



Annual Review 2017

Foreword by Sue

Well, what a fabulous year we've had! It's been hard work but we've loved every minute of it. As a charity, we've worked hard with funding bids - being successful as can be seen by our financial statement. We've worked hard within the community, creating links which we hope to strengthen in the following years. Our young people are a credit to themselves and the charity - they have done us proud. Our trustees have also worked hard - IT and DIY support a recurring theme, with baking and general moral support also being on hand.

All in all, a successful year. Long may it continue!

Introduction

Welcome to our review of 2017. The following is a snapshot of the work the Young People involved with GYC get up to but doesn't truly show the skills and experiences they have so at the end, we will tell you a little about the skills young people develop and the added value of being a member of GYC and its projects. This is basically the 'So what?' question. Why GYC is important and relevant to Young People in Gateshead today.

About half of GYC projects are currently GYA related but as our capacity increases, so does the breadth of work we do and young people we work with.

Most of 2017 saw GYC operate with four hours of council support (Valerie) and about sixteen hours of volunteer support (Sue and Valerie) as well as ad hoc, but considerable volunteer time from the Board and young people in order to keep things going, our board members and volunteers are incredible and all work to make GYC the fantastic project it is.

2017 saw the work developed by GYC double with the development of Peace of GYC and the World Artists group and we expect that to continue to grow, and new projects develop in 2018.

This year also saw our young people start to work more closely with the Northumbria Police Community Engagement Team. We started working with them around the Asylum Seeker group and this developed into being part of a group of organisations who help assess stop and searched. We have further developed work around and young peoples police panel. Watch this space.

January 2017

As happens every January our Young People come together to plan their year. Meeting as a whole group enables us to plan things across the year taking each groups ideas into account, for example, ensuring exam season is light on activities and that Ramadan isn't full of food related activity. We firmly believe that doing this planning with the whole group develops compassion, consideration and tolerance.

Peace of GYC had the first drop in of the year which saw refugee and asylum seeking young people working with UK born young people to develop a welcome to Gateshead guide for newcomers to the area, designed for young people but equally useful for parents and carers. While young people were working on this their parents were taking part in English Language sessions which are designed to complement the ESOL classes and focus more on deciphering the forms parents routinely need to complete and also to better understand some of the quirks of the English Language.

As in previous years we held a Convivial Supper and invited members of Gateshead Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee along to meet GYA members who presented their plans for the coming year. This event has proven to be a far more effective method for collaborating with OSC than young people going along to a meeting. This informal setting allows the young people to shine and the adults to learn more about their work.

February 2017

February was a great month with GYA members cracking on with their projects but the best bit was the GYC whole project residential. Every member of GYC whether a group member or board member was invited to a residential weekend looking at the future of GYC. From the start, it was made clear that every individual's opinion was of equal value and the residential was the starting point of a new way of developing services at GYC. The young people and the adults developed great working relationships through old fashioned community work activities like orienteering, cooking and session planning. It was, in hindsight, a mistake to plan a full cooked breakfast on a Sunday morning and a Roast dinner before we left at 3pm - you live and learn!



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During half term we had one of our annual 'bus days' where we meet at the metro, everyone gets all day tickets and we take it from there. There was deliberately no advanced planning, so the young people decided where to go, and planned it on the go, just like real life. Many of our members don't use public transport and we firmly believe it's a skill worth developing. It gives you freedom and access to activities you might otherwise miss out on. Who wants to stay home just because you can't get a lift? These bus days also include discussions around safety; what to do if things go wrong and our fantastic young people are really good at working through these issues. This particular bus day saw us pop into the Family Day at St Chads Church where some of our members made their own pizzas, some took part in drumming and others chatted to the other participants while eating the hottest curry we ever tasted!

March 2017

March was quieter, thankfully, Peace of GYC drop in and GYA regular meetings were fully attended but no 'extras' which was just as well as occasionally we need time to take stock, evaluate and plan.

April 2017

As part of their 2016 Winter to Remember Key Bid our group The Saviours took the whole GYC group ten pin bowling. This was the first time some of our members had ever been, their first time on public transport and for some, their first experience of fast food (not that we are too proud of that). Some of the Peace of GYC young people who came along have now gone on to join GYA and the World Artists group which goes to show how important it is to enable young people to have new experiences, it opens many doors!



