

Leeds GATE Annual Report 2023/2024



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Welcome to our latest annual report

This report covers our work between December '23 – November '24. Here you can read about our work across our four main aims and stories from our members across West Yorkshire.



CEO's welcome



I am so proud to welcome you to Leeds GATE's 2023-2024 Annual Report.

We have worked hard on our strategic work this year, being involved in accommodation needs assessments, site allocation plans, site improvement plans, health needs assessments, inclusion health strategies and education work across the region. All of this is routed in our relationships to our members and finding solutions from their lived experience. This remains our secret ingredient and our best quality - being committed to our value of

"Leeds GATE belongs to Gypsies and Travellers".

I have so enjoyed watching our area teams establish their work with our

winning combination of advocacy, community development and youth work. There's a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes to make this happen - not least managing the multiple funders and partnerships it takes. So well done to everyone across our team involved in fundraising, managing funds, delivering work and reporting for remaining excellent at what you do - without this we couldn't deliver these life changing offers to our members.

My personal highlight was opening the memorial garden for Kathleen Morrison on Cottingley Springs Site and being able to use her own inspirational words from a speech she made about domestic violence. In the words of Kathleen, "the way to find the answers is to talk about it." I was also delighted to see a new kitchen and an accessibility ramp installed at our community centre, which have been goals we have held for a long time.

Thanks to our members, our volunteers, our staff and our amazing board for your continued contributions and commitment to our work, we couldn't do it without working together as a team and valuing each other's contributions.

Ellie Rogers
CEO

Chair's welcome



This year has gone so fast. Leeds GATE has had yet another rewarding year, celebrating our 20th Anniversary with a fantastic event that was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Our work in Calderdale, Bradford and Wakefield has flourished and is going from strength to strength. I would like to express my appreciation to the teams for their consistent hard work and the relationships being built within all areas of West Yorkshire.

I'm very proud to be able to say that Leeds Gate were a strong support in securing our local horse fair Lee Gap and thank everyone involved. We also had a great involvement in the Cartwright Museum exhibition which was visited by almost 20,000 visitors and a great success.

All our staff are greatly appreciated and admired for their consistent hard work they do. I would like to send sincere thanks to all our staff team, our board and all our funders for everything they do that keeps Leeds GATE the amazing organisation that it is. I am so looking forward to seeing what next year brings.

Elizabeth Spaven
Chair of the Board

Accommodation

Everyone needs a place to call home. Leeds GATE provides a range of advocacy support across West Yorkshire to help families secure and sustain accommodation.



Scan the QR code to access the Negotiated Stopping website: www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk

Getting Back on My Feet

Jacky's Story

"My name's Jacky, I'm part of the Gypsy and Traveller community, and a couple of years ago, my whole world turned upside down. When my marriage broke down, I found myself with nowhere to go.

I ended up sofa-surfing, then sleeping on the floor at my son's house. He's got a small two-bedroom place in Halifax, with his partner and two primary aged children, it was really overcrowded. It wasn't ideal, but I had no choice.

I've got a disability, and the stress of losing my home and family life hit me hard. My mental health took a nosedive—I was struggling with depression and anxiety and ended up being admitted to hospital for a short time. I felt like I had no future.

Things started to change when I got support through Leeds GATE and a local health programme. They helped me access proper mental health care and supported me to apply for housing.

Eventually, I got a place through a housing association—a flat of my own. It was a big relief, but also stressful. I didn't have anything—no cooker, no proper food. I was living off whatever I could scrape together.

That's when Leeds GATE really stepped in. They gave me supermarket vouchers so I could buy decent food, and they even sorted me out with an air fryer so I could cook something warm until I could afford a cooker. Sounds small, but it made a big difference. It helped me feel like I could look after myself again.

Now, I'm slowly getting back on my feet. I joined a local gardening club and started English classes. I want to be more independent and confident in myself. Moving into my own place meant leaving my family home behind, which was hard. But I needed that fresh start.

Leeds GATE haven't just helped with housing—they've stuck by me with emotional and practical support, and that's what's made the difference. I'm not where I want to be yet. Life is still difficult but I'm on the right path."

