



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2022/23**



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WELCOME TO LEEDS GATE

Welcome to our annual report!

This report covers our work between **December '22 – November '23**. Here you can read about our work across our four main aims and stories from our members across West Yorkshire.



Leeds GATE is a brave and creative grassroots membership organisation. We are led by Gypsy and Traveller people and we work in partnership with others across West Yorkshire. Our work has an award-winning track record of community activism, social action and member led innovation.

Established in 2003, Leeds GATE was founded by a group of likeminded people who came together with one mission: to improve quality of life for Gypsy and Traveller people. We now work across Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield and Calderdale.

Our vision for the future is a world in which all Gypsies and Travellers have the opportunity to thrive and make choices as equal, valued and respected members of society.

Our members are the engine to all of our work - thank you so much for your commitment and passion over the last 20 years.



[Read about Our Values here.](#)

**We hope you enjoy
reading about our work
and achievements!**



ELIZABETH SPAVEN

CHAIR'S REPORT

The last year for Leeds GATE has been another successful one with such great things happening, and the organisation growing. I am and always will be extremely proud to be a part of Leeds GATE, and would like to express my appreciation to all members, staff, funders and the board for their continued support and dedication to our work.

Staff have worked tirelessly ensuring members are always involved with projects and decisions. Our young people travelled to London for conferences and public speaking for the first time. The confidence they have shown is amazing and the youth work team are to be thanked for this. We had our first year of involvement in both the Healthy Holidays program in Leeds and Baby Week UK that were fantastic for our members.

Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month is always a highlight and a great time for everyone, including funders and partners who visit and learn about the importance of our heritage and culture.

One of the most important projects this year has been setting up a community drop in to help support our members in response to the cost of living crisis. The drop in provides food, company and advocacy with anything else we can help with. For our roadside families, we have installed a washer and dryer and can help with water and washing facilities to help improve quality of life and facilitate people's right to live a nomadic life.

Leeds GATE is amazing. I am so proud of the work we do. I look forward to the future of our organisation and am excited to be a part of it.



ELLIE ROGERS

OUR CEO'S STATEMENT

In 2022-2023, we have embedded our core offer of advocacy, community development, and youth work to our members across West Yorkshire. We have also as developed and grown our specialist services. We continue to work towards our strategic goals of improving health, homes, education and inclusion. We are joined by some fantastic partners committed to change for our members.

This year funding from the WY ICS under their Core 20 Plus 5 objectives, has enabled us to open up more specialist services. This includes a Health Access Service aiming to ensure all universal vaccine and screening programmes are available to Gypsies and Travellers across West Yorkshire.

We have also been able to expand our Mental Health Team – something which is so valued and needed within our communities.

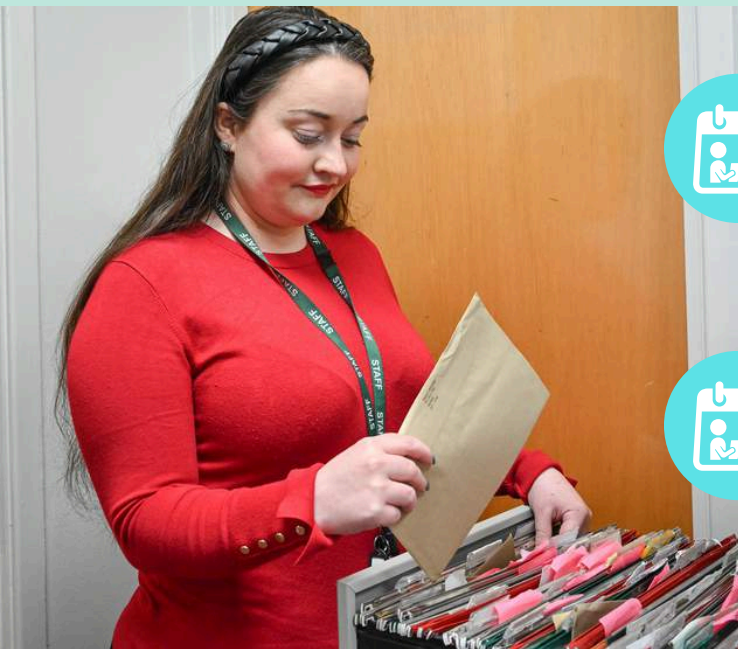
I am really proud of Vickie and Mary's work to support women with relationships and other personal issues to alleviate the risk of harm to them and their families. This work is vital and life-changing.