April also saw a Convivial Lunch, delivered in conjunction with Peace of Mind Communities, we invited many of the lovely friends who have donated to Peace of

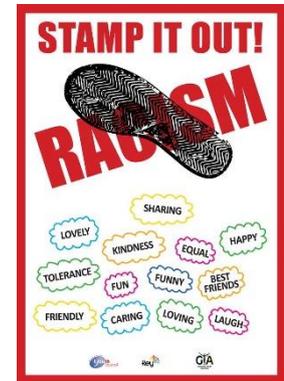
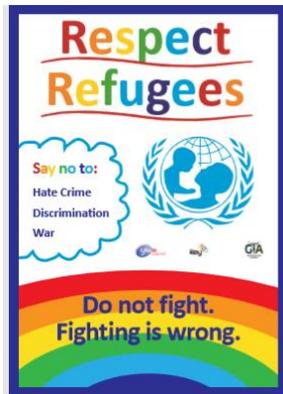
Mind along with group members and members of the refugee and asylum seeking communities as a way to develop relationships and friendships.

The Easter holidays were quiet as both support staff were on holiday at the same time, which hardly ever happens! But, just before they went off, there was time for the #jellybeans Key group to go shopping for all the games they wanted for the games nights they were planning, they also had a wonderful brunch at the Settle Down café in Newcastle; we recommend a visit if you haven't been already - and no, we aren't on commission. This was the #jellybeans' stage 1 Key bid, and had taken a few months to get going as the members were very new, young and anxious. There were times when we thought we should just pull the plug and cancel it as they were so stressed out but they didn't want to, they powered through and oh my days, are we glad they did. This group have visibly progressed, by the time they had been through the process they had grown massively in confidence. Preaching to the converted we know, but this group demonstrates exactly why young people need opportunities and support to develop their own projects, the ramifications are so much wider than the project in hand.

In the midst of all of this, another of our Key groups had the idea to have a poster competition for all of the Gateshead Primary Schools promoting diversity and equality. As part of this project the group developed a session to be delivered in Primary schools either by one of us from GYC or by the schools and this was sent to every school in Gateshead as a free resource. The competition was hugely successful and we were inundated with posters. Here are just a few examples.



Our young people chose these three as the very worthy winners and they have in turn been sent out to all Gateshead Schools. Valerie and Sue also did Diversity and Equality talks in a couple of schools, leading assemblies and workshops.



We delivered congratulations cakes, framed posters and certificates on a very rainy cold day!!



May 2017

May saw another Peace of GYC drop in, well attended by young people and parents, lots of discussion around how to best support refugee and asylum seeking young people. No easy answers of course but we spent time looking at what we can do and decided to spend time developing relationships with parents too, it's better for young people if their families are doing better and they are more likely to be able to engage in projects if their parents are comfortable with the project.

Our AGM was small, compact and bijou would definitely apply here. The review of 2016 did however show that even if we are stretched to the limits time wise, our fantastic young people step up and produce amazing results.

June 2017

We did a bit of schmoozing in June, as one of our groups were nominated for a Key Award which saw us attend the ceremony in Newcastle Civic Centre. We were at the table with the High Sheriff of Tyne and Wear, Lieutenant General Robin Brims and Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Susan Whitfield who were lovely and talked at length with the young people about their work. This led to the High Sheriff coming along to other GYC events including our Remember Srebrenica event. Our group didn't win the award, but weren't in the least disappointed as the competition was fantastic.



June also saw Valerie and Sue begin to deliver some new sessions, we had been asked to deliver something around respect and tolerance following on from the poster competition and because the Primary school in question wanted sessions during the school day when our young people are also at school, it was down to the adults. They delivered the sessions written by young people although modified for fear of trying to look 'down with the kids'. The sessions at Oakfield Juniors not only went down a treat with the young people and staff, but also paved the way for some new interest from year 7 students later in the year.

July 2017

The Great British Get Together is a fantastic movement aimed at bringing communities together over food, learn about each other and remember that we have more in common than that which divides us, Following the murder of Jo Cox, GYC decided to hold a GBGT with all of our groups, but it fell during Ramadan, so we moved ours to just after Eid so all of our families could take part in a fantastic picnic

and games in Saltwell Park. Many thanks to Gateshead Council for their grant and also Greggs, for a massive donation of food! There were also the 200 cupcakes that we had iced! It was lovely to see people chatting and playing, people realising they were neighbours and had mutual friends, this is exactly the kind of community event we, as community organisations should be holding.



