



**FRIENDS,  
FAMILIES &  
TRAVELLERS**



# 2021 Friends, Families & Travellers **Annual Report**

[gypsy-traveller.org](http://gypsy-traveller.org)

---

# Contents

- 3 Message from Our Chair
- 4 Directors Report
- 5 Our Team
- 6 Our Impact Supporting Individuals and Communities
- 9 Transforming Systems and Institutions
- 10 Recognising Heritage and History
- 11 Reports
- 12 Finance
- 13 In The News
- 14 Our Funders and Partners
- 15 Our Favourite Moment



## A brief message from our Chair

---

I write this at a time when the Gypsy and Traveller way of life is under almost unprecedented attack.

The trespass provisions of the Police Bill will make it a criminal offence for Travellers to park up, while at the same time the duty on councils to make provision for Travellers has been withdrawn.

It thus becomes impossible for Travellers to settle, and likewise impossible to keep moving.

This combined approach can only be seen as an attempt to entirely erase travelling cultures, and it has at least been heartening to see Gypsy and Traveller communities of all stripes set aside their differences and band together in protest.

FFT will be doing everything in its power to help resist this outrageous injustice.

---

### Neil Ansell

Chair

## This Year

Our casework and outreach team helped people with over **3500 issues**

Our theatre production Crystal's Vardo was watched online by over **1000 people**

**Over 850** people took part in our Cultural Awareness Training to provide more inclusive services for Gypsy and Traveller communities

**Over 690** people attended our events

# Director's Report

**We are coming to the end of another period of difficult and uncertain circumstances.**

**We continue to be amazed at the resilience and fighting spirit that everyone has shown during what continues to be one of the toughest periods in our lifetimes.**

It's no secret that the day-to-day difficulties experienced by Gypsy and Traveller people were made significantly harder by the pandemic.

At FFT, the heart of our work continues to be a practical advocacy and legal support service to Gypsy and Traveller communities across the UK, pushing to get a fair deal and protect the nomadic way of life. In the midst of these challenges, our work has never been more needed. This year, we have been able to provide support to Gypsy and Traveller people on over 3500 issues ranging from health to homelessness, education to financial inclusion and discrimination to employment.

Continuing to pursue our Vision for Change, our work has focused on our key areas of accommodation, health, education and discrimination.

One of our proudest moments this year has been our success in the High Court alongside our friends at London Gypsies and Travellers and the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups and our legal representatives from Garden Court Chambers and Community Law Partnership. Together, we acted as interveners in a David and Goliath case which successfully challenged the continued use of discriminatory anti-Traveller injunctions across England.

However, the year has been filled with wins both big and small. While we're very proud of the very public wins like supporting over 5,600 people to write to their MPs and oppose the Policing Bill, behind the scenes we see lots of very small wins every day in our casework and outreach work – from supporting a young person into education or giving an individual the tools to challenge discrimination.

Now, the criminalisation of trespass looms ever closer. As the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill is now back in Parliament for the last of its readings, it is more important than ever that we stand united.

Criminalising trespass may effectively render the travelling way of life impossible, but we know that this will not happen without a fight from FFT, Gypsy and Traveller people and their allies.

Once again, we have been overwhelmed by the amount of solidarity and support which we have received this past year. I cannot thank our funders, trustees, staff members, volunteer team, partners and supporters enough for making our work possible.