As we grow, we want to ensure we also stick to our roots. We will never forget any of the contributions the people who came before us made to our work. We will always honour our values and our ways of working that make us Leeds GATE.

Thank you to our board, our staff and our volunteers for making Leeds GATE such a special place to be.



ACCOMMODATION



1225

Advocacy
appointments
delivered



189

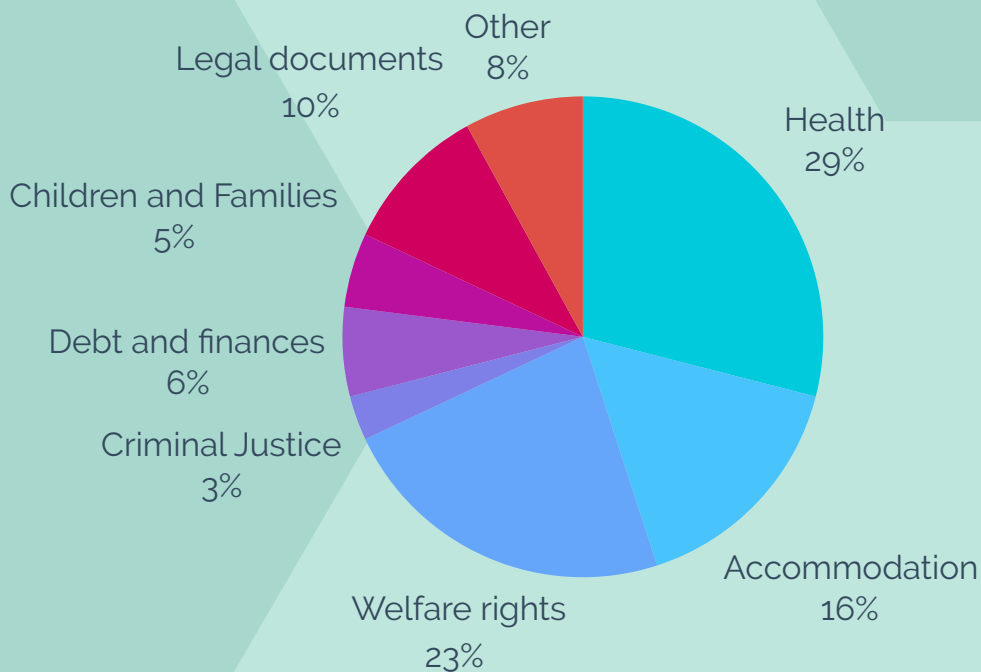
Families/
individuals
supported
through
Care of Post

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.

We work strategically to influence the availability and quality of accommodation for our members. This is across stopping places, site accommodation, houses and planning. We work with resident groups to improve sites through campaigning, running activities and community clear-ups.

➤ ADVOCACY BY AREA

Over the year our team delivered 1225 advocacy appointments to members across the following areas:



> ADVOCACY

Our advocacy team have provided support on a range of accommodations issues, including completing **homelessness assessments, accessing emergency accommodation, housing exchange, flooding, rubbish removal, housing-related benefits, bidding for social housing, housing adaptations, electricity supply, mould and damp, and general repairs support.**

> CARE OF POST

We provided care of post address for families without access to a secure postal address, enabling access to health services, early years support (including milk and vitamin tokens) and welfare benefits.

> MEMBER FACILITIES

We provided a shower, tap, washer and dryer for roadside families at our base in Leeds.

> SITE IMPROVEMENT

We worked to improve sites with our members and partners. We installed post boxes, held gardening sessions, reviewed repair processes, organised monthly clear-ups, and campaigned for funding and improvements.

