



Faculty of Business and Law

# Negotiated Stopping & ABCD

Excerpt from the final evaluation report

Leeds GATE  
Asset Based Community Development  
(ABCD) Project

De Montfort University, Leicester  
17<sup>th</sup> July 2017

The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) project at Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange (GATE) ran for three years from 2014 to 2017. A small team at De Montfort University, Leicester undertook an evaluation of the approach during that period. A full report and an executive summary are available separately – this brief document contains the evaluation pertaining solely to the negotiated stopping intervention aspect of the ABCD approach.

## Negotiated Stopping

### ***GATE definition:***

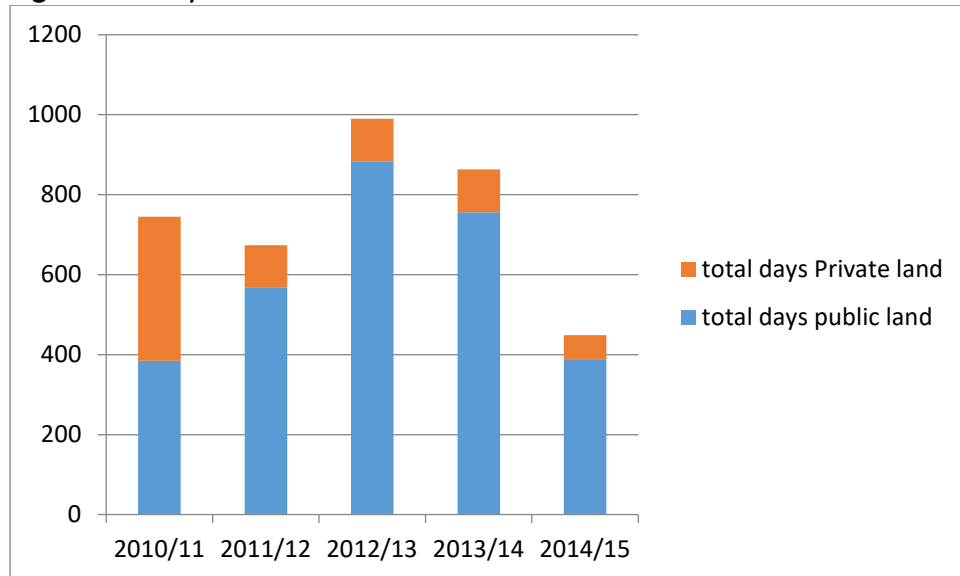
Year One: A new co-produced policy and practice in managing unauthorised 'roadside' encampment by Gypsy and Traveller people, via negotiation and agreement rather than via recourse to eviction.

Years Two and Three: **Negotiating Stopping** is *asset based problem solving on the roadsides; finding solutions to managing unauthorised encampment through negotiation and treating all stakeholders as a part of the solution not the problem; leading to greater quality of life for all stakeholders (Travellers, residents and LA's)*

Negotiated Stopping, as an alternative to the traditional eviction approach, produces social and financial benefits resulting from members of the community, supported by GATE, communicating with the local authority and police authority relying on dialogue and negotiation to enable travelling families to stay, for limited periods of time, on ground where it isn't causing great inconvenience. The families make an agreement with the authority about acceptable behaviour, use of waste disposal, and agree when the camp will leave. The negotiations and agreements are carried out by and with the community. These skills can be regarded as community as well as personal assets but no financial value can be placed on these assets in terms of a cost savings illustration which is included later on.

