

A photograph of a woman in a black dress with white trim crouching on a paved surface, kissing a young child on the cheek. The child is wearing a dark shirt and blue jeans. In the background, there is a blue van with 'HAMBRO ROOFING' and the license plate 'LM02 LCV' on it. Further back, there are several tall, modern apartment buildings under a cloudy sky. A metal fence and other vehicles are also visible in the mid-ground.

**LONDON
GYPSIES &
TRAVELLERS**

Challenging perceptions, changing lives



Message from the Chair

2018 has been an exciting year for London Gypsies and Travellers. After more than 25 years based in Westgate Street, our new home is in the heart of the vibrant Mildmay community centre. It's a great space to be in, and a sign of how we want to work: with Gypsies and Travellers at the heart of our organisation, and recognised and respected as part of the wider community.



That ambition has run through everything we've done this year, from challenging prejudice and working with young people, to engaging councillors and documenting the community's heritage. I'm particularly proud of the brilliant response to the London Plan consultation, where Gypsies and Travellers across London made their voices heard on the future of their city.

None of this would be possible without the support of our funders, my fellow trustees, and most importantly, our committed and hardworking team of staff. My sincere thanks to them all.

Claire Cooper

"Gypsies and Travellers across London made their voices heard on the future of the city"

Revealing the reality

City Hall events tell the true story

London Gypsies and Travellers launched an exhibition of images at City Hall in January 2018, challenging the public and Greater London Authority employees to see the reality beyond the stereotypes of Gypsies and Travellers.

The pictures of everyday life among Gypsies and Travellers were gathered by photographer Mary Turner as part of LGT's successful #weareallsomanythings anti-prejudice campaign in 2017. Launching the exhibition, Mena Mongan, one those portrayed, challenged the public to see Gypsies and Travellers as they really are: "There is still that stigma about Travellers," she said.

Before the launch, LGT activists outside City Hall invited members of the public to describe themselves using just one hashtag, and gave them a sticker bearing the hashtag to wear during the day. The point was that people are many things – not just a stereotype or first impression. Gypsy and Traveller

representatives and London Assembly members gathered in City Hall's cafe area surrounded by the positive images.

In June, LGT along with the Mayor's Office and other Traveller organisations held an event at City Hall to mark Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month. With a mixture of discussions, screenings, music, stories and dance, the day celebrated and explored the rich culture and heritage of Gypsies, Roma and Traveller communities in London, as well as highlighting the challenges they still face.



"We are part of the London community, but it seems we're always looking in from the outside" Mena Mongan

“Lack of access to secure accommodation and suitable living environments has far reaching implications for physical and mental health, welfare, education, employment and access to wider opportunities...”

The new London Plan



London Assembly member Tom Copley displaying the LGT postcard response, with LGT staff at the City Hall exhibition

Influencing policy

Massive response to new London Plan

During the first quarter of the year, LGT supported Gypsies and Travellers to respond to the draft London Plan. A postcard response, developed with members of the community, was signed by 977 Gypsies and Travellers and sent to the Mayor's office. This constituted a large proportion of the total number of responses the Mayor received to the plan.

The draft London Plan includes a policy dedicated to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. The LGT postcard called on the Mayor to strengthen the policy, for new pitches to go towards meeting housing targets and for boroughs to be held accountable if they didn't deliver. LGT supported members of the community who wanted to write more detailed letters.

On 13th February, LGT held a meeting of the London Gypsy and Traveller Forum at City Hall, jointly with officers from the London Plan team. This brought together over 50 participants,

including Gypsy and Traveller activists, representatives from community organisations and planning officers from 17 boroughs. Notes from the discussion were submitted as the formal Forum response. LGT also produced a more detailed response, with additional evidence and suggested changes to ensure that meeting Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need was a priority and that the Mayor would take a leading role to ensure delivery.

The draft London Plan requires boroughs to: carry out accommodation needs assessments; plan to meet identified need based on a more inclusive definition of Gypsies and Travellers; review living conditions, overcrowding, need for refurbishment and potential to expand existing sites; plan to protect existing Gypsy and Traveller sites.

“The plan makes some significant steps forward in recognising Gypsies and Travellers as part of London's communities”

**Ilinca Diaconescu,
LGT Policy Officer**

In putting together the plan, the Mayor's team took on board much of the evidence gathered by LGT as part of its Mapping the Pathway to Equality project and presented to the team in an accommodation topic paper. Public examination of the plan begins in 2019.





Moving on

A new home for LGT

In March, London Gypsies and Travellers moved after 25 years at Westgate Street to its new home in the Mildmay Community Centre, Islington.

An office warming event (pictured left) was held in May, to introduce our new office base to members of London's Gypsy and Traveller community.