Advocacy impact

147

Drop in appointments in Wakefield

138

Drop in appointments in Leeds

2

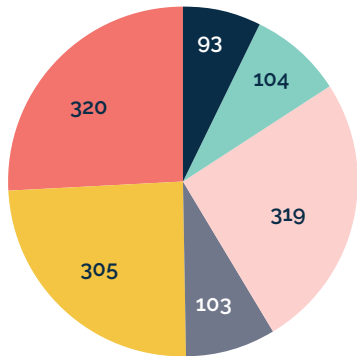
Weekly drop ins (in response to member demand)

1444

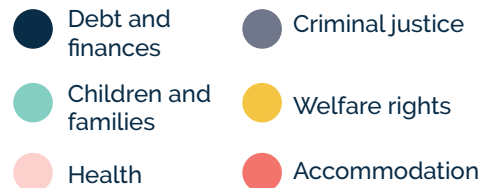
Total number of advocacy appointments

272

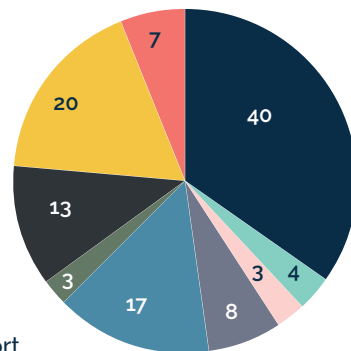
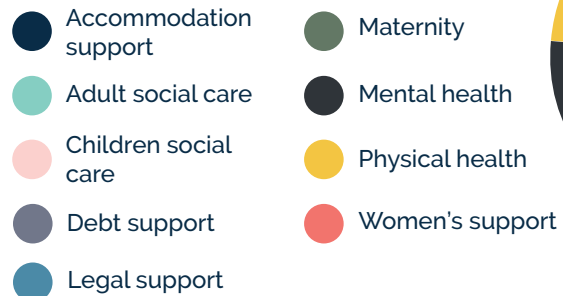
Number of members received advocacy



Breakdown by appointment type with primary need:



how many have led to referral to another of our services or external services?



7

Members supported with plot adaptations for accessibility

38

appointments for plot issues and repairs on sites

2

Complex planning cases we provided specialised support. One case secured a family temporary planning permission



Family support project

Supporting families and relationships to alleviate the risk of harm to them and their families – accessing refuge, moving homes and tackling exploitation



24

Number of children worked with



15

Number of families worked with

Accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers in Calderdale

Throughout the year, we were actively involved in shaping the Local Plan through a 'Development Plan Document' that decides the accommodation needs for communities in Calderdale.

We evidenced that the requirement for culturally appropriate pitches was 22, a more than 100% increase, and progress was made through our public consultation advocacy. We continue to push for a publicly owned site to be included in development plans for the area.

Care of Post service

A vital lifeline for roadside members and those without a fixed address, our care of post service includes a safe address to hold post securely, a letter reading service and direct links to further advocacy and support when needed.

For folks who can't get to us due to disability or isolation, or those who can't read well, we are trusted to open and read important post almost every day. From medical consultations, GP appointments, Universal Credit and bank letters, we make sure members get the information they need.

"I've used Leeds GATE for my post for years. I've no idea what I'd do otherwise."



166

Number of families across West Yorkshire that use Care of Post

Leeds Memorial Garden

Better places and green spaces

March 2024 saw the start of our memorial garden building project at the entrance of Cottingley Springs site in Leeds, in partnership with Hyde Park Source. The garden is in memory of Kathleen Morrison, our first youth worker who's legacy lives on from her trail-blazing work over many years. Our garden opened from May 2024. Having access to a community run green space has led to a weekly gardening club for adults and children.

"The garden makes the place look better already. Kathleen was a very important woman to a lot of us women and girls she was someone we looked up to. She was very good to our children when she worked at GATE she will always be remembered."



Welfare Calls

Our phone line is a lifeline for our members within West Yorkshire, people just passing through or those further afield, easing isolation and providing crucial links to verbal information and community, reminiscing on fond past memories

"I look forward to a call from the staff at Leeds GATE. Even though staff can change they understand Travellers, so the kindness and the understanding of our ways carries on"



60

Number of people registered for welfare calls

Household Support

Supporting individuals and families with financial stability and to access support they need to help with cost of living



80

Winter warmth packs distributed in Leeds and Calderdale

40

Food vouchers distributed in Leeds worth £1000

22

Roadside families supported with gas bottles

Our Building

Community assets for Gypsies and Travellers

Our main Leeds building is a thriving hub and community centre. We've made significant improvements to the building over the last year to make it more accessible for members:

- Fitted a new kitchen in community room including two new ovens and dishwasher
- New ramp installed outside to improve accessibility
- New lighting and flooring to improve our youth space



8

Families used our wet room and shower



24

Families used our new laundry service for 2024

Health

Leeds GATE provides advocacy and support around health and mental health for Gypsies and Travellers. We support people to live with dignity through navigating health-related benefits, and adult social care needs.