> PRIVATE PLANNING

We provided evidence and support to three families navigating private planning applications.

ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHT: SUCSESSES FOR MARY STREET MEMBERS

Our resident meetings and women's groups in Bradford are key places where people can be heard and raise concerns and ideas. We work together on the changes members want to see, whether that's with other community organisations, in local authority meetings or with health services.



ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THIS YEAR INCLUDE:

- Gaining funding for post boxes for each plot on the Mary Street site, so each resident can consistently get their post.
- Members delivering a family fun day to celebrate GRT History Month in June, alongside partners like Living Well and Early Years.
- Running a Hate Crime Awareness Week event at Cartwright Hall Gallery Bradford, engaging with the public, police and other services around some of the issues the community faces.
- Reviewed repairs processes and highlighted issues with council officers at residents meetings.
- Supported members to engage with a vaccination visit on-site.
- Residents attended a consultation on the proposal for a new hydrogen-powered electric charging facility near the site.
- Delivered training for adult social workers in Bradford.

“

It is lovely to get involved in new things because I have never been involved with anything like Leeds GATE before. I knew it was there but never really engaged until they started coming to Bradford. They do good things for the children in the summer holidays and also do good things for the women and the site – getting the post back was just great.

”





33

people received
intensive suicide
prevention support



3

new winter
vaccine clinics
across West
Yorkshire sites

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, adaptations and adult social care needs. Our mental health and suicide prevention service delivers intensive support. 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.

NEW HEALTH ACCESS SERVICE TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Our health access service provides access to universal screening and vaccination offers for Gypsies and Travellers. We do this through outreach, developing specialist pathways and delivering community development work.

We have a focus on working with:

- Expectant Mums
- Children and Young People
- People Living with Long Term Conditions
- Over 50s

We are proud to have supported access to vaccinations, health checks, cervical screening, and condition reviews since we started in August 2023.



WOMEN'S SUPPORT WORKER – VICKIE

A new role in the team for 2023 supporting women and girls from Gypsy and Traveller communities in West Yorkshire.

If they experience difficulties with relationships and other personal issues, support is offered to alleviate the risk of harm to them and their families – accessing refuge, moving homes and tackling exploitation.

The role also provides confidential support around promoting healthy relationships and becoming safer sooner. We work with people to ensure they are well linked into services and support they need such as schools, GP's and other Leeds GATE and community services.

Most referrals come from the community, with women promoting the service through word of mouth. But we have worked hard to network and build partnerships and we also receive referrals from other services now.

We are also particularly proud of a support forum established, meeting with others supporting Gypsies and Travellers across the country sharing experiences and learnings with one another.

“

I have had a very hard year. I had a lot to deal with and I don't think I could have got through any of it without Vickie's support. I have achieved so much and feel like I'm finally getting my life on track. I honestly have to thank Vickie at Leeds GATE for that. She's always there when I need her.

”



Vickie supported **12**
families on case load

> BABY WEEK UK

Baby Week is a network organisation dedicated to giving all babies the best start in life.

Our involvement in Baby Week UK for the first time in 2023 was impactful for members and families. We presented to Leeds Council about members' experiences of maternity services. Specifically, roadside members who were having poorer experiences.

After these meetings, we held roadside outreach with maternal health resources and an event at our building. We're continuing to focus on making changes in maternity services so people feel safe and supported.

Through developing partnerships with health providers across West Yorkshire and Leeds GATE acting as a trusted 'bridge', members have been able to discuss health topics that are important to them in ways that are safe and culturally appropriate."



➤ MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

Our suicide prevention project was the first of its kind in the UK for Gypsy and Traveller people.

33 people accessed intensive 1-2-1 support across West Yorkshire. Many were new members that hadn't accessed support before and had shown a range of risk factors, determined by our research with members.