Since then, our new accommodation has housed several training and information events. These include the Step Forward project, which continues to offer training in employability skills with a focus on support with self-employment, and the Phoenix Arise programme which offers weekly support to families who are experiencing domestic abuse.

In 2018 we provided advocacy and support to 232 families facing difficulties with accommodation and benefits



Accommodation

Supporting residents

Access to suitable accommodation continues to be one of the most challenging issues for London's Gypsy and Traveller community due to the chronic shortage of available pitches and lack of social rented housing.

Many Gypsy and Traveller families are living in unsuitable and insecure accommodation. In 2018 we provided advocacy and support through our accommodation advice service to 232 families from a wide range of London boroughs who were facing difficulties with accommodation and benefits. Universal Credit has been a particular focus this year, as it has been rolled out across London boroughs. Appointments with our accommodation advice service are available every Friday (call 020 8533 2002).

As well as providing one-to-one advocacy, we continue to support residents who are keen to work together as a group and represent their community on the issues they are facing. This year, we supported members of the newly formed Haringey



Gypsy and Traveller liaison group. The group came together to raise concerns with the council about the number of Traveller families in temporary accommodation and the urgent need for more sites in the borough.

We have also continued to deliver outreach to support the representation of residents living on sites in a number of boroughs.

Mapping London

The community map

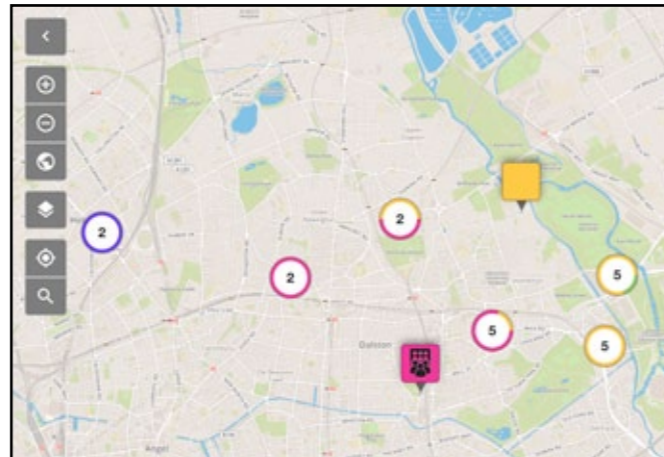
In May, LGT launched an interactive online map, where Gypsies and Travellers in London can find out about the local services available in their area – for example, those related to housing, sites, employment, health and education. The map is open to members of the community to share their own experiences for others to refer to.

Gypsies and Travellers are encouraged to log their good and bad experiences – from facing discriminatory treatment by councils to being refused entry to pubs and wedding venues. The resource, known as the Community Map, can be accessed by phone or computer, and users can add photos, videos, voice messages and comments.

The map is part of LGT's Mapping the Pathway to Equality data gathering project, run in collaboration with the organisation Mapping for Change. As well as providing a service, the aim of the project is to gather evidence about both the discrimination facing the community and the good services which support it.

The project is also collecting existing data to build a detailed evidence base about the size of the Gypsy and Traveller community in London and the accommodation and work issues faced. LGT will use this information in their attempts to ensure that borough and London plans and strategies take into account the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community.

LGT's Mapping the Pathway to Equality Project found that London lost 15% of its social rented pitches between 1994 and present day



Traveller heritage

LGT launched a London-wide project to chart the history of Gypsies and Travellers in the capital. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project aims to gather the knowledge and voices of Travelling Showmen, Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies, and put the community on the map of London.

By collecting stories, photos, videos and audio recordings, the project documents memories of place, lived experiences and social, economic and cultural relationships. The material is being uploaded onto online maps, co-produced with the organisation Mapping for Change. The maps show existing sites and yards and those that have been lost, travelling routes, the web of historical connections between travelling and settled communities and the places they share and live in today. The maps are for use by the travelling communities, policy makers and the public.

“It is vital that these long-overlooked histories are better understood. Travellers are London's oldest cultural minority and the myth that their lives are disconnected from the rest of society must be dispelled once and for all.”

Anna Hoare, LGT's Community Research Officer





Young people

Bright futures

The aim of the Bright Futures youth work programme is to support young Gypsies and Travellers to have access to education, training, mentoring and employment opportunities. It provides LGT with an opportunity to advocate for better inclusion.

With new youth workers in post this year, it was important to establish them in different areas of the community and let people know who we are and what we do. This was done through outreach in the community and an increasing presence on social media. This provided a fresh chance to engage with young people and parents and find out what they want.

We have run some training courses (in driving theory and hair & makeup) and provided one-to-one advocacy ranging from giving phone advice on education to direct mentoring. Young people have been supported into apprenticeships, employment, college and other training including a youth internship at LGT. Behind the scenes there have been meetings with councils, colleges, charities and others – all aimed at bringing more opportunities to the communities.

