



Gateshead West Uniform Scheme (registered charity number 1202131) Trustees Annual Report.

Governance Overview

This report has been compiled by the Trustees of Gateshead West Uniform Scheme to cover our activities over the last reporting year, from 1st March 2023 to 29th February 2024.

At the time of reporting, our charity has six Trustees, Emma Mons-White (Chair), Rebecca Skoyles (Secretary), Eleanor Baggaley (Treasurer), Amy Thirlwell, Emma Bowman and Lucy Smith. In addition to trustees, there is a group of around 20 volunteers who regularly work with us at markets and events.

In addition to the governance of the charity, all Trustees are active and regular participants in our events. This ensures that all Trustees have first-hand knowledge and experience of the communities we serve and their needs.

As a governing body, we have meetings every 2 months with a standing agenda, as well as discussing upcoming issues. Decisions are made by a majority vote following discussions, with the Chair having the casting vote if required.

Activities and Achievements

Our charitable objectives as per our submission to the Charity Commission are:

“The relief of financial hardship among families in Gateshead and the surrounding area by the provision of clothing and equipment in particular, but not limited to, school uniforms which they could not otherwise afford.

The protection and preservation of the environment for the public benefit by the reuse and recycling of clothing which would have otherwise gone to landfill.”

Our key activities in the last 12 months in support of this have been:

Blaydon site:

In March last year, we expanded our operations by securing space at a new site in Blaydon, which opened in May 2023.

This has allowed us to increase the number of schools that we serve, as well as being able to increase the amount of stock we hold and display it better. Since opening, we have run 20 markets from this site (2 per month) and estimate that we have helped 200 families from this area.

Ryton Site:

We have continued to operate from our original site in Ryton, running 24 markets (2 per month). We estimate that we have helped 250 families in this area. We moved some school stock down to our new Blaydon site, which has allowed us to operate more efficiently at Ryton.

We held a Christmas Fair from our Ryton site in November 2023. This increased our profile in the local community, supported local independent businesses and brought income to our charity.

Pop-Up markets:

We have delivered several Pop-Up markets over the year. This involves bringing our uniforms out from our sites and holding markets in community spaces in Gateshead, which also raises our profile.

We have delivered two pop-ups from the Winlaton Centre, one at Greenside Primary School, one at 'The Bank' and one at the community hub in the Metro Centre.

Grant Funding:

We have been successful this year in securing grants from both Tesco Groundworks and the Peoples Postcode lottery. This funding has allowed us to dedicate funding towards buying high-value items of school uniform for 150 families in our local area. This grant funding was specifically for local people in receipt of benefits, so this targeted those most in need in our community.

Environmental:

We estimate that we have saved up to 2 tonnes of clothes from going to waste! This is based on the level of items donated to us. Where clothing has not been good enough for re-use, we have put these for scrap fabric recycling.

For our new site at Blaydon, we have managed to fit out our spaces by using second-hand shelving and clothing rails. These have offered us great value for money, as well as being environmentally friendly, reusing items and ensuring less resources are wasted.

We have also utilised 'Vinted' this year. This has allowed us to offer our generic, non-branded uniforms to a much wider platform, maintaining accessible prices. We have also been able to sell non-uniform items which are sometimes donated to us. This has had the added benefit of generating enough income, to cover our rental costs for our Blaydon site.

Working with schools:

We have had a particular focus on engaging with local schools this year. This has included creating mailing lists for the schools we cover, with information sent out to them on a regular basis. We have also spoken to each local school with the aim of building strong relationships. In particular, we have focused on working with our local high schools. These are often the highest-costing uniforms and we have worked hard to speak to schools, to promote our scheme and also to act as collection points for us at the end of school terms.

Drop-off points:

We have been able to increase the amount of drop-off points we have available this year, to include Whickham Library and Ryton Coop and we have invested in a clothing bin at our Blaydon site. This improves our visibility in the communities we serve, as well as increasing the uniform donations we receive.

Trustees and volunteers:

We have had one trustee resign this year, with another new trustee joining us, so our Trustee numbers have remained static.

We have increased the number of volunteers we have working with us, as well as offering volunteer opportunities for young people, some of whom have used this towards gaining the Duke of Edinburgh certifications. Our pool of volunteers has increased by 5 this year. We have held a social event to celebrate our volunteers, as well as having a 'Grand Opening' event for our new Blaydon site.

Finances

A summary of our finances for the last financial year is appended to this report and our finances are reported to the Charity Commission in line with their rules.

Our sources of income are as follows:

- Grant funding. This year we have received grants from the Peoples Postcode Lottery and Tesco Groundworks.
- Cash or card donations at markets and pop-up events.
- Vinted, income generated from selling donated non-uniform items and surplus non-branded school uniforms.

Our main outgoings are:

- Monthly rent, is payable at both our Ryton and Blaydon sites.
- Other operating costs include IT fees (website, licences, phones), fit-out costs (shelving, hanging rails, boxes), insurance, stationery and other office supplies.
- New items of school uniform.

Our finances are currently stable, with a small reserve held for contingencies.

Gateshead West Uniform Scheme

Financial Activities

March 2023 - February 2024

	TOTAL
Income	
Charitable activities	81.42
Donations and legacies	10,605.30
Services	219.60
Uncategorised Income	0.01
Total Income	£10,906.33
TOTAL	£10,906.33
Expenditures	
Insurances	96.00
Office/General Administrative Expenses	328.86
Phone Costs	61.35
Printing, Postage and Stationery	17.06
Raising funds	855.70
Travel and Accommodation	643.00
Total Expenditures	£2,001.97
NET OPERATING INCOME	£8,904.36
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	£8,904.36