

ANNUAL REPORT



2023



**FRIENDS,
FAMILIES &
TRAVELLERS**

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A BRIEF MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR, DARREN DIGHTON:

In 2022, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month celebrated its 14th year and our charity reflected on the theme of 'What Makes A Home?'. However, the state-sanctioned challenge to the nomadic way of life under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 reminds us all that the work of Friends, Families and Travellers in protecting the right to live a nomadic way of life is now more important than ever, so that wherever we call home remains a right.

Sadly, the war in Ukraine continues as does the wider forced displacement of innocent people across the world, by war and conflict, natural disasters, and poverty. Whilst there is only so much we can collectively do, we were pleased to see FFT provide two paid internships for people from Ukraine's Roma community.

The dedicated work of our staff at FFT, in service to our diverse Gypsy and Traveller communities has heartfelt recognition from the Trustees. Whether tackling racism on the pitch through Kick It Out with younger members of the communities, preserving the life

stories and tales through cultural projects like Crystal's Vardo, or supporting safe-spaces for LGBTQIA+ members of travelling communities.

The Board of Trustees would like to ensure special thanks is given to two remarkable friends of our communities. FFT's founder, Steve Staines, sadly passed away last year. Steve provided the cornerstone for what FFT is today, and what we can be for the future. Marya Sadouni-Smith, a warm, kind, open and dedicated support worker at FFT also passed away, with both leaving a legacy of change and are much missed by everyone at FFT.

We would also like to give a special thank you to Neil Ansell, our former Chair, who has been with FFT for over 20 years. I am pleased to be continuing on from Neil's long-standing commitment to FFT and to bring my own lived experience of Traveller life. I hope to represent even more members of our diverse travelling communities whilst I serve FFT.

DARREN DIGHTON
CHAIR

OUR TEAM

TRUSTEES DURING 2022/23

Neil Ansell
Chair

Dominique Corbett
Treasurer

Marc Willers
Vice Chair

Judy Pointing
(Vice Chair from 2023)

Ben Stroud

Marius Taba

Darren Dighton
(Chair from 2023)

Tony Thomson

Rob Torkington

Heidi-Victoria Ireland

Alison Smith

Sarah Mann
Company Secretary

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Baroness Janet Whitaker

STAFF

Abbie Kirkby

Angela Barnett

Barry Winchester

Chelsie Dolling

Chris McDonagh

Debbie Luxon
(Until October 2022)

Doug Devaney

Elijah Vardo

Elvira Popenko
(Until July 2023)

Emma Bray

Emma Nuttall

Emma Whitcombe

Emma Wilson
(Until November 2022)

Ivy Manning

Jessi Bruce

John Henry Phillips

Jonathan Jones

Josie Garrett
(Until September 2022)

Lena Stokes

Lucy Hetherington
(Until June 2022)

Lulu Jones

Maisie Lumsden

Martha Ostick

Mattey Mitchell
(Until January 2023)

Maxine Lambert

Michelle Gavin

Millie Cooper

Ngawang Dhargyal

Rosie Fox

Rosie Hollinshead

Ruby Conlon

Sami McLaren

Samson Rattigan BEM

Sarah Mann

Scarlet Hannington

Suzanna King

Tommy Buck

Victoria Gilmore

Viola Popenko
(Until August 2022)

VOLUNTEERS

Amelia Jepson

Hal King

Kathy Smith

Michael Manning

Patience Manning

Terry Green

CRYSTAL'S VARDO CAST AND CREW

Francesca Hennebury

Richard Cook

Jasmine Atkins-Smart

Kavanagh-Rose Rattigan
(Until January 2022)

Lucy Mepsted

Maisie Lumsden

Sarah-Jane Miller

Stewart James Barham

Suzanna King

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

This year, the cost-of-living crisis amplified the difficulties that Romany Gypsy, Roma, Irish Traveller and nomadic communities face, as evidenced through the energy crisis, which pushed many families into debt, food insecurity and fuel poverty.