Remembering Srebrenica

We hadn't really heard of Remembering Srebrenica, until Chrissie, the Community Engagement Police Officer mentioned it, and we couldn't have expected the developments that have taken place as a result. We were asked if Gateshead Youth Assembly might be interested in commemorating the genocide in Srebrenica at a civic event, as it seemed no one else in Gateshead was. We talked to young people and after they did some research, decided it was exactly the kind of social action that the youth council should be involved in. Cheshire Constabulary attended alongside Northumbria Police. It was a very touching event. Following this event Lucy Adams became an intern, and then Sue Adams signed up to be a Remembering Srebrenica board member, watch out for much more work around remembering why hate and intolerance needs to be challenged.



August 2017

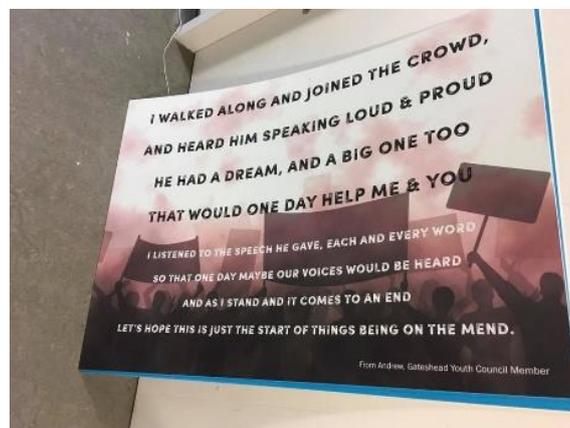
Our fantastic #jellybeans recovered from the stress of their first Key Stage earlier in the year and decided to go big by organising a residential. They discussed with other GYC young people what they wanted to do and chose a residential at Gibside. The group researched the trip, worked out food requirements and costed everything, wrote risk assessments and letters to parents and carers. They wrote a timetable for the weekend which included lots of activities on Gibside estate and lots of free time.

These guys aren't the kind of young people who sit around doing nothing, so we took along the old GYC Member Action Course kit and over the weekend had the group complete some of the exercises, with a view to re-writing it at a later date. Our fab former Vice-Chair Owen had a few new youth work exercises up his sleeve, one being to split the group into teams and have them plan and deliver sessions to each other - classic youth work but delivered in a way that kept it fresh. We also had our Food Olympics, which we don't imagine will happen again. Valerie bought a range of perfectly fine, but unusual food and the group had to taste them blind and try to identify each spoonful - we have some great photos!

The evaluation of this residential included making sure they have a purpose to any future residential. The weekend was a brilliant success though, all of the young people took part in the whole event and had a blast.

The World Artists group was developed in 2017 after a couple of asylum-seeking young people happened to mention how much they liked art, in the company of people from The Juice Festival. Funding was secured by Juice and Gateshead Youth Council to enable up to 15 young asylum seekers to take part in a two-month programme of art, leading to an exhibition at the Great Museum of the North during the Juice Festival.

The artists tried a variety of media and were encouraged to develop their exhibition around the Martin Luther King Freedom City initiative.



Their work was so impressive that further funds were secured to develop their works into a postcard set, which is sold with the proceeds being fed into a fund supporting young asylum seeking artists.

Following the Juice Festival, another grant was secured to enable these young people to undertake a Bronze Arts Award, which they are currently working on. Trying a different artistic media every week, researching influential artists and exploring what art means to them.

This project was aimed at asylum seekers, regardless of their living situation and has enabled six of the Eritrean young people currently looked after by Gateshead Council to participate. The group isn't limited to the Eritrean young people, we have young people from a variety of backgrounds attending.



Volunteers and staff actively look for the barriers to participation from the planning stage and have built travel expenses, food and refreshments, into the programme so the young people don't need to worry about that. The main volunteer for this group is also an asylum seeker so knows very well the barrier to participation and the other young people appreciate that this makes a massive difference.

September 2017

During September, Gateshead Youth assembly members worked within their schools to deliver workshops and assemblies to recruit new GYA members for the 2017-2018 GYA year.

Because of the links with Juice Festival, September was incredibly busy. We usually have a bit of a dip in September, projects finished, young people moving schools and colleges or going away to university means the projects are generally small scale but 2017 was very different. We planned the Arts Award sessions for September and October, running up to half term. The Juice Festival sourced funding, artists and

volunteers so that our young people could get involved. We aren't really an 'artsy' kind of group, some members of the group might be but that's quite incidental, so we haven't often been part of Juice as we felt it didn't fit with our young people but this year has shown us all that being 'artsy' isn't necessary. We tailored the Arts Award around our young people's volunteering, their volunteering enabled other people to get involved in Juice and this really worked for us. Of course, just being involved in the process enabled some of our young people to realise that they are into the arts, and really good at it! We also had the opportunity to take part in a drama workshop which was really youth work, drama style rather than our usual youth work, social action style. It was incredible to see our young people benefit from a different method of working and we will be doing more of this in the future. A couple of our young people were clear that they hated drama, but actually ended up loving this session, we guess youth work drama is different to school drama. Sometimes, you just need to look at things from a different perspective.

