



Welcome to GYA 2016 - 2017

So this is my opportunity to welcome you all to the 2016-2017 Gateshead Youth Assembly. We had a great training weekend and managed to come up with loads of ideas and priorities for the year. 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.

As you will be aware our support time from Gateshead Council is much reduced as a result of Government cuts to Local Authorities and while this has had an impact of the amount of work we can be involved in, it hasn't diminished the quality. You may find that we are no longer able to respond to requests to get involved in new projects after our priorities are set like we once did; but 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 the 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

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

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.



Welcome to Gateshead Youth Assembly 2016 - 2017

Following campaigns, elections, nominations and individual referrals below is the most current list of GYA delegates for 2016 - 2017. We know that there are more to follow.

Cardinal Hume Catholic School

Joshua Smith

James Parkin

Matthew Fairless

Rogan Walker

Cedars Academy

Joe Waggit

Bethany Ford

Ciaran Bell

Heworth Grange School

Andrew Adams

Sophie Adams

Abbie McMullon

Sarah Keegan

Gateshead College

Megan Wood

Joseph Swan Academy

Ewan Taws

St Thomas More Catholic Academy

Jake Guthrie

Sarah Muldoon

Whickham Academy

Robert Barker

Ellie Brain

Madeleine Hewson

Callum Wilson

Independent

James Thirlaway

Hannah Douglass

Freya Ender

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy

George Davidson

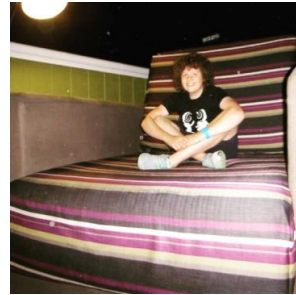


GYA 2016 - 2017 Executive Committee

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



Andrew Adams, Chair



Josh Smith, Vice Chair



Hannah Douglass, Member UKYP



Jake Guthrie, Secretary



Robert Barker



Abbie McMullon



Joe Waggitt



James Thirlaway

We have chosen not to have Portfolios this year as it didn't fit with the projects we felt most important.

Our priorities for 2016 - 2017

Public transport - Some of our members are young people travelling independently for the first time and this can be scary so we are holding some travel sessions, like our fab 'Bus Day' of a few years ago where we all meet, buy a day ticket and use the bus until everyone is quite happy that they know how to get to and from GYA meetings. We feel this is an important life skill for us and gives our parents and carers a break from ferrying us about. Joe will lead on this.

Awareness of GYA in schools - We want to increase the awareness of GYA in schools as we feel this has waned in the last couple of years. We are going to produce posters, work with schools to promote GYA events on their websites and try to get a GYA noticeboard in schools where we don't have one already. We are also going to speak to each school council and Head Teacher to see if we can publicise GYA and the benefits being involved can have for young people. James will lead on this.

Mental Health - We plan to carry on our existing work around emotional well-being as this issue hasn't gone away. We plan to ask the CYPs team to talk to us and discuss a way GYA can help support young people who suffer from emotional wellbeing issues. We also run an informal buddy system at GYA so that members who are struggling can access support from other members. Abbie is taking a lead on this.

First Aid - Joe is working with his colleagues at St. John Ambulance to develop and deliver a training session to our members, this session will focus on keeping young people safe when out and about and possibly under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Basically, how do we keep our friends safe if they are hammered!

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 - We will continue to work with Public Health around tobacco related issues and how we can protect children and young people from the effects of

smoking, e-cigs and from being manipulated by the manufacturers of tobacco related products.

Environment - We are going to develop a 'clean up' campaign to encourage people to stop littering, we know this is an ongoing issue but feel that more work is always better than less! Robert will lead on this.

Child Sexual Exploitation - We plan to work with the Northumbria Police Cadets who developed a great resource a few years ago around CSE and consent. We plan to adjust it for schools and try to deliver it as widely as we can.

Bullying - Bullying, both cyber and real world continues to be a massive issue for young people, we plan to work on projects which enhances 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. Abbie will lead on this to tie in with the Emotional wellbeing work.

Child Poverty - We continue to work on issues around child poverty, we have representatives on the Regional Young Peoples Child Poverty Group and we regularly hold collections for the Foodbank and 5p clothing bus etc along with some extensive work supporting refugees and asylum seekers in Gateshead. Everyone will work on this.

of GYA - Working with Peace of Mind we have launched a series of drop in sessions for refugee and asylum seeking young people and GYA members to work together on projects, activities and events that affect young people. This project will focus on social action and essential life skills. Our first event is a community Christmas Party where, so far, 120 children and their families have signed up to attend.



Position Statements

We have developed the statements below, we accept that we cannot change the world or indeed legislation in one GYA year but we do have opinions, these statements have been agreed by GYA for 2016 - 2017

- 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 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.
- We believe that young people will be more ready to be properly contributing workers if they secured 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, they 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.