---

**Sarah Mann**

Director



## Our Team

### TRUSTEES DURING 2020/21

**Neil Ansell**  
Chair

**Dominique Corbett**  
Treasurer

**Marc Willers**  
Vice Chair

**Judy Pointing**

**Ben Stroud**

**Marius Taba**  
(From March 2021)

**Darren Dighton**  
(From March 2021)

**Justine Compton**  
(until October 2020)

**Tony Thomson**

**Rob Torkington**

**Heidi-Victoria Ireland**

**Alison Smith**

**Sarah Mann**  
Company Secretary

### STAFF

**Abbie Kirkby**

**Angela Barnett**

**Avril Fuller**

**Billie Dolling**

**Chris McDonagh**

**Emma Bray**

**Emma Nuttall**

**Emma Whitcombe**

**Ivy Manning**

**Jessi Bruce**

**Josie Garrett**

**Lena Stokes**

**Lucy Hetherington**

**Maisie Lumsden**

**Martha Ostick**

**Mattey Mitchell**

**Maxine Lambert**

**Michelle Gavin**

**Ngawang Dhargyal**

**Rosie Fox**

**Sam Worrall**  
(Until August 2020)

**Sami McLaren**

**Samson Rattigan**

**Sarah Mann**

**Sarah Sweeney**

**Suzanna King**

**Tommy Buck**

**Victoria Gilmore**

**Zoe Matthews**  
(Until August 2020)

### VOLUNTEERS

**Angel Smith**

**Bev Wells**

**Caleb King**

**Hal King**

**Kathy Smith**

**Michael Manning**

**Patience Manning**

**Terry Green**

### HONORARY PRESIDENT

**Baroness Janet Whitaker**

### CRYSTAL'S VARDOS CAST AND CREW

**Jasmine Atkins-Smart**

**Kavanagh-Rose Rattigan**

**Lucy Mepsted**

**Shannon Nolan**

**Stewart James Barham**

# Our impact supporting individuals and communities

## Meeting needs

Our outreach and casework team help people with the issues that matter most to them, from health to homelessness, education to financial inclusion and discrimination to employment. In total this year, we supported people with over 3,500 issues! There were some new and emerging themes this year, some of which we've set out below.

## Supporting education

As the pandemic hit, many of the families we worked with didn't have enough devices for children and young people to continue to take part in school. We worked closely with a grant provider and arranged for over 50 devices to be given to families who needed them, benefitting over 150 young people.

## Traditional skills and crafts

To beat lockdown blues and keep traditional skills and crafts alive, we worked with artists and craftspeople to release a series of online tutorials on making paper flowers, scroll painting, flower arranging and much more. Using Facebook groups, we connected with others and organised for craft packs to be sent out, which helped reduce the impact of isolation during lockdowns.

## Award winning work

Our Health Champions project, run by Samson Rattigan BEM, took the top prize for the Children and Youth category at this year's Charity Awards, the longest-running and most prestigious awards scheme in the charity sector.

## Covid-19 support

During Covid-19, our helpline and outreach workers liaised with local authorities and helped individuals and families to access facilities and sanitation. 85 individuals were able to access emergency grants for gas bottles, clothing and sustenance as a result of our support.





FFT have given us more help than we've had from any other places. The Council have made our lives hell and FFT have supported us throughout to resolve these issues and move forwards. It's good to have someone to help voice our opinion as often it feels like we're not listened to and our voices go unheard.

Angela has gone above and beyond, attending social services appointments, supported with a range of issues that we wouldn't have been able to manage ourselves.

Our situation would have been impossible without this support.

– **Anthony and Mary**



I'd like to say a big thank you to all at FFT especially Michelle with all the help and support they give me no matter how big or small Michelle has been helping me for over 10 years and no matter what it is she helps. Even something as small as reading a letter – she has become a very good friend and the support she gives me means everything.

– **Gemma**



Samson has helped me out so much this year, I would be lost without him, he is a top fella. He has helped me get into college to learn construction and has taken me and the boys on lots of trips to do different activities we would never of had the chance to do otherwise.

Thank you Samson and FFT.

– **Martin**



In January 2021, we took part in a High Court case and helped **put a stop** to anti-Traveller wide injunctions

**Over 24,000 people** accessed advice, information and guidance on COVID-19 on our website

**Over 5,600 people** used our online tool to write to their MP to let them know that the Government's Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill is not wanted

# Transforming systems and institutions

---

## High Court win

In January 2021, we acted as joint interveners in a High Court case on the use of anti-Traveller wide injunctions against “persons unknown”. We jointly intervened together with London Gypsies and Travellers and the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups with legal representation from Garden Court Chambers and Community Law Partnership. In a landmark ruling, the High Court favourably ruled to bring an end to wide injunctions against “persons unknown”. This marked a huge victory in this David and Goliath challenge.