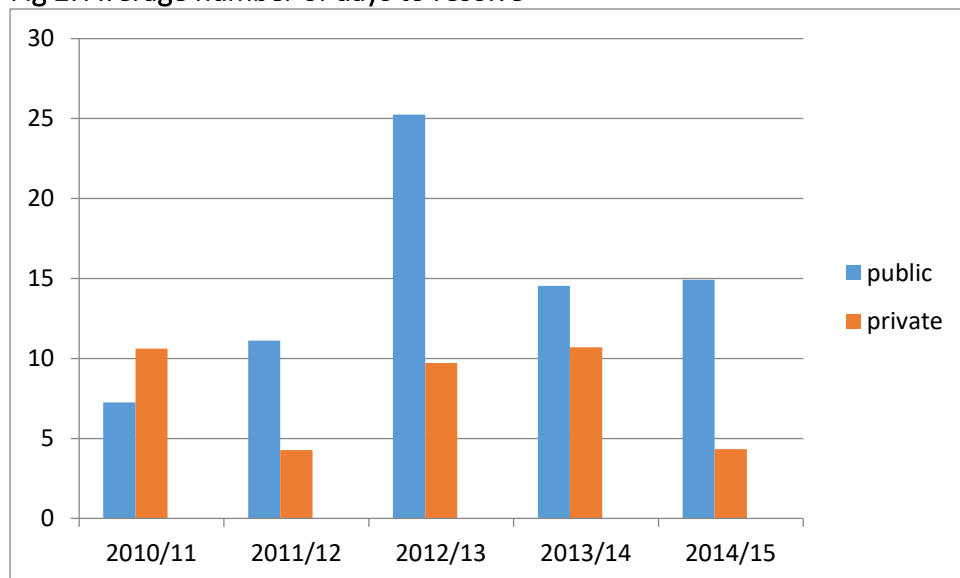
For the local authorities and police authorities the key costs are on salaries and related costs so the total time spent on activities is their key performance driver. In the period 2010 to 2015 the number of unauthorised encampments and the times spent dealing with those cases has been quite volatile both in terms of encampments on private and public land as shown in figure 1 overleaf.

**Fig 1: Total days to resolve**



Most of the encampments are on public land and in particular local authority land. The financial analysis used the savings and costs identified for the public land due to availability of information and its significance. Not only is the total time spent volatile, making resource planning and control difficult, the average number of days to resolve unauthorised encampments is also variable as shown in figure 2.

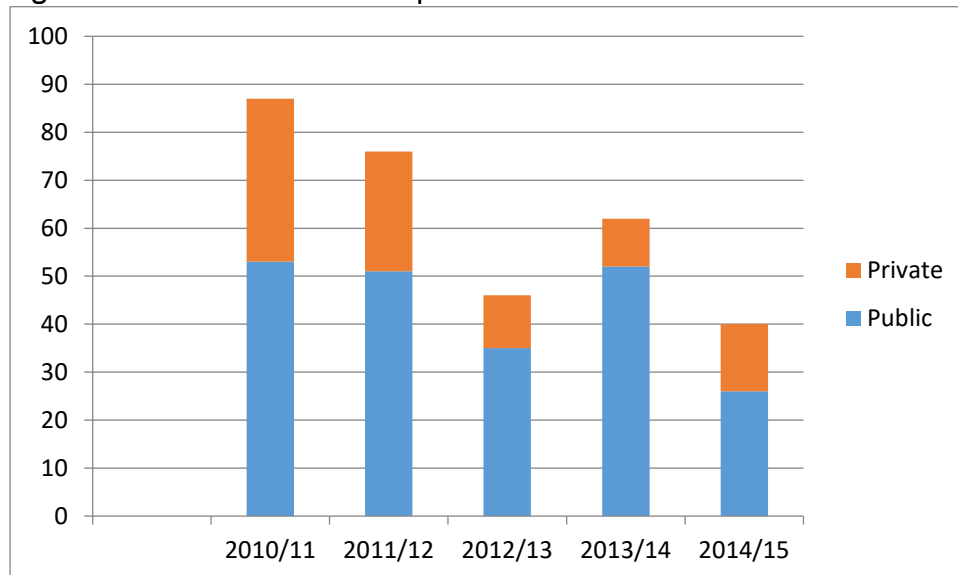
**Fig 2: Average number of days to resolve**