Mental health service impact

Our mental health service offers intensive 121 support and has continued to grow over the last year



37

Number of members supported by our Mental Health team



8

Men supported



20

Outreach sessions to talk about mental health

We know physical ill health, bereavement and poverty are the main presenting causes of mental ill health.



84%

of members who received mental health support initially came to us for some form of advocacy first



100%

of those bereaved by suicide were offered support

100%

of members supported are now aware of the importance of mental wellbeing

We supported a member who was struggling with panic attacks and anxiety.

We worked on several goals identified by our member including reviewing their medication, accessing a support group, and using breathing techniques.



Supporting young mums and maternal mental health

New monthly group established working with young women who hadn't previously felt confident to access antenatal and postnatal support.

"I've never felt safe to tell anyone how I've felt before."



27

Women supported to access antenatal and postnatal care

8

Young women's groups across the year

Improving health access

We deliver community health development work to improve the information, assets and networks members have available to them and their access to health care services. This year we developed our own health access services in exciting new ways to reach more Gypsies and Travellers in ways that mainstream provision often can't.



355

Vaccine and screening conversations

114

Cervical screening advice conversations

Member feedback

"I was so worried and anxious about a condition I didn't have. I'm so relieved I'm ok. Thanks for encouraging me to come to the health check."

"I can't say what I want to say in front of the GP, but you help them understand my problems."



114

Wellbeing visits to over 50s



10

Health professionals trained



£36,457

Saved to the NHS

Improving health access for Gypsies and Travellers

Universal health offer to Gypsies and Travellers

- Community blood pressure checks
- Screening offers
- Access to health outreach services
- Vaccine information and community vaccine clinics



Innovation for Healthcare Inequalities Programme

38 members supported to access vital testing and preventative screening measures for cardiovascular diseases. We are increasing our use of this community-based model aiming to reduce unequal health outcomes and encouraging this approach from other services.



Wakefield Health Drop in

Expanded health partnership work with Trinity Nurses and Bevan Healthcare with us of the Bevan bus mobile clinic.



27

members seen in weekly health drop ins – this alone has directly led to sign-ups of 8 more members



Education and young people

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to learn in a space they feel valued and safe. Young people thrive every day attending our weekly youth groups and homework clubs at Leeds GATE and across West Yorkshire. We also hold a library for community use and a community archive.



15

Number of young people supported with college advice and applications



44

Homework club sessions supporting 50 young people across West Yorkshire



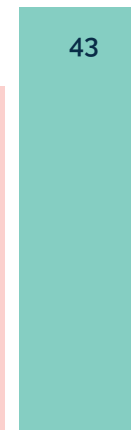
24

Healthy Holidays sessions across the year



24

Young people attending Healthy Holidays programs



Number of young people accessing youth groups

Leeds Wakefield
Bradford

117

Total number of young people accessing youth groups across West Yorkshire

Young Gypsies and Travellers speaking up

- Taster sessions (mechanics and beauty) through Go Higher West Yorkshire at Leeds University
- Young people met with the Lord Mayor of Leeds and talked about their experiences of discrimination, their experiences of education, and their hopes and dreams for the future
- Attended NHS conference to present on their experiences and knowledge around mental health and how mental health services could be made more accessible for young people



Paula's Story

(name has been changed)

Paula is a young Traveller girl who had suffered a traumatic childhood. Additionally, she had been a victim of cultural bullying and discrimination at school so was reluctant to go back into mainstream education when she moved to Leeds.

She had been through a lot, leaving her with little hope for the future. Paula's mam wanted her daughter to have the chances in life that she, personally, had missed out on and so had her join our homework club.

Paula initially lacked confidence but joined in with maths and English. She was eager to learn and received 1-1 support. She felt comfortable and safe at Leeds GATE: there was no cultural bullying and she felt at ease with the tutor and she was helped to see that she did have a future to plan and look forward to after all.

Paula is now learning a skill that she plans to build a career on, as well as improving her maths and English to go onto college in September.

"The homework club has been a real benefit to her."

- Paula's Mam

"I feel more positive about my future now."

- Paula



Creating space for young people

Esholt Youth Club

- In May 2024 we started the first youth club on Esholt site, Bradford.
- With residents we plan our weekly sessions including: community clear ups, games, fun days and cookouts. Connections are developing with more trust and amazing relationships with the young people who attend our youth group.