➤ DEVELOPING TOOLS TO HELP PEOPLE KEEP THEMSELVES & LOVED ONES SAFE:

Our unique training on mental health and suicide awareness - "Keeping our friends and families safe" is co-produced with our membership and staff and delivered to Gypsy and Traveller communities in the region.





MEMBER'S STORY

“ As a youngster, I lived roadside with my parents and siblings. I don't remember it being a hard way of life as a child, I just loved travelling to different places, especially Scotland. I think our way of living made us all close to each other and I suppose we stuck together because we depended on each other. I am proud to be an Irish Traveller and be part of Leeds GATE.

The staff at GATE help us and help everyone who is Gypsy or Traveller. We all have a laugh together. I've had support with my physical health issues, and mental health, going to conversation cafes and group sessions and the women's groups at GATE.

I have lived in both trailers and houses and I have both Gypsy and Traveller friends and settled friends. The support Leeds GATE gave me to move house has made a big change in my life. I have my privacy. I do my own thing. I manage my own money. I go see my friends and family when I want. I am happy.







EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & FINANCIAL INCLUSION



£3000

Distributed in food and support & support vouchers

140

Young People

26

Trips away

12

Fun Days

Education, employment and financial support are key to working towards equality in opportunity and choice throughout someone's life. We encourage our member's ambitions and support them in groups and individually to reach their goals.

Leeds GATE provides advocacy support around access to schools, colleges and further education. We support access to welfare rights and debt advice and assist members with CV's, job searches and self-employment. We run an adult learning programme as well as weekly youth groups and homework clubs across West Yorkshire.

➤ WARM SPACES

In response to cost-of-living pressures, we started two new weekly drop-ins which provided Warm Spaces during the winter months. Members have access to hot drinks and food, saved money on high energy bills, digital support and grants, emergency food parcels, vouchers and winter warmth packs and our newly fitted industrial washer and dryer service at our Leeds centre.

➤ INCOME MAXIMISATION

Our advocates supported members to maximise their income, deal with debt and fines, go through benefits applications and appeals, make the switch to Universal Credit, save money on energy bills, deal with financial exploitation and achieve financial stability.

➤ ADULT LEARNING

Our community adult learning programme has improved connections, confidence, skills and opportunities through informal courses, learning sessions and social outings in a safe and trusted environment. Topics have included crafts, art, food hygiene, cooking and flower arranging.

➤ YOUTH PROVISION

Our individual support and weekly youth groups have increased confidence and skills through fun and educational activity sessions and 'pick and plan' reward trips. Sessions have included crafts, cooking, mental health, healthy relationships, physical health and access to education.



**“Coming to Leeds GATE
makes me happy.”**

MARTINA

A LEEDS MEMBER

“ My name is Martina I live on Cottingley Springs site. I used to attend college but decided I didn't want to go no more. My mam always went to GATE so I wanted to go with her. At first didn't really like coming, but because everyone looks after me, I got used to it and made good relationships. I enjoy learning about the healthy food, word searches, making things and helping Mags with jobs that she might have for me.

I go with mam on Wednesdays to the group and Mags gets me colouring books and pens that I can do. I have my dinner and we do something different each week. Thursdays I come on my own. I volunteer with Angela, Kirsty or Mags doing jobs they have for me.

I've started doing some learning as well with Angela. She helps me learn about money how to count it and work out my change when I buy things. She helps me and I help her too. I help sort resources for young people and I donated some Jacqueline Wilson story books to the GATE library. Coming to Leeds GATE makes me happy.”

A photograph showing a person's hands clasped together on a dark, reflective glass table. The person is wearing a teal-colored top and several bracelets on both wrists. To the left of the hands is a clear glass filled with a light brown iced beverage and a straw. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a wooden chair.

STRATEGIC ADVOCACY

Members living on Heath Common site in Wakefield were affected by a decision about their housing costs which meant they were facing shortfalls between £400 and £800 a month.

At least 20 residents and their families could have been made homeless as they didn't have the money to make up the shortfall.

Residents called our advocacy team experiencing mental health crisis - fearing losing their homes.

