



Our plans and priorities for 2018 - 2019

Welcome to GYA 2018 – 2019

This is my opportunity to welcome you all to the 2018-2019 Gateshead Youth Assembly. We had a fantastic training weekend at Lobley Hill and came up with loads of ideas and priorities for the year ahead. Whilst some of our priorities have changed, we will still be sticking with some of our previous projects, including Child Poverty. I expect that GYA will have another packed year, and it already looks like there are some brilliant projects.

This year's GYA is considerably larger than the last few years; Valerie's new work structure has meant she has been able to recruit new members and we are so pleased.

We continue to be the voice for Young People in Gateshead and continue to work on issues identified by ourselves and our peers. I'm really looking forward to working with our Youth Assembly team this year and hopefully this newsletter gives you an insight into our ideas. If you want to get involved, have contacts you think we could try or indeed have some spare change down the back of the sofa, we would love to hear from you.

Watch this space!

Andrew Adams, Chair

Welcome to Gateshead Youth Assembly 2017 – 2018

Cardinal Hume Catholic School

Josh Smith

Julia Onyebuchi

Louise Robson

Melissa Towler

Heworth Grange School

Andrew Adams

Sophie Adams

Abbie McMullon

James McMullon

Daniel Chard

Sarah Keegan

Charlie Renwick

Joseph Swan Academy

Georgina Pendleton

Thorp Academy

Amelie King

Amy Binks

Erin Bilclough

Esmay Wright

Jasmine Sillence

Jessie King

Tegan Oxley

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy

Sabah Ahmed

Benjamin Johnson

Cedars Academy

Katherine Young

Individual Members

Joe Waggitt

Freya Ender

Mohammed Al-Kateeb

Ayaa Al-Kateeb

Martin Nichol-Bartram

GYA 2017 – 2018 Executive Committee

Following campaigns, speech writing, hustings and elections at our recent training weekend, the following Executive Committee was elected by our delegates

Chair - Andrew Adams

Vice-Chair - Josh Smith

Secretary - Sophie Adams

Treasurer – Freya Ender

Project Leads - Benjamin Johnson; Sarah Keegan; Abbie McMullon; Louise Robson; Tegan Oxley

Each project lead will work with all GYA members to design and deliver their chosen projects.

Our priorities for 2017 – 2018

Mental Health Issues – We plan to carry on our existing work around emotional well-being and mental health as this issue hasn't gone away. We run an informal buddy system at GYA so that members who are struggling can access support from other members. We plan to produce a range of resources for parents, teachers and young people around mental health, the signs and symptoms and where to get support. We are going to work on a range of myth busters and do our best to reduce the stigma around mental health. We also do our best to ensure that we cover the five building blocks for good mental health:

- **Connect** – We spend time developing relationships with other GYA members, in and out of GYA. Some of our members recently said that apart from GYA and family, they don't go anywhere, as a result of this we are making greater efforts so hold more social activities, even if it's just board games at GYC.
- **Be active** – We aren't known for our physical activity but last summer we, collectively, walked over ONE MILLION steps. We had a great time too. So, for this year, we plan to build on this and set ourselves some challenges.
- **Keep learning** – Everything we do at GYA is about developing existing skills and learning new ones. We also deliver a range of training to our members around committee skills, soft skills, self-esteem, first aid. Also, our members deliver training to other young people and adults, so not only do we keep learning, we facilitate learning in other people.
- **Give to others** – All of our members are volunteers, however some of them don't always realise that so lots of our time is spent developing an awareness of what volunteering is and why it's good for both the donor and the recipient. We also collect food, clothing and household goods for our friends at Peace of Mind to give to whoever they need to.

- Be mindful – Some of our members take part in the ‘100 Happy Days’ initiative, those who don’t, are encouraged to think about it. We firmly believe that we need to pay attention to the world, our place in it and our effect on it and the people around us.

Self - confidence/self – esteem – We plan to continue our series of self-confidence and self-esteem workshops throughout the year. Each year these sessions are delivered by young people who have been through GYA, and coming back to volunteer.

Tobacco & Alcohol– We will continue to work with Public Health around tobacco and alcohol related issues and how we can protect children and young people from the effects of smoking, e-cigs, alcohol and from being manipulated by the manufacturers of tobacco and alcohol related products.

Environment – We will continue to support WWF Earth Hour and make efforts to reduce our consumption of disposable products and encourage our members to use public transport where appropriate. We already refund our members public transport costs and try to ensure that all our school holiday activities use public transport. We also bought a stash of cups and plates to use when we are out and about, so we don’t need to buy paper ones.