17

Youth sessions with
115 attendances

"I feel more included here than elsewhere."
– young member



6-8

Children joining sessions
each week

"Bridgett has a lot more confidence around others now. She never used to want to stay at the club, now she begs to go with the other children."
– Parent

"The children were running down to the after-school club. It was so lovely to see how much they enjoy it."
– Parent

Community advocacy achievements on Esholt site include:

6 children supported into school

2 nursery places secured

1 EHCP in place for further education



7

Young people away from home on Bradford's first residential

"The trip was so good! I was really scared to do abseiling but was so glad I faced my fears and did it."

"When you're at Leeds GATE you have a one on one teacher, when I'm struggling with something I know I'll get help."
– Edee, young member

"I always wanted to know what a residential was like. I loved all of it and can't wait to go again."

Reaching new families

During our weekly outreach we met a new family who had recently moved to the Leeds area. The family had several children and those of school age were not in any form of education and were quite isolated due to recently fleeing violence.

Over a number of weeks, our youth worker built a trusting relationship with the family. We made a plan together for the children to attend our youth groups each week, including providing transport and regular updates to the parents to let them know their children were safe and happy at our groups. The children began forming friendships and trying new things. As the children grew in confidence, we provided a 1-1 space to share their experiences.

Four of the children wanted to look into education options with our youth team's support. 6 months on, all four are now in full time education.

Social inclusion

We believe everyone is equal and can be included. Our work seeks to platform members' voices and realise their potential.



Social inclusion impact

Our community centre and work across the region provides safe spaces for our members to come together, and a gateway to our services - whether you're a resident or passing through.

We work through our partners and community groups to improve service access, challenge discrimination and celebrate Gypsy and Traveller history and culture.



642

Number of roadside outreach interactions (Leeds)



10

Average number of families seen



1229

Number of Leeds Gate members



3794

People trained last year



7

New private yards engaged with support across Wakefield

Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller History Month in June shares pride in Gypsy and Traveller culture and celebrates the strength of people's contributions historically and in present day society. We also use it as an opportunity to engage partners, promote solidarity and educate people.



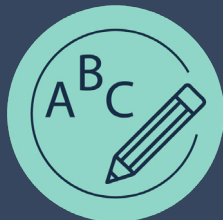
2242

People directly engaged with activities



4

number of regions in West Yorkshire that held events in expanded program



60+

Schools downloaded our education pack



160

People trained



6

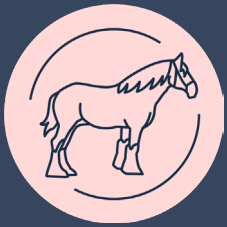
Celebration events for members



Youth Voice

Speaking for themselves in mainstream media

In response to reports of high absence rates for Gypsy and Traveller young people from schools, our young people worked with the BBC to platform their experiences in schools and access to education through our homework clubs. A group of four young people were filmed and involved in campaigning media work for the first time!



2 million

People watched BBC Look North Gypsy and Traveller youth campaign



Scan to read the article
'I'm a Traveller and too anxious to go to school'



1 million

People read the article

Building on this work, we worked closely with the University of Leeds to publicly sign and commit to the 'Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Boater Showpeople into Higher Education' pledge. We have produced an action plan together for improving access for Gypsies and Travellers, as well as continued outreach with our young people at Leeds GATE.

Lee Gap Fair

Oil painting artwork by Hannah Ostapjuk was commissioned to commemorate the historic fair. Community members were engaged in choosing the artist, featuring in the work and discussing memories of the fair.

We supported the fair committee to negotiate with the landowners for the continuation of the fair on its current ground. We facilitated the provision of toilets by Leeds City Council and donated £500 to cover costs of water for the fair after the current supply was damaged. We will continue to do whatever we can to keep our fair alive.



300

Number of engagements at Lee Gap Fair



Bradford Cartwright Hall exhibition

Dreams and Songs to Sing with photographer and long-time partner Cath Muldowney

A wide group of members involved in the development of the exhibition across 18 months, including planning, being in photos, loaning objects and family photos, member stories and what information should be written on boards for visitors to learn about Gypsy and Traveller people.

Almost 20,000 visitors between May and September 2024. Used across museums and galleries services as best practice case study for partnership, access and community engagement.