We were able to bring our knowledge and skills to successfully advocate against these changes, keeping families safe and secure in their homes. and alleviating financial stress and mental health distress.



SOCIAL INCLUSION



73

New members
joined Leeds GATE



619

Outreach
interactions
in Leeds



1800

People included
in GRT History
Month activities

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

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



> OUTREACH

We increased our engagement and reach through extensive outreach, trying out new activities, creating new spaces, developing new specialist roles, increasing our social media activities, developing more partnership work and building trusted relationships in everything we do.

> ROADSIDE

We made regular outreach visits to roadside encampments, an important way of connecting families to Leeds GATE and other support services. We made the first visits of this kind to roadside encampments in Kirklees this year.



> CRIMINAL JUSTICE & HATE CRIME

Our Criminal Justice and Hate Crime Advocate supported members individually to challenge hate crimes and discrimination.

> HERITAGE & HISTORY

The Lee Gap Fair and Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month were major events for celebrating, educating and raising awareness of Gypsy and Traveller culture and history.

We extended our History Month activities into every area of West Yorkshire for the first time, started a new project which engaged with primary schools and successfully delivered 'Lives of Gypsies and Travellers' training to a wide range of professionals.

Display case in Leeds City Museum:

Co-created and designed with our Leeds young people with objects, written content and photos to celebrate their culture and communities. This was a first in the region for Gypsy and Traveller youth.



Irish in Britain exhibition:

Look Back to Look Forward:

Our former chair and MBE Kim Moloney participated in a national exhibition by sharing her story to celebrate the Irish diaspora.



[Visit the online exhibit here](#)

SUZIE'S STORY

“

I am an Irish Traveller: my father is from Belfast and my mother is from Galway. My family didn't have a lot of money, but it was always very supportive with many happy memories. I remember Dad would always paint wagons.

When I recently experienced discrimination in my local area the whole experience made me feel uncomfortable and that I was not welcomed because of who I am. Leeds GATE's Hate Crime Advocate came to support me at meetings with other professionals to help resolve things. We spoke about hate crime that Travellers experience on a regular basis. It makes people afraid to identify themselves and be who they are.

We worked as a little team on an article together at Christmas time all about charity work and foodbank donations myself and people I know love to do. We had pictures taken and managed to get some positive press coverage. We even got into the Catholic Universe magazine which is national and has been going 150 years! I was so proud to show who we Gypsy and Traveller people are.

”

OUR TEAM

31



Kirsty Rourke
Communities Coordinator



Lily Buxton
Communications Assistant



Linda Barker
Health Access



Louise Murphy
Criminal Justice and Hate Crime Advocate



Mags Price
Community Outreach Worker



Mary Cunningham
Communities Manager



Pauline Kimantas
Programme Manager



Rachel Cooper
Director of Development



Rachel Trafford
Communications Coordinator



Savana Lowther
Cleaner



Teresa Birtle
Community Centre Coordinator



Thomas Gaffney
Services Manager



Vickie Leaverland
Women's Health Worker



Angela Allen
Community Tutor



Bernard Cunningham
Wellbeing Worker



Bethany Lally
Business Support Officer



Charlotte James
Team Leader - Leeds



Cindy-Lou Price
Admin Support Worker



Claire Ahmed
Team Leader - Mental Health



Ellie Rogers
CEO



Gemma Carlier
Advocate



Grace Cunningham
Youth Work Coordinator



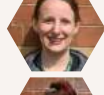
Gemma Smith
Bradford Advocate



Jacopo Rancone
Leeds Advocate



Jane Standeven
Advocate



Kari Griffiths
Director of Operations & People



Kathleenanne Boswell
Senior Youth Worker



Kayleigh Bradshaw
Team Leader - Wakefield

OUR BOARD

Elizabeth Spaven Chair
Andy Bagley Treasurer
Kathleen Boswell
Ryan Powell
Sinead Cregan

Sinead Price
Roseanne Price

A HUGE THANKYOU

TO OUR FUNDERS!



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Joseph Rowntree



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MOVING FOR
CHANGE



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