## Challenging the Policing Bill

Through our work as Secretariat to the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma and through our campaigning work, we have been one of the forefront organisations pushing back against the Policing Bill. Over 5,600 people used our online tool to write to their MP to let them know that the Government’s Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill is not wanted. The fight is far from over and we will continue to oppose at every turn the measures set out to imprison, fine and remove the homes of people living nomadically.

## Inclusive services

In February 2021, we launched a new tool to support Primary Care Networks to assess and improve their work with people at the greatest risk of health inequalities, with a specific focus on Romani and Traveller people.

The tool, which was endorsed and supported by NHS England and NHS Improvement, was developed with people with experience of health exclusion and partners at Homeless Link, Doctors of the World, National Ugly Mugs and Stonewall Housing. We will shortly be welcoming a new member to our team who will work with Primary Care Networks across England to roll out the tool.

## Support during Covid-19

With others, we campaigned to ensure Romani, Traveller and nomadic people were protected and supported through the pandemic. As a result of our collective calls, the Government arranged for people living roadside to be able to access water and sanitation and the Government released specific advice for self-isolation for people living nomadically. Over 24,000 people accessed advice, information and guidance on COVID-19 on our website.

## Addressing suicide inequalities

Alongside others, we carried out research to show the need for targeted suicide prevention activities in Gypsy and Traveller communities. Together with friends at GATE Herts and Buckinghamshire New University, we met with Nadine Dorries, the Suicide Prevention Minister, who committed to include Gypsies and Travellers in the next Cross Government Suicide Prevention Plan.

# Recognising heritage and history

## Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants

As part of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month (GRTHM) 2020 we created 'Standing On The Shoulders of Giants', a series of interviews with people who have challenged injustice faced by Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and nomadic communities. The videos serve as a poignant reminder of why we should all stand up for what we believe in and speak to the courage of so many people we were privileged to interview. **You can find the videos on our YouTube page.**

## Crystal's Vardo

This year and for the first time ever, a filmed performance of Crystal's Vardo at Ovalhouse was made available online for everyone to watch! It was so successful, we even created a dedicated online digital theatre performance. But that's not all – we also updated our Crystal's Vardo Teacher Pack and even created a new Crystal's Vardo activity book for young children!



# Reports

We carry out evidence-based policy research and develop reports to target injustice at all levels. Here are some of our key research projects and reports we have developed or contributed to this past year.



-  **Friends, Families and Traveller submission to Women and Equalities Committee Inquiry ‘Coronavirus (Covid-19) and the impact on people with protected characteristics’**  
Sarah Sweeney and Abbie Kirkby, *April 2020*
-  **Submission to the Public Services Committee Inquiry ‘Public Services: lessons from coronavirus’**  
Friends, Families and Travellers and National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups, *June 2020*
-  **A research paper: Suicide Prevention in Gypsy and Traveller communities in England**  
Sarah Sweeney and Billie Dolling, *August 2020*
-  **Reducing Health Inequalities for People Living with Frailty: A resource for commissioners, service providers and health, care and support staff**  
Josie Garrett, Sam Worrall and Sarah Sweeney, *October 2020*
-  **Supporting legal action related to COVID-19 with regard to Gypsies and Travellers: Evictions from and service provision to unauthorised encampments**  
Friends, Families and Travellers and Chris Johnson, *October 2020*
-  **How to tackle health inequalities in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities**  
Friends, Families and Travellers, *November 2020*
-  **Friends, Families and Travellers submission to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities Call for Evidence on Ethnic Disparities and Inequality in the UK**  
Friends, Families and Travellers, *November 2020*
-  **Police renew calls for more Gypsy and Traveller sites in opposition to the criminalisation of unauthorised encampments**  
Victoria Gilmore, Abbie Kirkby and Billie Dolling, *September 2020*
-  **Last on the list: An overview of unmet need for pitches on Traveller sites in England**  
Sarah Sweeney and Billie Dolling, *January 2021*
-  **Friends, Families and Travellers submission to the Joint Committee on Human Rights – legislative scrutiny of the Police Powers and Protections Bill: the impact on Gypsies and Travellers**  
Abbie Kirkby and Victoria Gilmore, *February 2021*
-  **The Health Status of Liveaboard Boaters**  
Sam Worrall, Josie Garrett, Billie Dolling and Sarah Sweeney, *March 2021*

