

the **GIRLS'**
BRIGADE
ENGLAND & WALES



A round-up of 2019

A 2019 round-up of news and stories from
Girls' Brigade England & Wales

Premier Digital Award for koko's film



GB Ministries' project koko scooped first prize for our Dare to Care film at the Premier Digital Awards in the Best Use of Video category.

Staff team members Catherine Burt and Claire Rush were at the awards, on 2 November, to represent GBM and accept the award.

Check out the film, which is about kindness, at www.youtube.com/watch?v=enb4QE8hpbQ

Pastoral Care Principles launched

Girls' Brigade Ministries (GBM) is thankful to our leaders across England and Wales who are working tirelessly to invest in girls and young women in their local communities. We know their role comes with so much fun and many rewards – especially as girls become more confident and discover Jesus – but it also comes with challenges and difficulties.

The culture that children and young people are growing up in today can present so many opportunities but also significant challenges for them as they try to discover who God created them to be. As safe and trusted adults to GB members, leaders will have been asked difficult questions, will have heard the doubts and anxieties, and have helped to wipe away the tears.

We hope our new GBM pastoral care principles, launched at GB's November conference, will help to support leaders in their important role as they journey alongside young people.



Three new groups open



The new school year saw the opening of 3 new GB groups in the Northumberland & Durham, Merseyside and Stour Valley Districts. All 3 groups have already had a great response and are enjoying welcoming girls through their doors every week.

Finance update

Did you know you can raise money for GB without spending a penny?

- * You can hold a birthday fundraiser on Facebook where you can choose us as your charity and ask friends and family to donate instead of buying gifts.
- * By shopping via Amazon Smile, Amazon donate 0.5% to The Girls' Brigade England and Wales when you choose us as your charity.
- * Give as you Live is a great scheme to sign up to. Choose Girls' Brigade England & Wales as your charity and shop through the Give as you Live website at thousands of online stores and a percentage of the sale comes to us



smile.amazon.co.uk



We've also been really blessed this year by individuals' donations as well as groups by groups raising money for us as part of the £125 Build Hope Challenge or by taking part in events like The Big Pancake Party, run by Church Urban Fund's (CUF) Together Network, and recycling crisp packets.

We've also benefited from grant funding – thanks to government money administered by the Youth United Foundation for core costs and to set up new groups, and a second year of funding from the Methodist Church Connexional Grant Committee for our mission and discipleship project.

If you'd like to support GB financially you can give quickly and easily online at **www.give.net/gbm** – your gift, whether monthly or a one-off will enable us to continue developing as a positive Christian influence on the lives of girls and women.

If you're unable to support us financially, please tell others about our need and how they could contribute to our ministry, and please continue to pray for GBM.

Daphne Cosser

Sadly Daphne Cosser, former National Secretary for GB England & Wales between 1978 and 1993, passed away on Saturday 20 July 2019.

When interviewed for GB's 120th year in 2013, Daphne said 'GB has meant so much to me, from such an early age, and I'll always be grateful for the calling I had to serve the Lord in this way.'



We give thanks for her faithful service and pray for her family and friends.

GB members get hands-on to renovate van



Members of 35th Birmingham GB group are renovating an old Volkswagen T4 van and repurposing it into a coffee van to accompany events taking place at their church.

The group of 9 are part of a scheme being run by MechaniX – it's the first time the programme has been run in the Midlands and is taking place at the Vehicle Inspection and Training Services (VIATS) training centre in Redditch.

Shirley Giles, 35th Birmingham's Team Leader, says 'We're thankful to be given this opportunity which acknowledges that girls are able, confident learners who can approach this project with courage and enthusiasm, learning skills that will last a lifetime and raise their self-esteem tremendously.'

The GB members and the VIATS training centre were visited by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Mohammed Azim and the Lady Mayoress, Ms Bushra Bi, on Saturday 20 July 2019.

The MechaniX programme, a vocational course, created by Haynes Publishing Group in 2014, is designed to equip participants with the self-reliance and confidence that comes from developing mechanical skills. The participants, aged 15 to 19, will also have an opportunity to learn teamwork and leadership skills which will stand them in good stead and further enable them to grow into responsible, skilled and productive adults.



GB's Endurance Award given to brave cancer fighter



8 year old Isabella Gillies from 1st Andover received a GB Endurance Award in 2019.

Presented at her group's awards evening by Hampshire West District President, Mrs Dianne Richardson, the Endurance Award is a special award that is given to recognise bravery and determination in young people dealing with prolonged or serious illness.

Isabella was diagnosed with a plexiform hystiocystic tumour in her hand in April 2018 and had to undergo three operations. As well as operations, Isabella's treatment included numerous CT and MRI scans and still, Isabella continued to attend her GB group each week and never let the situation get her down. Isabella was given the all clear two days before Christmas 2018.

Following her all clear, Isabella, along with her sister Summer, aged 7, decided to donate over 10 inches of hair to the Little Princess Trust who make wigs for children going through chemotherapy and hair loss.

Build Hope breakfasts

Build Hope breakfasts, designed to showcase the work GB Ministries does in turning up the volume of hope for girls and young women, took place in three locations in 2019 – Southend, Bristol, and Sheffield.



Invites for the breakfasts were sent to local youth workers, church leaders, and politicians.

Carol de-Beger, Deputy District Team Leader of Bristol District hosted an event in October. She said 'The Build Hope breakfast showcased the opportunities GB offers to girls, young women, churches and the community. I felt huge pride to be part of such a robust ministry.'