October 2017

October saw the GYA elections and election night ceremony which was attended by the Mayor of Gateshead, existing and prospective members and their parents and carers. The event was more low key than in previous years but ensured that the prospective members and their parents/carers had time to meet other young people and the support workers ready for the training weekend.



The Peace of GYC saw young people continue to work on their welcome pack, take part in some team building and personal development exercises and help plan the half term Halloween Party (Holiday Hunger session which saw twenty-five families receive culturally appropriate groceries to help them over half term).



Half term itself was incredibly busy. Our GYC members were heavily involved in the Juice Festival, attending first, the launch party, then helping to deliver the Our Time Event at the Great North Museum; Zest workshop and Zest theatre production at Northern Stage; and helping to run the Imagine That day which saw over 300 children and young people taking part in artistic activities and working toward their Discover Arts Award.



November 2017

November 2017 saw the annual GYA training weekend where new and existing GYA members worked together to develop their programme of work for the coming year and took part in a range of training from 'how Gateshead works' to self-esteem, running a meeting to how to campaign. This weekend is always fun, fully inclusive and much is delivered by older or former GYA members.

As often is the case, day two of the training also encompasses Remembrance Sunday where our young people represent all of Gateshead's young people, deliver a reading at the Cenotaph and lay wreaths on behalf of GYC and GYA. This year Andrew Adams delivered the reading and Sophie Adams delivered the wreaths. This event is always emotional, whether you are a pacifist or not, all of our young people acknowledge that we should always remember the sacrifices made by others for us.



Remembrance Sunday isn't the only time we remember how people suffer though. The ongoing relationship we have with Peace of Mind Communities and Samosa Sisters led to our Chairperson Sue and Peace of Mind Chairperson Sara heading to Leeds Beckett University to deliver a workshop to students around the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers coming to the UK. These sessions are always tough to experience, as it's difficult to hear about the suffering of people first hand, and, whatever some element of the media might like us to believe, people who come to the UK seeking asylum, really do need it. They also need our friendship and support. Meeting Peace of Mind has completely changed the way we work at GYC. We realised that unless we engage with the whole family, then we aren't going to be able to engage with the young people, so over the past few years we have developed a range of family activities and 2017 has seen them grown and grow.



December 2017

We usually have a short run up to Christmas as our workers usually finish sessions mid-December but this didn't mean we had a slow month, just a compact one!

As well as our regular meetings at GYC we had the opportunity to visit the most Christmassy house any of us have ever seen. It's a small world, we know, but last

year we realised that two of our younger GYA members are actually cousins of Valerie, we also realised that their Grandparents REALLY do Christmas. Their house is transformed over October and December into a Winter Wonderland like nothing we have ever seen. The house was, in the past, Ofsted inspected for school trips! We took a small group of about twelve young people to visit and every one was blown away. Every single thing in the house is 'Christmas' from cushions to doorbell, loo roll to cornflakes to cutlery. Amazing!

Following this was the GYA Christmas party, which, as always is completely planned and delivered by young people, the support workers turn up, help out, laugh a lot and help clear up. This year the young people collected toys and sweets for asylum seeking families to go in the culturally appropriate grocery bags at the holiday hunger Christmas party, which, of course, was simply named The Christmas Party, where over forty families received groceries, toys, gifts and had a lovely old fashioned party with party games like, pass the parcel, music statues and corners - the old ones never go out of date!



December also saw us move into a new, slightly smaller office downstairs. This took a considerable amount of time in the weeks prior, as board members and the young people were clearing out our old office upstairs whilst also getting downstairs ready for us to move in. Particular thanks go to Richard and Mike who spent weekends and many Tuesday nights over the weeks sorting the woodwork and the tech. Whilst we may still have a couple of cupboards to build, once the building is properly separated, we have to say it's turned out quite nicely.

So what? You may well ask

Well, apart from the benefits the young people who are part of GYC make to the wider community in terms of poverty relief, intergenerational harmony and political awareness, the young people who get involved with any of the GYC projects develop massively in terms of their personal and social skills.

We think Young People are given a rough ride and frankly don't deserve it. Young People are amazing individuals who, with support, encouragement and opportunity can achieve great things. The skills Young People develop while working on their projects are the soft skills that employers seek, the everyday things we often take for granted but aren't part of a school curriculum.

