organisation in the UK to own our own building. We are continuing to develop our building to make it as welcoming as possible – starting with painting and clearing out our youth space and creating new storage. We're excited to see what comes next.

If These Walls Could Talk

If these walls could talk, what would they say?
They'd be proud of us all stood here today
Proud of our work, our care and our don't give way
They'd say thank you to those who have passed away
Whose passion and bravery paved our way
So that we can grow and learn, laugh and play
And fight for justice in the Leeds GATE way,
Help people find places to stay
And just be there on a rainy day
To give our young people hope that they,
Have bright futures already underway
So if these walls could talk, what would they say?
They'd say "Gypsies and Travellers are here TO STAY!"

A poem celebrating the purchase of our building - **by Ellie Rogers**

"Now we have our own building GATE really
does belong to Gypsies and Travellers and I
know GATE will always be here for me."

Quote - **Leeds GATE Member**



COMMUNITY VOICE

We help our members to have their voices heard on issues affecting them. Our aim is to support Gypsy and Traveller voices to be present in rooms and conversations they may have historically been excluded from to advocate for themselves and speak from experience.

CELEBRATING VOICES HEARD

Health champions – we've recruited three community members across Bradford and Wakefield to support and run campaigns to improve access to services for wider members.

Traineeships – We've developed a new traineeship scheme for members and two people have been recruited, trained and stepped up into paid job roles at Leeds GATE.

Hate Crime Awareness - At the Police Crime Commissioner conference in Leeds, Leeds GATE member, Cindy-Lou presented & raised awareness of our organisation and the hate crime that the Gypsy and Traveller community experience every day.

National Voice - One of our members told their story as part of an article by Liberty Investigates, exposing the lack of action nationally on hate crime reports by the police.

Health needs assessment research – members attended Bradford strategy meetings to highlight the health impacts of living on sites and how services can help improve this. They also met with Bradford, Hate Crime Alliance to develop a hate crime strategy for the city.

Engagement on sites – planning officers met members to capture their views on future provision.

Scan to read



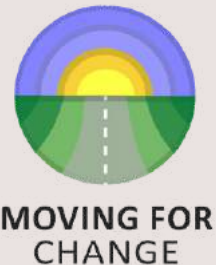
LEEDS GATE CAMPAIGNS & PARTNERSHIPS

Roadside families worked with us on our negotiated stopping website as a resource and campaign to promote this approach as an alternative to criminalisation and eviction. We also ran campaigns including petitions and options to write to local MP's.



Our Media that Moves campaign (ran with London Gypsies and Travellers) delivered and published a groundbreaking research paper on interactions between Gypsies and Travellers and the media.

Moving for Change – employed a contract manager and developed our work as part of this partnership, working to support nomadic communities and people living roadside.



Our young people worked with Go Higher West Yorkshire to inform valuable research about their experiences in education and tackle barriers and exclusion with institutions.

Training – we produced a number of resources and films, commissioned by West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership and NHS England, to help tackle inequalities for Gypsy and Traveller people in healthcare.



LEEDS GATE PARTNERS

Developing partnerships makes our work stronger. To make the long-lasting and systemic change we can't do it alone. We would like to thank our partners for their work with our team and GATE members – we look forward to seeing what comes next.

- **Council teams across West Yorkshire** - Leeds City Council, Bradford Council, Wakefield Council and Kirklees Council
- **LCHT Homeless and Health Inclusion Team**
- **West Yorkshire Health & Care Partnership**
- **Bevan Healthcare**
- **Pennine breast screening**
- **Covid response teams**
- **Leeds Coppice Workers**
- **Spin Arts**
- **Keira Martin**
- **Cllr Venner** – Leeds City Council
- **Alison Lowe** - Deputy Mayor and Police Crime Commissioner
- **Gareth Self** - Leeds City Council Travellers Services
- **Helen Binns** – Leeds City Council, Gypsy Roma Traveller Education Team
- **Solidarity Network members** – LASSN, Yorkshire MESMAC, Basis Yorkshire

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