Despite many households and businesses across the UK receiving support with rising energy costs since October last year, many Gypsies and Travellers living on sites were not eligible for financial help until April. Even then, people living on roadside camps and itinerant Boaters were still excluded from the grants.

As the PCSC Act received Royal Assent, we organised a Day of Solidarity in support of nomadic communities and we were honoured to see participation across civil society – with social assets appearing on over 630,000 feeds.

Over 2022-23, we sought to effect change by forming vital partnerships with other organisations and groups. We partnered with the National Emergencies Trust to ensure Gypsies and Travellers get the right support in the event of national emergencies, challenged the use of wide injunctions in the Supreme Court, and launched the three-year Oak Project to help increase site provision.

Through our youth work, young Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex led the way in creating change, delivering positive messages to encourage healthier choices, to tackling racism on the football pitch. Our Sussex Service Delivery and National Helpline helped Gypsies and Travellers with over 4300 issues ranging

from benefits advice to plot applications to accessing insurance.

While there has been great adversity this year, we have had some great achievements. FFT won the Sheila McKechnie Foundation's Best Coalition Award for our work as part of the Police Bill Alliance, and we helped reclaim the rights of Gypsies and Travellers by successfully challenging the discriminatory definition of 'Traveller' in the courts.

We look forward to another year of working closely together to break down barriers, and we would like to thank our staff, trustees, volunteers and supporters for joining us on this journey.

Our work wouldn't be possible without you.

SARAH MANN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



OUR IMPACT



“You’re brilliant at your job Jonathan, honestly couldn’t ask for a better support worker.”

“Thanks to Tommy for helping me get a washing machine. It has really helped us as a family.”

“Thank you, Ruby. Thank you, I wouldn’t have got this far without you, I can’t thank you enough.”

Photo taken by a young Irish Traveller at London Zoo, as part of our Sussex Outreach projects



SUPPORTING NEEDS

The Cost-of-Living crisis has disproportionately impacted Gypsies and Travellers, and our dynamic Service Delivery team has responded accordingly. FFT’s Outreach and Casework teams supported families and individuals with over 4300 issues, from post-reading and letter-writing, to accessing grants and securing accommodation.

MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES

Our award-winning Young Health Champions Programme was delivered to over 50 young people in Sussex, qualifying young Gypsies and Travellers to cascade health messages to peers and families. Graduates have increased knowledge of health and wellbeing, gained a Level 2 qualification, and made positive health impacts in their communities, including reducing sun bed use and swapping energy drinks for water.

TACKLING RACISM

Facilitated by our Sussex Outreach Team, England C Team coach and ex-West Ham player Anwar Uddin MBE visited St Michael’s Way site, along with anti-discrimination charity [Kick It Out](#) to play football games and practice with young Irish Traveller children.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

In partnership with NHS England, we delivered a digital health inclusion project in Brighton and supported clients to download and use the NHS Digital app to book GP appointments, check medical records and access healthcare information.

IMPROVING SUPPORT

We released a report on tackling suicide inequalities in Gypsy and Traveller communities in partnership with [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities](#) (OHID) to provide guidance for healthcare professionals on how to ensure Gypsies and Travellers receive the right support, and are included in suicide prevention and planning.

To date, the report has been downloaded over 1200 times.

SUPPORTING UKRAINE’S ROMA COMMUNITY

With over 400,000 Roma affected by the war in Ukraine, we facilitated two paid placements over summer 2022 for people escaping the conflict.

GIVING SEASON

Our [Season’s Giftings campaign](#) was launched in response to the cost-of-living crisis impacting many Gypsy and Traveller families across Sussex. Thanks to everyone’s support, more than 40 families received toys, a food hamper, or a gas bottle, spreading festive cheer during a difficult time.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

CHALLENGING LAWS AND POLICIES



DEFINING CHANGE

We presented evidence of the discriminatory effects of the Government's planning definition of 'Traveller' alongside [London Gypsies and Travellers, Southwark Travellers Action Group](#) and the [Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group](#). The Court of Appeal ruled in our favour, declaring the definition as discriminatory. We're grateful for the incredible work of David Wolfe KC, Owen Greenhall and Tim Jones, and Chris Johnson of [CLP](#).