"In a big whole room at a museum about us, and it was on show to the world - made me feel proud in today's society to be treated like we mattered and shared like that in a museum. Not often do you feel like that."
- Member

"Walking into that exhibition for the first time, I was lost for words. We've never had anything like this for Gypsy and Traveller people that I know of."
- Member

"The exhibition and unique partnership with Leeds GATE and their community members showcases stories of Gypsy and Traveller communities illustrated through the lens of Cath Muldowney's stunning photography, has been a resounding success." - James Steward, Head of Service, Bradford Museums and Galleries

Kathleen's story

Kathleen is a fundamental part of Leeds GATE. A member since the beginning and a member of our board of trustees, Kathleen is key to steering the ship. Her story featured as part of our Bradford exhibition last year in Cartwright Hall gallery.

'I grew up on the roadside. We'd stay in Yorkshire in the winter, but then we'd move around all over the country in the summertime. She recalls the excitement of reuniting with friends from previous years. Her upbringing was bursting with community, family, culture, and food. 'My mother always had a fire going, cooking outside in big black pots, hearty food such as bacon and cabbage or ribs and stew. We always make enough food to share around still now. I send dinner up and down everywhere.'

"Bradford is home. I've been here since I was 5. I'm 57 now, so 52 years I've lived between Leeds and Bradford. We're strong on family values, everyone keeps an eye out for everyone's child and we take care of the older people.'

'Day to day growing up on the road, it was just nice, you know. I was like a tomboy and we played out all the time. When you live roadside you mix with different cultures all the time, it helps to teach morals.'

'I never went to school when I was a child because we were roadside. Here today, gone tomorrow.' However, when she became a parent, ensuring her own children received an education became a priority. 'I think everyone should have the right to read,' she says.

'We're all the same. It's not right to look down on someone else. It's important to try and preserve some traditions we have. It's our culture and I don't think they'll ever stop it, but they're doing their best to try.'

Kathleen then explains the importance in the community of keeping loved ones' memories alive.

'We mention everyone we've lost, so they're not forgotten about. My brother died 45 years ago and we talk about him every day. People come from all over Ireland and England on one specific day every year, and we all stand by their graves in the cemetery - it's like a blessing. All our ancestors are buried there. Our people belong to us.'

Research

We were part of ground-breaking innovative research projects with our members.



Criminal Justice project

We took part in Economic and Social Research Council backed national research project "Realities Checked: Gypsy and Traveller Experiences of Crime and Justice Since the 1960s.

The study provides the first comprehensive and historically grounded account of the crime and criminal justice experiences of Gypsies and Travellers in England since the 1960s. The project sheds light on Gypsies and Travellers' perceptions and experiences of criminal victimisation, hate crimes, and offending over their lifetimes, with the goal of helping to inform sensitive policy-making and work practices for those engaging with Gypsy and Traveller individuals and communities.



3

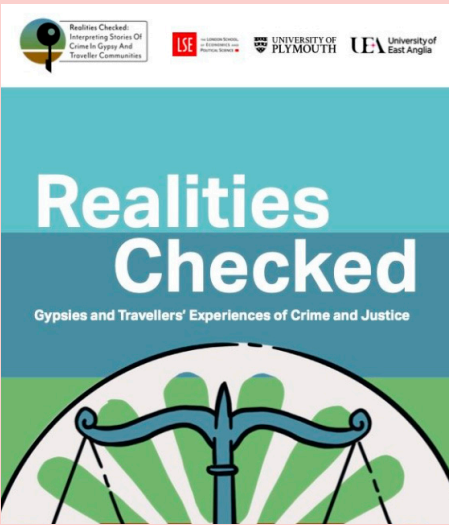
Staff members trained in research methods

100+

People surveyed across West Yorkshire to have their voices and experiences heard

400

Total people surveyed around the UK



Scan to read the 'Realities Checked' report

Narrow Margins

Working with Birmingham City University, we were part of a two year research project aiming to understand and expose the violent impact of the 2022 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act on Gypsy and Traveller people's lives, their voices, and their rights.

Through criminalisation of trespass, these laws are squeezing already marginalised groups, despite the increasing lack of sites and places to stop.



Scan to learn more



Some of our research and findings were used as part of evidence brought in the first successful challenge to the new Act in a landmark judgement by the High Court in May 2024, thanks to the bravery of Wendy Smith, a Romani Gypsy woman bringing the case.

It was ruled that sections of the PCSC Act were incompatible with the Human Rights Act.

The Act will now be subject to Parliamentary review into it's effectiveness. It's another step on a long road towards change.