# Finance

## Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total funds 2020 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>				
Donations and legacies	541,720	388,390	930,110	620,841
<b>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</b>				
Fees, subscriptions and publication sales	37,821	7,478	45,299	102,933
Investment income	52	-	52	193
Other income	22,306	-	22,306	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>601,899</b>	<b>395,868</b>	<b>997,767</b>	<b>723,967</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>				
<b>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</b>				
Office Costs	117,315	19,122	136,437	35,413
Project Costs	31,351	26,185	57,536	93,900
Staff Costs	393,042	265,800	658,842	547,369
Professional fees	29,136	3,542	32,678	8,487
Property Costs	27,109	150	27,259	29,269
Management charges	(49,406)	49,406	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>548,547</b>	<b>364,205</b>	<b>912,752</b>	<b>714,438</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>53,352</b>	<b>31,663</b>	<b>85,015</b>	<b>9,529</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
Total funds brought forward	172,965	3,668	176,633	167,104
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>226,317</b>	<b>35,331</b>	<b>261,648</b>	<b>176,633</b>

# In the news

We raise awareness of the inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities so that the public are equipped with information that enables them to hold the Government to account.



 **Systematic discrimination barring Gypsies and Travellers from holiday sites ‘common practice’, community advocates say**

Sky News

 **Criminalising trespass will hurt Travellers most – but government proposals fail on their own terms**

The Conversation

 **‘I was terrified’: pupils tell of being victimised in UK schools**

The Guardian

 **Oxford councillor condemns ‘draconian’ crackdown on Travellers**

Oxford Mail

 **(Opinion): When you’re a Traveller like me extreme hate speech is an everyday occurrence**

The Independent

 **“A direct attack”: Gypsy and traveller communities campaign against new law to fine up to £2500 for roadside camp**

Yorkshire Post

 **The scourge of anti-Traveller discrimination in the UK**

France24

 **NHS ‘failing’ people from ethnic minority backgrounds, study shows**

Evening Standard

 **Nomadism in the UK: You can’t travel if you’re never allowed to stop**

The Planner



# With grateful thanks to our funders and partners

---

AB Charitable Trust

BBC Children in Need

BUPA

Baring Foundation

Brighton Youth Fund

Brighton and Hove City Council

Brighton and Hove Clinical  
Commissioning Group

Department of Health and Social Care

East Sussex County Council

Enterprise Development Programme

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Garden Court Chambers

Heritage Lottery Fund

Irish Government Emigrant Support  
Programme

Irish Youth Foundation

John Ellerman Foundation

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Lloyds Bank Foundation

Lund Trust

Matrix Causes

Ministry of Housing, Communities and  
Local Government (via GATE Herts)