FIGHTING INJUSTICE

We [fought the use of anti-Traveller 'wide injunctions' at the Supreme Court](#), which have often been used by councils to stop Gypsies and Travellers from stopping on public land. We are waiting for the judgment.

POLICE ACT 2022

In the wake of the new police powers, we produced materials on what the law means for people living on roadside camps, delivered workshops, and held a [Day of Solidarity](#) alongside the Police Bill Alliance, in support of the nomadic way of life.

ENERGY CRISIS

We launched a campaign for people to [write to their MPs](#) calling for [energy support grants](#) to be extended to people living on roadside camps and itinerant Boaters. 625 letters were sent and as of August 2023, our campaigning led to itinerant Boaters being able to access support.

SHOWING CULTURES AND HISTORIES

WHAT MAKES A HOME?

Our theme for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month (GRTHM) 2022 was 'What Makes a Home?'. Throughout the month, we shared nostalgic and heartfelt stories from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people about what the concept of home meant to them – whether it was a place, feeling or people.

CRYSTAL'S VARDO

This year, our anti-bullying play, Crystal's Vardo celebrated its tenth anniversary and made the most of being on the road! We performed to over 2,500 young people and adults in schools, museums, libraries and prisons across the country, from Durham, Middlesbrough, Somerset, Wales, Worcester, Essex, London and our hometown in Brighton.



Crystal's Vardo 2022

PROJECTS

Having established an evidence base in previous years, we're now focused towards **delivering meaningful projects** aiming for **long-term change** for the benefit of nomadic communities:

OAK PROJECT

To increase site provision for Gypsies and Travellers across England, we launched [The Oak Project](#), a 3 year partnership including [London Gypsies & Travellers, National Policy Advisory Panel on Gypsy and Traveller Housing \(NPAP\)](#), and the [Housing Diversity Network](#).

RODDICK PROJECT

Our Roddick Project, supported by the Roddick Foundation, takes an asset-based development approach to advice, advocacy and casework, providing assertive outreach in the form of traditional skills workshops, weekly youth clubs and our Young Health Champions programme across West Sussex.

DSI DIGITAL

Funded by NHS Sussex, our 'Digital Traveller Champions' project set out to increase digital confidence, skills, and participation in digital health for Gypsies and Travellers in Sussex, through workshops, providing essential items such as SIM cards and young people's clubs.

STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY

The Baring Foundation-funded project addressed racial injustice experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities with the Criminal Justice System presented by new legislation, as with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act and the use of 'wide injunctions'.

PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP

Moving for Change commissioned FFT to begin a mentorship programme for a community member to gain new skills, information and knowledge, increase workplace skills, and empower them to take positive actions to uphold their rights and responsibilities.

REPORTS

TO FURTHER TARGET INJUSTICE AT ALL LEVELS, WE CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY RESEARCH.

FIND SOME OF OUR KEY RESEARCH AND REPORTS FROM THE PAST YEAR BELOW:

[CLICK TO VIEW ONLINE:](#)

[Briefing on Race Hate and prejudice faced by Gypsies and Travellers in England](#)
Friends, Families and Travellers, March 2023

[Written evidence for the 2023 Pre-Sessional Working Group Report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)
Friends, Families and Travellers, January 2023

[Briefing on Health Inequalities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities](#)
Friends, Families and Travellers, October 2022

[Tackling Suicide Inequalities in Gypsy and Traveller Communities 2022](#)
Friends, Families and Travellers, September 2022

FINANCE

Statement of financial activities (Incorporating an income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31st March 2023

