

HISTORY

It all began with the Dudley Hope Charity, which registered with the Charity Commission [Charity number: 1076233] on 29th June 1999. In those days we used to take the Christmas Argos catalogue, pull out all the up to £20 gift pages and then transfer them to the computer to make our own catalogue. We would then get it printed and sent out to the organisations to pick toys from. Next, we would have to go around all the Argos stores in the area to purchase the toys. They would often be out of stock, and we would have to spend days, sometimes travelling to multiple stores, to get what the child had asked for. As you can imagine this was very time consuming and we only provided gifts for about 200-300 children in those days.



The Dudley Hope Charity dissolved on 6th March 2012.

From that date the appeal became Operation Santa Dudley borough and we changed the format to the model we still operate today. We started to operate a central hub to collect donations which are then sorted by volunteers. It was at this time that our Business Ambassadors Brett from Blaze Hair, Kingswinford, then Lee Southerton from Volks Magic, Oldbury, came on board. We invited our partners to submit lists of children in need, collecting only age and gender. Our volunteers then select the gifts, they are bagged up and collected by the relevant organisations.



The Operation Santa Dudley borough appeal ran up until Monday 9th August 2021.

It was then that Operation Santa Dudley borough run by Dudley CVS, formally transferred operational control to us and Operation Santa Dudley borough became Santa's Black Country Toy Appeal. We certainly have our work cut out for us and we will now cover Dudley/Sandwell/Walsall and Wolverhampton, as these are the areas that make up the Black Country. The estimated number of children living below the poverty line in the Black Country is 104,265.



Last year we supplied gifts to 6305 children across Dudley borough.