Moving for Change

NHS England

Public Health England

Southdown Housing

Sported

Sussex Community Foundation

Sussex Police Crime Commissioner

The Community Justice Fund

The Henry Smith Charity

The Indigo Trust

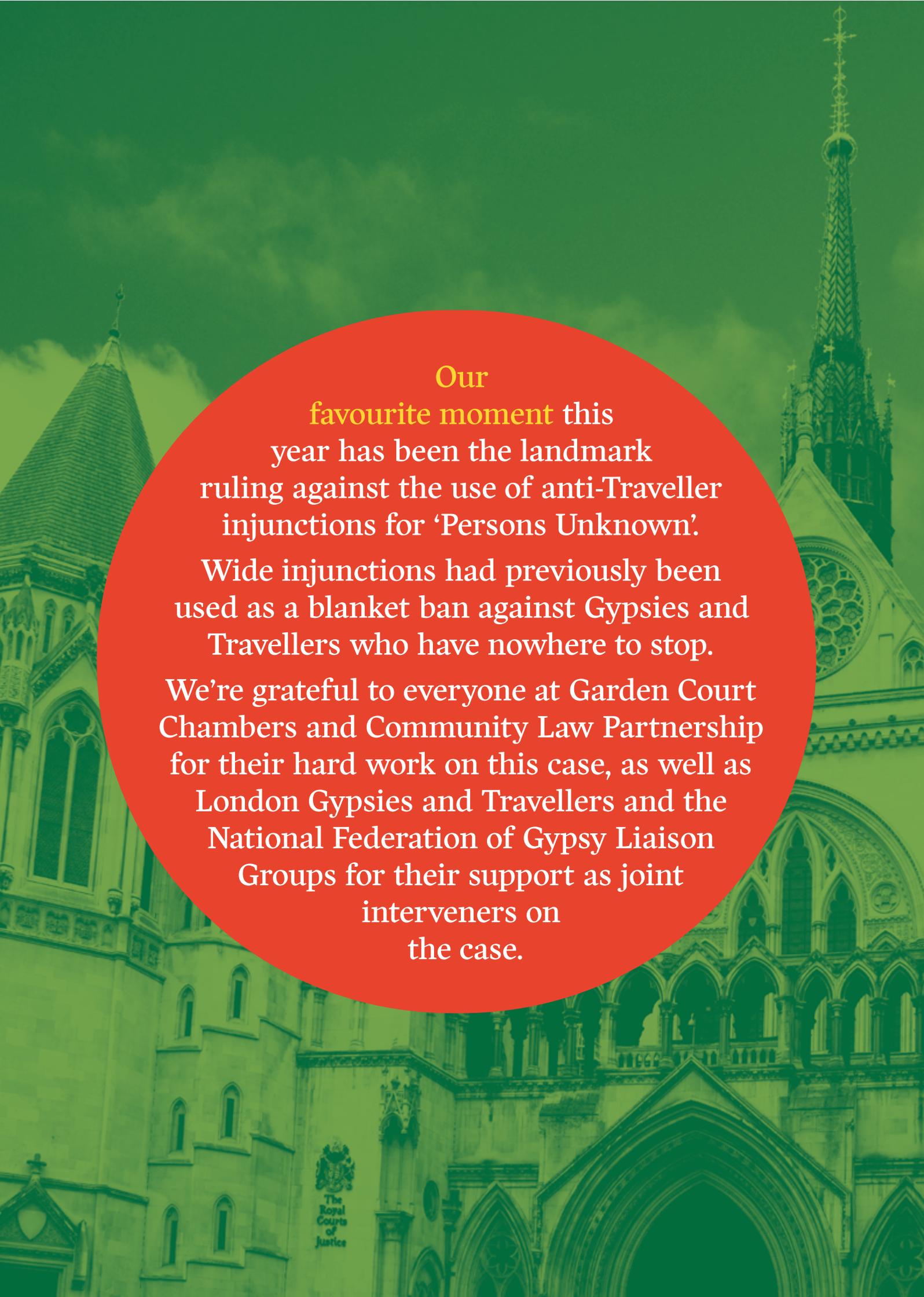
The Legal Education Foundation

The National Lottery Coronavirus  
Community Support Fund

The National Lottery Reaching  
Communities Fund

Uni Connect

Youth Futures Foundation



**Our favourite moment** this year has been the landmark ruling against the use of anti-Traveller injunctions for ‘Persons Unknown’.

Wide injunctions had previously been used as a blanket ban against Gypsies and Travellers who have nowhere to stop.

We’re grateful to everyone at Garden Court Chambers and Community Law Partnership for their hard work on this case, as well as London Gypsies and Travellers and the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups for their support as joint interveners on the case.

# Friends, Families and Travellers

## Address

Community Base, 113 Queens Road  
Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 3XG

**Telephone** 01273 234 777

**Email** [fft@gypsy-traveller.org](mailto:fft@gypsy-traveller.org)



**Like us on Facebook**

[/FriendsFamiliesandTravellers](#)



**Follow us on Twitter**

[@GypsyTravellers](#)



**Follow us on Instagram**

[@FriendsFamiliesandTravellers](#)



**View us on YouTube**

[/FriendsFamiliesandTravellers](#)