

Making Sunderland a Real Living Wage City



Sunderland's vision

More money going into the local economy and fewer residents earning poverty pay

Partners across Sunderland are working together to provide these benefits to the people of Sunderland, supporting Sunderland's ambition to become a Real Living Wage City.

In Sunderland we have around a quarter of children living in poverty, workless households account for one in every five households and around 20 per cent of those who are in work are on or just above the minimum wage - which feeds into a whole range of social and economic problems.

We believe that work should pay, or at least pay enough for people to live on.

Sunderland City Council has paid its own employees the Real Living Wage recommended by the Living Wage Foundation since 2014. Following accreditation this summer it has also extended this commitment to staff working for council contractors as contracts are renewed.

To help make Sunderland a Real Living Wage city, local employers are encouraged to sign up and work together to support this goal.

The evidence suggests that the additional money people will have in their pockets from paying them a fair day's pay for a hard day's work will be spent across our local economy, in local businesses and local shops, creating more jobs and more security.

Paying a real living wage will not only benefit the lowest paid individuals but also the wider local economy, communities and the city.

What is the real living wage?

In 2001 families came together and started a campaign to be paid a real Living Wage. Since then hundreds of thousands of families have benefited and been able to earn a wage they can live on.

Thousands of employers choose to go further than the government minimum and voluntarily pay the real Living Wage to all of their staff including their contracted staff. This has meant a pay rise for hundreds of thousands of workers and their families.

The Living Wage Foundation celebrates employers that sign up for accreditation by awarding them the mark of a responsible employer.

The Living Wage is an hourly rate of pay, independently calculated each year based on the real cost of living in the UK and London.

- The real Living Wage is independently calculated based on what employees and their families need to live
- That is why it is higher than the minimum wage
- Employers voluntarily choose to pay it, changing people's lives right now
- The real Living Wage includes a UK rate and a separate London rate that reflects the higher costs of living in the capital
- It applies to all workers over 18.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/become-a-living-wage-employer>





What are the business benefits?

We think it's the right thing to do, for your employees and for your organisation.

Paying the Real Living Wage can have positive effects on staff wellbeing and team morale.

Employers have told us it can mean increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, better recruitment and retention, improved quality of work, and an increased consumer awareness of an organisation's ethical credentials.

64% say it helps differentiate themselves from others in their industry.

85% of consumers think that companies that can afford to do so should voluntarily pay the Real Living Wage.

More than 80% of employers believe that the Real Living Wage has enhanced the quality of the work of their staff, while absenteeism has fallen by approximately 25%.

2/3 of employers report a significant impact on recruitment and retention within their organisation.

What has paying the real living wage done for your business



Join other Sunderland employers



SHARP

"ShARP are proud to be a Living Wage employer. We are pleased that our commitment to pay the Living Wage helps every member of our team feel valued: "Knowing that I have been in receipt of the Living Wage has felt nice and makes me feel that ShARP does care for its employees."

SHARP EMPLOYEE

We are pleased to be part of the action group supporting Sunderland to become a living wage city, by encouraging other voluntary and community sector organisations to understand the benefits of paying the real Living Wage for their employees and for their organisation."

JOANNE LAVERICK,
PROJECT MANAGER



INTERFLEX

"InterFlex believes that employees who feel valued and are engaged are a real asset to any business.

Registering as a Living Wage employer was an easy and straightforward process, which required little if any change to the Company's terms and conditions."

GRAHAM TILLEY,
UK MANAGING DIRECTOR



GENTOO

"Attaining Living Wage Employer Status is great news for Gentoo as people are at the heart of our business.

Investors in People has recognised the hard work we've put in to ensure our workforce has a say in the future of Gentoo, and that all colleagues have the opportunity to learn and develop in their roles.

Our Living Wage Employer status means we not only pay our workforce a fair wage but that we can encourage our supply chain to the same."

NIGEL WILSON,
GENTOO GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE



WWIN

"WWiN are proud to be a Living Wage employer, we deliver specialist domestic abuse services - highly skilled staff doing a difficult job. It's good for our people and that makes it good for the Charity-enables us to recruit and retain the right people"

BECKY ROGERSON MBE,
DIRECTOR



YOUTH ALMIGHTY PROJECT

"Youth Almighty Project are proud to be a living wage employer as we believe our staff deserve a wage that meets their everyday needs.



BLUE RIBBON

"Becoming a living wage employer was a natural progression for us. As a Care Provider its important to not only care for those we support, but also care for our colleagues.

The Living Wage is very visible proof of our commitment to all those who work in Blue Ribbon. I'm very proud that we are a living wage employer and would encourage every employer to do the same - value those you work with!"

MARK HUGHES,
DIRECTOR



SUNDERLAND COUNCIL BUSINESS INVESTMENT TEAM

Growing the number of businesses paying the real living wage is a key tool that Sunderland can use to address the many problems that flow from low wage work. Through their day-to-day contact with key companies on a range of matters the team will be delighted to advocate the moral and business benefits conferred by the real living wage and encourage them to sign up.

DAVID PATTISON
BUSINESS INVESTMENT MANAGER



UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND

The University of Sunderland supports fully the city's aspiration to become a Real Living Wage place. Having recently implemented the real living wage for our own staff, we are keen to encourage and support others within the Higher Education sector to make this commitment. Paying the real living wage has had a tangible positive impact on our staff, reflects the University's 'life-changing' purpose and aligns closely with our values.

ALISON STEPHENSON
DIRECTOR OF HR



NORTH EAST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber supports Sunderland City's ambition to become a Real Living Wage City. When employers commit to pay their staff a real Living Wage, it helps everyone – low paid staff and their families, employers through better retention and progression, and communities through greater financial health. Sunderland will also be increasing people's ability to spend locally and support local business – all great for Sunderland and the wider North East.

JOHN MCCABE
CEO

Find out more

Visit www.sunderland.gov.uk/cwb to find out more about how to become a real living wage employer

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