District Team Leader of 2nd Southend District Sally Claydon, who hosted a breakfast in June, adds 'I wanted to host a Build Hope breakfast because I recognise that in GB we sometimes hide our light under a bushel! We're such a great organisation, doing amazing things with our girls and young women, but sometimes we forget to tell others. Hosting the breakfast was a great way to encourage existing GB chaplains and to remind them how GB and the church can partner together to reach out to families in their area. Everyone went away encouraged and inspired.'

Exciting events

2019 has seen a number of exciting events take place for both GB members and leaders, including:

The Esther Generation Weekend saw 25 young women from across Girls' Brigade England and Wales gather at PGL Liddington in October for one of 2 streams:

- **#GBRaisesHope** – for those completing their Queen's Award
- **n:fluence 14-18s** – for those taking part in young leaders' training.



Every single young woman who came to the Esther Generation Weekend felt encouraged as a result of attending. 92% said it made them feel like part of the GB family; and 4 in 5 felt closer to God.

30 GB leaders attended a **Ruth & Naomi taster retreat weekend** at Cliff College in Derbyshire in July. The event looked at the Book of Ruth and some of the 'holy habits' that can be seen throughout the story, and how we might develop these in our own lives. The GB leaders attending were from across the generations, highlighting that just as Ruth and Naomi were of different generations but supported one another, so can we in our GB family support one another to become more like Jesus.

18 women attended the **Every Woman: Ruth retreat** at Cliff College, Derbyshire, in October. The event was a partnership between GB Ministries and Cliff College and open to all women. All of the women who attended said that the event enabled them to find space to connect with God, and many had powerful stories of God working in their life and speaking to them during the weekend. The weekend will be re-run in June 2020.

Several GB Districts have hosted **Come to the River retreats** for GB leaders throughout the year. These events gave leaders the opportunity to reflect on the Bible story of the women who gathered at the river alongside Lydia in Acts Chapter 16 and what this means for us today. Contact us if your GB district or region would like to host one in 2020.

Eight women from GB England & Wales had the fantastic opportunity to travel to Uganda this summer with Fields of Life as part of a **FIZZ mission team** of 13 from GB Europe.

And around 1,000 GB members participated in **UK Parliament Week** in November 2019, where they were introduced to parliament, democracy and politics. For example 3rd Kettering's **n:spire** section learnt about the House of Lords, political parties and what a manifesto is and joined their Boys' Brigade for a four corner debate on various issues. They were treated to a visit from a local ex-MP who now runs a company giving advice about the government to big companies. And 1st Bedworth held a vote on a very important topic – favourite chocolates!

2020 conference dates

Conference dates for 2020 have been confirmed and are:

- **7 March** – Spring conference including 'Refresh' training (Bedford)
- **4 July** - Summer conference and retreat (venue tbc)
- **7 November** – Winter conference (venue tbc).



Digital developments



We're busy working on a new GBM website and a new leaders database.

We'll be launching our new website early in the new year. The site will contain lots of great new content to make finding information easier for volunteers, parents and anyone wanting to know more about GBM, along with all of the great news and events that we'll continue to share with the wider GB family.

We're also working with Online Youth Manager (OYM) to provide a new membership platform to

help our members, leaders and the whole organisation.

This will really help to equip and support the volunteers and young people at grassroots level, whilst providing our national staff with key reporting and management tools.

Go green with one of our great gifts

GB Trading has introduced a new range of products that are made from recycled goods or that encourage the products to be re-used – and that have an exciting new logo on them.

The range includes our GB est.1893 pencils manufactured from recycled CD cases (GBG00137 – **70p**) and pens made from recycled plastic bottles (GBG00138 – **£1.30**).



Girls' Brigade Ministries' sustainability plan 2019-2022

Girls' Brigade Ministries (GBM) is the operating name of the charity Girls' Brigade England & Wales (GBEW). Our vision and purpose is for lives and communities to be transformed and enriched as generations seek, serve and follow Jesus Christ.

We do this through our network of local uniformed community groups (GBEW), the video blog koko, The Esther Collective for 18-30s, retreats for women in and out of GB, mission consultancy for churches, and delivering equipping sessions across a number of areas around girls' issues.

Our sustainability plan sets out improvement goals for us to position ourselves as the leading Christian organisation for girls and young women and as a thriving youth organisation. Here's a summary of our 5 growth goals...

- *To enable GBM to achieve a financially sustainable platform for the next 10 years*
- *To share more widely the work of GBM, and the difference it makes upon the lives of girls and young women and their communities AND to secure Royal support and patronage*
- *To ensure that we have systems in place to enable the collection, analysis and evaluation of robust data to support future growth and funding*
- *To have in place equipped and resourced staff and volunteers to support delivery growth and sustainability AND to identify and implement a new leader registration and group management solution AND to increase our engagement with volunteers and the local church*
- *To ensure that we raise the profile and perception of GBM so that we're seen as a vibrant, proactive and relevant 21st century organisation motivated through our Christian faith, to help girls and young women live 'life to the full' and as a vibrant, proactive and contextually-relevant Christian mission movement for girls and young women that supports the mission and outreach of the local church AND our programme will be contextually-relevant and reflect the diversity and needs of this generation of young people.*

You can find a more detailed summary of our sustainability plan, and the actions we have planned to meet each goal, on our website.



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