There is, however, a declining trend in the total number of unauthorised encampments as shown in the figure 3, further below. This volatility means it is not possible to identify if there is a change in types of cases or sites due to the Negotiated Stopping, it appears however that there was a reducing trend in unauthorised encampments, in the period. The nature of unauthorised encampments in Leeds had been quite volatile averaging 83 per year in the 9 years from 2003/04 to 2011/12, The five-year period from 2010/11 has shown an improving trend in the number of cases going to court reducing to 40 in 2014/15. The figure will be

impacted by unusual events and in 2015 there was a spike in cases due to particular unusual circumstances (59 in the 12 months to Jan 2016). However, excluding the encampments caused by this one-off event, the reduction per year appears to be in the region of 20-25 unauthorised encampments. This supports the view of the local authority, the local police and Leeds GATE that due to Negotiated Stopping the number of Leeds based travelling community has significantly reduced. The recent trend can be seen in figure 3.

**Fig 3: Total unauthorised encampments**



Given the highest perceived benefit can be better seen in the reduced number of encampments being taken to court, that is used by the study to estimate the benefits. Most of the costs are front-loaded with the recently established encampment at Kidacre. The cost savings estimates are based on information by the police liaison officer and the local authority.

Traditionally, when the neighbourhood policing team was made aware of a new encampment, in the first instance a double or triple-crewed unit was dispatched to assess the encampment. When an encampment was established, there was a reported significant increase in complaints to the police call centre, the impact of which cannot be financially quantified as there are no directly attributable increase in costs. The costs for the neighbourhood policing teams the police liaison officer<sup>1</sup> estimated that at least 12 hours of their time could have been allocated to responding to emails and calls from local councillors and residents groups. The local police through officers and PCSO would traditionally visit the encampment on average twice daily, the total cost being approximately £200. This gives a fixed initial cost to the constabulary of £1,400 plus a daily cost of £200.

When a Section.61 Notice<sup>2</sup> was served by the police in the traditional process (prior to Negotiated Stopping), a team of approximately six officers, including the Inspector would attend. The entire process, including consultation with the Traveller liaison officer, discussion

<sup>1</sup>Evaluation team members ascertained costs in communication with a range of agencies and individuals during the first years of the evaluation project.

<sup>2</sup> Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJPO) 1994.

with senior officers and the preparation of the necessary documentation prior to the serving of the Notice would involve a substantial number of staffing hours. The estimate of the cost was provided by the constabulary of approximately £500.

Since the advent of Negotiated Stopping, the number of encampments involving Leeds based Travellers has fallen significantly. Visits to encampments after Negotiated Stopping were for engagement rather than enforcement purposes, and the number of calls to the police involving the particular group who were the catalyst for a new approach, were by 2015, few and far between.

Negotiations as part of the approach were also reported to have reduced anti-social behaviour (ASB) by addressing the individuals responsible instead of via eviction of a whole group; this reduction in ASB has not been financially quantified as part of the financial illustration below.

In addition to the police savings, the city council in Leeds calculated a cost saving of approximately £2,000 per week on expenditure. Figures from Leeds City council offer an insight into the costs involved and the reduced costs from implementing the Negotiated Stopping approach - over the decade from the year 2000, the average spend on unauthorised encampments was £255,000 per year.

### **Reduced Inputs = Savings**

Clearly the inputs are crucial, but the further dimension is the outcomes achieved. Figures from Leeds City council offer an insight into the costs involved and the reduced costs from the negotiated stopping approach over the past 10 years the average spend on unauthorised encampments has been £255,000 per year. In 2010/11 at its peak it was £324,000. Following the negotiated stopping arrangement the costs last year 2014/15 were £150,000 which is £105,000 less than the average for the past decade and £124,000 less than its peak<sup>3</sup>. The questions this then raised were how much of the cost savings were due to financial constraints, and will impact on worse outcomes, how much due to the impact of the positive outcomes from negotiated stopping, which could reduce input financial costs further as the process becomes more embedded.