Community development



Community groups



40

Women attending Bradford women's group



100+

Women regularly attending our groups across West Yorkshire

Unity and strength

Our community groups are a central part of what we do, bringing members together for activities, supporting each other and taking action on things that matter. Members help to design sessions.

Women are supported and encouraged to bring up often challenging topics related to mental health, physical health and other issues they may be experiencing. Our Communities Coordinator and Community Development Workers have worked hard to gain larger numbers of members attending. Bringing the women together is a sense of unity and strength!

"I look forward to the group, it stops me sitting at home thinking about things, it can bring me up when I feel down in myself."

"I'm new to the groups, I go to college everyday and study health and social care, so now I come here to be around my community as I don't go anywhere else the rest of the week to speak to people."

Community learning

Cindy Lou's Story

"Before I started working at Leeds GATE as a cleaner, I had no education. Leeds GATE has supported me with getting further education and I have now passed a Level 1 functional skills qualification and changed my job role to admin support worker."



5

Functional skills learners



Access to adult learning opportunities

Community upskilling and empowerment

“I love learning new things and coming to my reading class with Angela.’ I love to see myself improving my skills and doing all the tasks I have been set.”
– Adult reading learner



10

Adult readers supported weekly



35

Adults going on to further education



10

Community courses with topics chosen by members

Our team (up to November 2024)

- Lily Buxton – Communications Assistant

Ellie Rogers - CEO

Rachel Cooper – Director of Development

Jane Standeven – Wakefield Advocate

Gemma Smith – Bardford Advocate

Vickie Leaverland – Family Support Worker

Louise Murphy – Criminal Justice and Hate Crime Advocate

Lavanna Joyce – Youth Work Assistant

Katie Wilson – Finance Manager

Maia Nolan – Mental Health Support Worker

Robin Dark – Calderdale Team Leader

Nicola Turner – Director of Admin and Operations

Steph Knight – Wakefield Youth Worker

Judy Hall – Wakefield Community Development Worker

Lily Morgan – Health Access Co-ordinator

Darren O’Connell – Leeds Advocate

Maisie Spaven – Admin Support Assistant

Gemma Bowers – Mental Health Support Worker
- Teresa Birtle – Community Centre Co-ordinator

Grace Cunningham – Senior Youth Worker

Charlotte James – Leeds Team Leader

Mags Price – Community Outreach Worker

Kathleenanne Boswell – Bradford Team Leader/Youth Worker

Angela Allen – Community Tutor

Kirsty Rourke – Communities Co-ordinator

Savana Lowther - Cleaner

Cindy Lou Price – Admin Support Worker

Tom Gaffney – Service Manager

Kari Griffiths – Director of Admin and Ops (on mat leave)

Rachel Trafford – Communications Team Leader

Mary Cunningham – Communities Manager

Claire Ahmed – Mental Health Team Leader

Kayleigh Bradshaw – Wakefield Team Leader

Bethany Lally – Business Support Officer

Linda Barker – Bradford Team Leader/Health Access

Our board (up to November 2024)

Elizabeth Spaven Chair
Andy Bagley Treasurer
Kathleen Boswell
Sinead Price

Ryan Powell
Roseanne Price
Sinead Cregan

Our funders

BD4+
BDSP
Bartlett
The National Lottery Community Fund
Bradford CNET
Bradford Hate Crime Alliance
Bradford ICB
Calderdale Public Health
Children in Need
Leeds ICB
Embassy of Ireland
Healthy Communities Together - Mesmac
Leeds Community Foundation
Henry Smith
Leeds Household Support Fund
Irish Youth Foundation
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Lankelly Chase
Leeds Building Society
Leeds City Council - Public Health
Ministry of Justice
Movement for Change
NHS West Yorkshire ICB
NOVA Wakefield
Narrow Margins
Parental Support Fund Wakefield
Prosper Wakefield
Volition - Leeds
Wakefield ICB
Wakefield Digital Fund
Thrive by Design

Our highlight

Our 20th anniversary year in 2024 and our party brought together members, staff, friends and partners from over the last 20 years. We'd like to take a moment to thank all our members past and present and all they have achieved.

We would like to especially make mention of anyone who is no longer with us that made Leeds GATE what it is today, and their family members who help us keep their legacies alive.





www.leedsgate.co.uk

Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange (Leeds GATE)
Crown Point House
169 Cross Green Lane
Leeds
LS9 0BD




 LeedsGATE
 leeds_gate
 Leeds GATE

Photo credit: Cath Muldowney and Leeds GATE

Charity No: 1123374