Bullying – Bullying, both cyber and real world continues to be a massive issue for young people and we plan to work on projects which enhance young people’s self-confidence, self-esteem and emotional resilience so they are better equipped to cope with bullying and stand up against it. We also plan to challenge bullying and body shaming whenever we see it online.

Added to this, we realised that the CEOP button which we are taught in schools is easily accessible and should be used when we see anything inappropriate around child sexual exploitation online, but we have found that it doesn’t work as the button isn’t on websites. CEOPs site is really good, when you find it, so we want to raise young people’s awareness and get them to bookmark CEOP, so they have it handy should they ever need it.

Child Poverty - We continue to work on issues around child poverty, we regularly hold collections for the Foodbank and the Peace of Mind Drop in.

Arts Award – We never really thought we were ‘arty’ until we met people from the Juice Festival last year, seems we were wrong! Even those of us who can’t or don’t want to ‘do art’ can help other people get involved. Last year lots of us were awarded a Bronze Arts Award for the volunteering we did around the Juice Festival, we have just found out this week, that we have been granted funding for twenty of us to continue our Arts Award journey with Bronze, Silvers and Golds!

Human Rights/Equality/Feminism – We are passionate about equality and believe that lots of our projects are based on human rights, taking in racism, sexism, homophobia and feminism. We plan to raise awareness of these issues in schools because we believe that equality is necessary in society. We want to raise awareness about how important it is to treat all people with dignity and respect and to learn lessons from the past. So, we are going to develop an information booklet and

presentation to send to schools. We are also developing work around Holocaust Memorial Day and Remembering Srebrenica.

First Aid – We are going to learn First Aid, then we can teach our friends, so people know what to do if someone is in danger. One of our members, Joe, is a long serving member of St John Ambulance and is one of their trainers and he is going to lead a session with other St John members. It will focus on basic first aid most relevant to young people.

LGBTQ+

We are going to develop links with existing groups to highlight the available support, challenge inequality and discrimination and work to make sure that all Children and Young People in Gateshead are supported to be themselves, whatever that means to them. We will write a myth buster and develop, and information poster aimed at reducing stigma, disproving incorrect information and educating people.

Fair Trade – We will work with Gateshead Council to keep Gateshead a Fair-Trade Town by encouraging our schools to be Fair Trade Schools and by using Fair Trade products at our meetings and events.

Position Statements

We have developed the statements below; we accept that unfortunately we cannot change the world or indeed legislation in one GYA year, but we do have opinions and these statements have been agreed by GYA for 2018 - 2019

- We believe that everyone should be paid the living wage, regardless of age. The argument that young people don't work hard enough is just fluff, any worker not working to the expected level is a management issue, and age is just an excuse.
- We believe that Emotional Well Being and Mental Health Services need improving, with our help.
- We believe that young people will be more ready to be properly contributing workers if they secure good quality work experience and careers advice.
- We believe that young people in Gateshead are entitled to and need a good quality Youth Service. We further believe that the Government should commit funds to a properly funded statutory Youth Service.
- We believe that organisations, whether public, voluntary or private need to engage young people in their decision making in real, not tokenistic, ways.

- We believe that young people should be able to access support to develop their self - confidence and self - esteem; this has been stated by Northumbria Police as the best protection from being exploited.
- We believe that it is everyone's job to try and limit the effects of poverty on children and young people. Whatever the cause of a family's poverty, the children never had any influence over decisions made. We must all work to ensure that these children and young people are protected and their dignity preserved.
- We believe that in order for young people to make informed decisions when it comes to voting, sound political education should be delivered efficiently within schools.
- We believe that young people aged 16 and 17 should be entitled to vote in all elections. Nothing happens between the ages of 16 and 18 which make people better qualified to vote, so why not?
- Gateshead Youth Assembly supports Fairtrade and uses, where possible, fairly traded goods. We firmly believe that we all have a responsibility to ensure that people all over the world are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

If you want to get in touch with us to find out more, get involved or anything else please email Gateshead Youth Council at info@gatesheadyouthcouncil.org.uk You can also find us on Facebook by searching for Gateshead Youth Assembly.

If you are a young person who would like to get involved please contact our support worker Valerie at valerieender@gateshead.gov.uk or valerie@gatesheadyouthcouncil.org.uk

GYA meets weekly, usually at Gateshead Youth Council, 12 Gladstone Terrace, Gateshead, NE8 4DY but we do hold our monthly formal meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at Gateshead Civic Centre, Council Chamber.

If you want to attend a meeting for any reason, please contact Valerie Ender in the first instance as these are private meetings and guests are welcome by invitation. This is so that the GYA members retain control of their meeting.

Thanks for all the support