There were a number of aspects related to inputs that the evaluation team followed up in year one of the evaluation through further discussions with senior council staff, as well as communication with the police. It was difficult to ascertain exact spend in terms of staff hours from the council on negotiated stopping.

In March 2015 the Leeds Gypsy and Traveller local authority team took a report<sup>4</sup> to council asking for £34,925 to cover the cost of site works carried out by Parks and Countryside Services to prepare a site on Kidacre Street for use as residential accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. However, this figure was really associated with the provision of resources at a particular site – Kidacre – rather than the process of negotiated stopping. The evaluation

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<sup>3</sup>Figures provided in a telephone call between Jo Richardson at DMU and Rob McCartney at Leeds Council on 17 June 2015.

<sup>4</sup>Report of Head of Housing Support, 17 March 2015.

team therefore needed to discuss with GATE and the council whether such a cost input was appropriate to consider in the evaluation. Related to this were issues on Kidacre and the slow progress of actually delivering a habitable site for residents. The decant process during 2016 led to dissatisfaction and a lack of trust which it could be argued led to a deficit of trust as an asset to this particular ABCD intervention.

In year two of the evaluation the evaluation team asked for costs from the Leeds City Council Traveller team and the police liaison officer who works in this area. During the year to Jan 2016 there was a total of 41 unauthorised encampments (plus one blind eye encampment) averaging 21 days in length for those on council land; the average length of time on private property was 4 days (18 encampments). From the policing figures eleven (11) of these were Section 61 enforcements.

The team was provided with cost figures from the local authority and the police which identified costs for different types of encampment (those that require serving of notice and attendance at court cost more). The average cost equating to local authority land encampments were £5,134 and for private property £1,600. Assuming a daily allocation of local authority costs, the average cost would be £192 per day or £4,032 per unauthorised encampment. The overall costing, per unauthorised encampment, therefore is £9,534 on LCC property.

The net impact found in the analysis was that authorised/ negotiated encampments are self-financing. Unauthorised encampments average £9,534 per encampment in public costs from the local authority and policing. The savings for negotiation therefore is £9534 per encampment.

The nature of unauthorised encampments in Leeds over the previous five years was quite volatile averaging 83 per year in the 9 years from 2003/04 to 2011/12, to 40 in 2014/15 (59 in the 12 months to Jan 2016). It would appear the numbers of unauthorised encampments have fallen since the work of the team at GATE with the Gypsies and Travellers in need of accommodation in the area led to the Negotiated Stopping approach, but given the volatile nature of the figures it is too early to estimate the total impact on an annualised basis. However, given the per encampment savings the reduction per year appears to be in the region of 20-25 unauthorised encampments and the average costs equating to local authority land encampments were £5,134. An ABCD framed approach to Negotiated Stopping was broadly consistent with a reduction of 20 to 25 encampments producing local authority savings of £102,640 to £128,350 annually for the local authority and £88,000 to £110,000 savings for the local police, giving a savings of between – a total potential savings range of between £190,640 and £238,350 in local authority and policing costs combined<sup>5</sup>.

There are, of course, unquantified benefits within the evaluation such as roadside families, both local families and those passing through Leeds, have significantly improved access to healthcare and education. The decrease in the type of stress caused by continuous court and police eviction has a significant, although difficult to quantify, effect on quality of life.

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<sup>5</sup> (NB due to the different costing methodologies from the police and local authorities these savings are approximate).

For the wider ABCD project negotiated stopping principles could be captured more broadly in the City beyond the existing site; it might also embrace the successful negotiated grazing that was facilitated by the council towards the end of year on – there may have been scope for more of these that Leeds GATE ABCD project could help to facilitate by sharing the good outcomes with the community members, get them to identify possible areas of land for grazing and provide confidence and support for community members to approach the council to extend this scheme.

By year three though, in the context of wider political changes and the impact of austerity, the appetite for negotiated stopping and the public sharing information of Leeds as a national lead on this approach, had dimmed somewhat. Beyond the development of the Kidacre site by the council, which seemed to suffer from continuous set-backs and delays in years two and three, there is not a lot of council led public discourse on the benefits of a negotiated stopping approach.

