Title:

Laptops for disadvantaged young people in Surrey and Sussex

Background:

Level Up Laptops is a project started in May 2020 by Horley Town Council councillor Martin Saunders to donate refurbished laptops to disadvantaged young people so they could continue their studies at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The demand for laptops grew rapidly, and with help from YMCA East Surrey, Raven Housing Trust and Voluntary Action Reigate and Banstead, Level Up delivered over 1600 laptops to young people throughout Reigate and Banstead Borough.

In May 2022, with young people back in school and the pandemic easing, Level Up refocused its efforts to help other disadvantaged groups in society, especially women and children fleeing domestic abuse, and young refugees.

To date, Level Up has donated over 1900 laptops since its inception.

Why donate to Level Up?

Level Up prides itself on being exceptionally efficient and effective at getting laptops into the hands of disadvantaged young people. Most of the devices donated to Level Up (over 90%) are used and onward donated. Only occasionally laptops can’t be used because of an unrepairable fault, or they are too old to be used. In these circumstances, the laptops are used for parts, and what remains is taken to be WEEE recycled at a local community recycling centre.

Level Up doesn’t have any paid staff or other costs. All the running costs are donated by Cllr Saunders.

Is Level Up a Charity?

No Level Up isn’t a charity itself as Level Up rarely handles money and running a charity is a costly and time-consuming job. Level Up is supported by several charitable and non-profit organisations. Level Up’s current non-profit partner is Alliance For Better Care.

Process:

Level Up focuses on laptops as they are most useful for studying, work and play. When a laptop is donated the following steps are taken:

1. Laptop details are recorded and the laptop is assessed for damage or failed parts
2. Laptop hard drive is securely wiped using the ATA Secure Erase command (<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjEtYaRmIH8AhULV8AKHfICCsgQFnoECBEQAw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fcsrc.nist.gov%2Fglossary%2Fterm%2Fsecure_erase_command&usg=AOvVaw2yeEA_KOAcjGAPHOQxLt24>)
3. The hard drive is typically replaced with a solid state drive (SSD)
4. Depending on the age and specification of the laptop either Windows 10 or Google Chrome OS Flex is installed
5. The laptop is thoroughly cleaned and checked

How to Donate:

Level Up heavily depends on the generosity of individuals, businesses and the public sector to donate laptops and keep the project going.

Specification of laptop:

Level Up requires laptops that work (turn on, with a working, non-smashed screen) including their power supply. We will take laptops with a faulty battery.

If the laptop originally came with Windows, we can only take laptops that came with Windows 7 or newer (Win 8 or Win 10). We unfortunately can’t take laptops that came with Windows 2000, XP or Vista.

How can I tell? The easiest way to find out which version of Windows the laptop came with is to look for the licence sticker on the bottom of the laptop – note the sticker may be under the battery.

Level Up is also happy to take any age of Chromebook laptop or Apple Mac laptops produces since 2012.

Although we always securely wipe the data from every device we receive, we also recommend the donor performs a secure wipe of the laptop before donation. For Windows laptops, please follow these instructions:

Windows: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/recovery-options-in-windows-31ce2444-7de3-818c-d626-e3b5a3024da5#bkmk_reset_pc>

Apple Mac: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT212749>

Chromebook: <https://support.google.com/chromebook/answer/183084?hl=en>

Special note for businesses:

If you use Microsoft Intune or Google Enterprise to manage your laptop estate, please ensure that the laptop is unenrolled first before donation: -

Intune: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/mem/intune/user-help/unenroll-your-device-from-intune-windows>

We don’t require the password of the laptop

Unfortunately Level Up doesn’t take tablets or mobile phones

1. Small donations (1-3 laptops)

For donations of 1-3 laptops, please drop the laptop Horley Library

1. Larger donations (3+ laptops)

Please contact us using the contact form below, or email [donations@leveluplaptops.org.uk](mailto:donations@leveluplaptops.org.uk)

How do I get a laptop:

Level Up works exclusively with schools and charitable organisations for onward donation of laptops. If you are interested in applying for a laptop, in the first instance please contact your school. If they’ve not heard of Level Up, please ask them to get in touch as we’ll do our best to help

Who has helped us so far:

A huge thank you to these amazing businesses who’ve donated laptops and funds to Level Up since its inception:

SGN

First Community

Getty Images

Pfizer

CMED

ResourceIT

L3Harris

Halliford School

Gatwick Airport

Digital Spring

Claranet

Cartesian

Tesco Bank