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM				
Donations and legacies	862,168	201,015	1,063,183	1,205,832
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES				
Fees, subscriptions and publication sales	201,115	-	201,115	96,215
Investment income	4,679	-	4,679	-
Other income				
TOTAL	1,067,962	201,015	1,268,977	1,302,047
EXPENDITURE ON				
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES				
Office Costs	91,780	6,094	97,874	96,393
Project Costs	66,073	14,617	80,690	127,808
Staff Costs	791,794	177,362	969,156	844,372
Professional fees	102,959	3,764	106,723	86,305
Property Costs	31,757	2,286	34,043	26,949
Manangement charges	(46,645)	46,645	-	-
TOTAL	1,037,718	250,768	1,288,486	1,181,827
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	30,244	(49,753)	(19,509)	120,220
Transfers between funds	1,395	(1,395)	-	-
Net movement in funds	31,639	(51,148)	(19,509)	120,220
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Total funds brought forward	328,688	53,180	381,868	261,648
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	360,327	2,032	362,359	381,868

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.

CLICK ARTICLES ON THE RIGHT TO READ ONLINE

Supreme Court to hear challenge to 'persons unknown' injunctions

Friends of the Earth

Fighting financial exclusion in the Gypsy and Traveller community

Financial Times

Inside the online forums where anti-Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sentiment thrives

Gal-dem

'Landmark' court judgement rules that 'Gypsy status' planning law discriminates

Travellers' Times

The world has been redesigned to exclude us

Inside Housing

Hearing the voices of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community

Green World

Will The Government's New Fund To Support Travellers Make A Difference?

EachOther

Gypsy and Traveller families 'paying £600 a month for gas' after being left out in the cold from government support

Big Issue

'It's traumatic': new travellers' Dorset home challenged by Martin Clunes

The Guardian

WITH GRATEFUL THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

[AB Charitable Trust](#)

[Baring Foundation](#)

[BBC Children in Need](#)

[Blagrove Trust](#)

[Blue Moon Trust](#)

[Brighton and Hove City Council](#)

[Brighton and Hove Clinical
Commissioning Group](#)

[Brighton University](#)

[Brighton Youth Fund](#)

[Chalk Cliff Trust](#)

[Choice Support](#)

[Department of Health and Social Care](#)

[East Sussex County Council](#)

[Enterprise Development Programme](#)

[Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#)

[Garden Court Chambers](#)

[Indigo Trust](#)

[Irish Government Emigrant
Support Programme](#)

[Irish Youth Foundation](#)

[John Ellerman Foundation](#)

[Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#)

[Lloyds Bank Foundation](#)

[Lund Trust](#)

[Matrix Causes](#)

[Moving for Change](#)

[NHS England](#)

[Oak Foundation](#)

[Office for Health Improvement and Disparities](#)

[Roddick Foundation](#)

[Scottish Government](#)

[Southdown Housing](#)

[Sussex Community Foundation](#)

[Sussex Learning Network](#)

[Sussex Police Crime Commissioner](#)

[The Community Justice Fund](#)

[The Henry Smith Charity](#)

[The Legal Education Foundation](#)

[The National Lottery Community Foundation](#)

[Infrastructure Programme](#)

[The National Lottery Community Foundation](#)

[Reaching Communities Fund](#)

[Trust for Developing Communities](#)

[Youth Futures Foundation](#)

OUR FAVOURITE MOMENT

Our favourite moment this year was helping **reclaim the rights of Gypsies and Travellers** living with disabilities or in old age, by successfully **defeating the discriminatory planning definition** of ‘Traveller’ in the courts.

This **incredible victory** is a devastating blow to policies and legislation that have long been used to stifle the cultural traditions of Gypsy and Traveller communities.

FRIENDS, FAMILIES & TRAVELLERS

Contact Details:

Address

Friends, Families and Travellers
Community Base
113 Queens Road
Brighton
BN1 3XG

Telephone 01273 234 777

Email fft@gypsy-traveller.org

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