Overall, there are a number of benefits to the Negotiated Stopping approach in Leeds that could be adapted and replicated elsewhere. The benefits can be identified in terms of regularising the housing situation of the residents concerned allowing the charging of rents for pitches, better management and reduced costs of police intervention. The costs of accommodation for the local authority come from the authorised and unauthorised encampments; the unauthorised encampments generate no revenue but are a significant resource consumer. There are additional cost savings from interventions relating to health and welfare that could be captured in more detailed analysis, if the data were available.

Negotiated(ing) Stopping in Leeds isn't the first or the last such approach, there are a number of local authorities in England who 'tolerate' unauthorised encampments on appropriate pieces of land and who see savings in the amount spent by councils on evictions as a result. However, where the work of Leeds GATE does stand out is in publicising the approach and highlighting the possibility of social and economic savings to other areas, including London. The potential reach of Negotiated(ing) stopping is huge and through amplifying the message through the assets of their organisation (their Gypsy/Traveller members) to talk about the benefits of the initiative, Leeds GATE punches above its weight in terms of disseminating the benefits and it is the ABCD framework which helps to support this, and to provide the organisation with an 'in' to discuss this with a variety of organisations across the country.

## **Key evaluation findings related to Negotiated Stopping**

Some of the key evaluation findings related to Negotiated Stopping at Leeds GATE, in a nutshell, were that an ABCD type approach produced:

- Better community cohesion around Negotiated Stopping – in addition to the potential combined savings of £238,350 per year.
- Sustainability of Negotiated Stopping principles politically – has potentially been stronger outside of Leeds, rather than inside, and has led to amplification of the idea nationally.

- Wider sharing of Leeds model on Negotiated Stopping, resulting in a positive image of the city's approach more broadly, but importantly got other organisations, such as the London Mayor's office, interested in the possibility of the idea.

## Recommendations

Leeds GATE has punched above its weight on the local and national level in terms of outputs and outcomes from the ABCD project and a number of interventions as part of that. There are ten recommendations altogether in the full report on how to consolidate existing successes and move on to next steps. This excerpt on Negotiated Stopping includes four recommendations which have links to the Negotiated Stopping approach.

Recommendations for the future:

1. GATE should continue its focus on 'bridging capital' having recognised the strengths of 'bonding capital' which were evident in the ABCD project. This bridging focus does not need to adhere to standard 'ABCD' methods, but could use the enhanced mapping developed with communities by GATE and look forward to a new framework.
2. GATE should continue to develop and share roads, bridges and tunnels mapping. The roads, bridges and tunnels model developed by Leeds GATE is an important contribution to share with practitioners, but also to help develop the academic debate and particularly to examine where support to build up one area (a road or bridge) might unintentionally undermine another (a tunnel). This anti-colonising approach to mapping and understanding community assets (the recognition of tunnels) is especially (but not exclusively) useful in excluded communities and in the spirit of bridging, should continue to be shared with other groups 'on the margins' and with the wider community of ABCD practitioners in order to enhance existing methodologies.
3. GATE could work with other organisations who provide support and advice to marginalised communities in and beyond Leeds. There are lessons that have been learned in developing ABCD approaches for Gypsy and Traveller communities that could have wider impact if GATE continue to reach out. There should be continued reflective work on GATE's role in amplifying and sharing these assets, not just with the Gypsy and Traveller community, but with other communities 'on the margin'. GATE is already developing its own framework of understanding around 'solidarity' and that should be encouraged by funders interested in amplifying the effects already achieved by the ABCD project.
4. GATE and Leeds City Council could consider mediation to see if the fracture in communication channels between the council and GATE in recent years, which has impacted on many issues including Negotiated Stopping, can be healed. It is recommended that some form of mediation is encouraged in communications between the council and GATE in the best interests of Gypsies and Travellers in Leeds.