Opposing evictions

LGT's legal challenge

London Gypsies and Travellers began a legal challenge to local authorities trying to ban nomadic Gypsies and Travellers from camping on parks, commons and other public land. More than 20 local authorities in England have obtained injunction orders giving them the powers to fine, imprison or seize the property of Gypsies and Travellers stopping on the designated land. LGT spoke at the High Court hearings for Croydon and Sutton, making the case that the injunctions are a violation of equality and human rights law.

LGT joined protests against the injunctions by anti-discrimination groups at Wandsworth Town Hall. On 26th November it went to the High Court (pictured) to stop Bromley from

“The injunctions criminalise the traditional way of life for all Gypsies and Travellers living on roadside camps. There is a serious shortage of authorised stopping places”

Debby Kennett, LGT Chief Executive



preventing camping on 171 parcels of land in the borough. The challenge was made possible by pro bono representation by Marc Willers and Tessa Buchanan from Garden Court Chambers and Chris Johnson from the Community Law Partnership.

LGT was granted permission to “intervene” in the case of Bromley London Borough Council v Persons Unknown, with a full High Court hearing due on 19th February 2019. The decision at the High Court could have a bearing on whether other local authorities are granted similar injunction orders.

Eviction alternatives

Negotiated stopping



LGT has launched a research project to reveal the potential of negotiated stopping – a more humane and balanced alternative to the normal “zero tolerance” response of councils to unauthorised encampment or roadside stopping. It involves local authority officers making an agreement with Gypsies and Travellers on matters such as waste disposal, basic facilities and stopping time, sometimes directing them away from contentious public spaces to more suitable council land.

LGT has been supporting the concept of negotiated stopping for many years, bringing it to the attention of London decision-makers and more recently promoting online resources produced by Leeds GATE.

The new research project has received grant funding from the Mayor of London and will be carried out by LGT in collaboration with DeMontfort University. It will involve interviews with families living in roadside camps and a survey of all London boroughs. Findings will be published in summer 2019.

“Negotiated stopping has the potential to improve life for Gypsies and Travellers and could help reduce conflict”

James Murray, Deputy London Mayor

Staff

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ILINCA DIACONESCU
Policy Officer
TRACIE GILES
Community Campaigner
TYLER HATWELL
Youth Outreach Worker
ANNA HOARE
Community Research Officer
CLEMMIE JAMES (to April 2018)
Community Development and Campaigns Officer
GERALDINE LINDSAY
Skills Development Coordinator
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Partnerships and Innovation Officer
BETSY MOBEY (to December 2018)
Youth Engagement and Campaign Support Worker
MENA MONGAN
Community Engagement Officer
LOUISA NIGHTINGALE (to November 2018)
WARREN LEE
Accommodation Advice and
Admin Support Worker



Staff pictured, left to right. Front: Mena Mongan, Louisa Nightingale, Anna Hoare, Geraldine Lindsay. Back: Betsy Mobey, Tracie Giles, Tyler Hatwell, Ilinca Diaconescu, Debby Kennett

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Income and expenditure 2017-2018

This is London Gypsies and Travellers' Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31st March 2018.

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31.3.18 Total funds £	31.3.17 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM				
Donations	10,217	318,986	329,203	270,395
Investment income	111	-	111	62
Other income	9,174	-	9,174	1,500
Total	19,502	318,986	338,488	271,957
EXPENDITURE ON				
Charitable activities				
Policy/ Strategic Development	2,721	87,549	90,270	25,622
Youth	-	43,754	43,754	85,075
Community Development	3,270	107,381	110,651	199,717
Total	5,991	238,684	244,675	310,414
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	13,511	80,302	93,813	(38,457)
Transfers between funds	14,930	(14,930)	-	-
Net movement in funds	28,441	65,372	93,813	(38,457)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Total funds brought forward	33,666	42,925	76,591	115,048
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	62,107	108,297	170,404	76,591

Funders

Thanks to our funders during 2018.

THE AZIZ FOUNDATION
 BBC CHILDREN IN NEED
 THE BIG LOTTERY FUND
 GARDEN COURT CHAMBERS SPECIAL FUND
 THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND
 IRISH GOVERNMENT EMIGRANT SUPPORT PROGRAMME
 JOSEPH ROWNTREE CHARITABLE TRUST
 LUSH CHARITY POT
 LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION
 LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY
 TRUST FOR LONDON
 THE TUDOR TRUST
 THE WAKEFIELD AND TETLEY TRUST



Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality



London Gypsies and Travellers is an organisation which challenges social exclusion, working to support Gypsies and Travellers living in London as they seek more influence on the decisions that affect them, more opportunities and an end to the discrimination they experience every day.



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Annual report produced for LGT by Simon Crompton
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Photos front, rear and inside cover by Mary Turner

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