We did a little bit of brainstorming recently, and by little, we mean little, this was five minutes' worth. Imagine if we had more time?

What are the benefits to being involved in a GYC project?

- Developing a 'can do' attitude.
- Learning to problem solve.
- Developing resilience.
- Learning and developing life skills.
- Developing political awareness.
- Starting to understand civic society.
- Developing civic responsibility.
- Learning about citizenship.
- Developing awareness off community ownership/leadership/responsibility.
- Increased self-esteem.
- Increased self-confidence.
- Developing critical thinking skills.
- Learning to recognise and challenge inequality and stereotypes.

- Experience of people from different social groupings.
- Learning to work with people from different groups to achieve common goals.
- Developing an awareness of others, their feelings, needs, qualities and limitations.
- Recognising and appreciating all of these differences.
- Developing empathy with others.
- Developing mindfulness about self and others.
- Practicing effective decision making.
- Learning to negotiate.
- Developing communication skills.
- Developing research skills.
- Developing skills in presenting self and ideas.
- Working with people in positions of power.
- Understanding power structures, how they can be a struggle to comprehend.
- Developing awareness of how power structures can affect self and others.

Funders

Of course we can't do any of this without the help and support of our wonderful funders. They are fantastic and we are so grateful for their support.

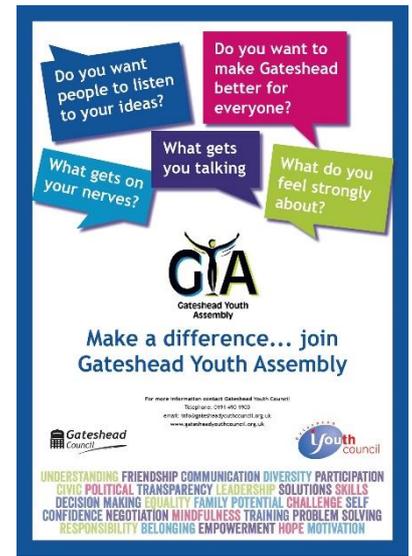
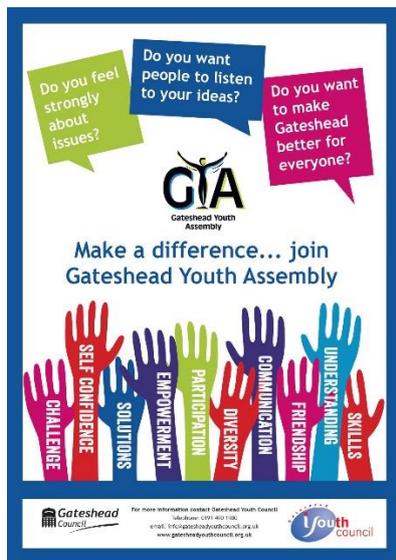
Our work in 2017 was funded by The Tyne and Wear Community Foundation; United Way and Costco; The Police and Crime Commissioner; Gateshead Council, The Finn Family Foundation; Trinity College London; The Willan Trust; John D Grassroots Funding.

Also many thanks to The Key, who don't consider themselves funders, but their delivery model enables our young people to develop and deliver projects while developing essential life skills.



Thank You

Thanks go to Gateshead Council for their support, particularly around staffing (Valerie), also to all of our young people, their parents and carers, the High Sheriff of Tyne & Wear Robin Brims, Greggs for their generous donations of food, schools and organisations for accommodating GYC requests, also to Helen Wallis from GHP Design for the wonderful new posters, everyone from Juice for the help with our arts awards, all of the other organisations that we have worked with this year and those who support us with hugs and funding ideas!



And that, was 2017!

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Gateshead Youth Council

Financial Statement

1st January 2017 - 31st December 2017

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|---|-------------------|
| Balance at 1st January 2017 | £ 22227.46 |
| Income | £ 22,228.02 |
| Expenditure | £ 25054.47 |
| Balance at 31st December 2017 | £ 19401.01 |

| Income | | Expenditure | |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Grants | £ 20307.00 | Rent | £ 4295.00 |
| The Key | £ 1248.76 | Services | £ 2114.22 |
| Misc | £ 715.77 | Activities/Events | £ 9016.08 |
| | | Equip/Postage/Misc | £ 2842.28 |
| | | Restricted | £ 2389.17 |
| | | Membership/ Ins/Fees | £ 711.50 |
| | | Bank charges | £ 72.00 |
| | | Misc | £ 614.22 |
| TOTAL | £22271.53 | | £ 25054.47 |