

the **GIRLS'**
BRIGADE
ENGLAND & WALES



Summer 2020 round-up

A summer 2020 round-up of news and stories
from Girls' Brigade England & Wales

£125 for GB's 125 challenge



Girls' Brigade community groups raised more than £4,350 for GB last year by participating in the £125 challenge.

We challenged groups to each raise £125 in 2019 to mark GB's 125th birthday year in 2018, and groups got fundraising in a variety of ways.

One GB group who raised £125 proved that a small number of members wasn't a barrier when it came to fundraising. 1st Portsmouth has around 4 girls and young women, but still successfully completed the £125 challenge.

Free songs for worship now available

Same Boat Music partnered with GB to provide a range of fun, relevant, memorable songs for use in groups for worship and events. Same Boat Music provides music for all-age worship, children's groups and families. Songs include:

Benediction Song – this song of benediction is a heartfelt song of coming together, gratitude to God, and a prayer of blessing. 'May you be sure of His goodness, this day and all of your life.'

As The Sun Rises – a song of faith and gratitude to welcome any new day with hope and positivity. Focusing on the goodness of God, and our daily response to His love. 'As the sun rises on a new day, may our hearts say, God is good to us.'

Find the special songs at www.sameboatmusic.com/girlsbrigade



GB's 2020 resources

This year, The Girls' Brigade England & Wales released 2 new sets of resources in order to engage and stay connected to GB members during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

GB@home was a free weekly resource of activities for the 4 age groups we work with to do at home – but suitable for anyone, not just GB members – including activities such as games, craft, Bible studies, and discussion points. This resource also came with certificates and badges to celebrate children and young people's achievements as they used the GB@home resources and a 'Stay Connected sheet' for GB leaders helping them think of ways to stay connected to their GB members when they can't physically meet.



Popcorn's summer stay-cation was a free six-week resource launched at the start of the school summer holidays and specially written for the period of lockdown easing and people's plans for the summer being likely to have changed. Popcorn's summer stay-cation offers all children and young people a daily challenge, reflection or activity, and is based on GB's cuddly mascot Popcorn the guinea pig. The resource aims to promote values like kindness, joy and love, as well as sharing some Bible stories.



GB group runs food parcel service

More than 40 food parcels were delivered in less than 2 weeks to people stuck at home during the Coronavirus pandemic, thanks to members of 1st Haydock GB group.

A group leader's daughter said she wanted to help people and the leaders came up with the idea of a weekly food parcel service, delivered to people who are referred from the community.

Team Leader Becky Taylor says 'We've asked for donations from the families that come to GB and the leaders have donated too, but it has expanded to the public also donating, with the leaders using their homes as drop-off points, and the local Home Bargains shop staff are also collecting weekly for us.'



GB member fundraises for NHS



Jessica, an **n:spire** member of 2nd Polesworth, has been making 'stay safe' and 'rainbow' key rings for a donation of £1 each to fundraise for the NHS – raising £800 so far.

Her Team Leader Christine Harris says 'Jessica has a sister, Sophie, who is in our **n:gage** section and together they also made small gifts which they left on people's doorsteps for those who work in the NHS or care sector. Both girls are very thoughtful and have very supportive parents.'

Jessica, 13, has been in GB for 6 years and her fundraising efforts have also been featured in the Tamworth Herald and by Radio Tamworth. At GB, she helps within the **n:vestigat**e section and is soon going to do her Young Leader Training.

Can collection smashes target



A member of 1st Huncote GB community group has been noted for his efforts to collect aluminium cans for Leicester Royal Infirmary Helipad Can Collection.

The cans will be turned into a helipad so air ambulances can deliver patients direct to the emergency department at Leicester Royal Infirmary, rather than having to waste precious time transferring critically-ill patients to wheeled ambulances for the last three-quarters of a mile of the journey.

Mark, aged 11, was aiming to collect 6,000 cans in a year but has so far, since January, collected 6,373 in just 6

months. The collection started with the GB group and Mark's close family and friends and now other local community groups in Huncote and Croft are joining in too.

GB Team Leader Amanda Sadler says 'We're so immensely proud of Mark for making the decision to support such a worthy cause. It's something we've all got involved in and it shows such strength of character to commit to the cause throughout this unusual season. "Socially distant" doesn't mean socially inactive. Our social responsibility to each other remains. The can collections are something that's enabled us to continue with reaching out to others and has been a joint focus.'

Mark, who is in the **n:counta** section of the group, was featured on Facebook and on the Helipads for Hospitals website where you can read more of his story.



Staying connected during lockdown

GB group leaders have been creatively supporting and engaging with the members of their groups despite distance and communication barriers that COVID-19 lockdown has presented.



Like many, 7th Coventry held weekly sessions using Zoom for tasks, songs, stories, quizzes and more and 1st Alford met online every week with 1st Alford Boys' Brigade members for their activities.

The **n:counta** and **n:spire** sections at 1st Burnham were thrilled when International President Priscilla Penny joined them online one week!

The **n:spire** section at 18th Sheffield worked through two challenges online, God Channel – Inspired Words and Love Channel – Love is, at 14th Stoke on Trent, members made edible bricks whilst looking at the topic of courage and 1st Kidderminster were busy celebrating Easter, holding virtual scavenger hunts, celebrating VE Day, baking, joining in world book night, making sock puppets, saluting Captain Tom, and sending cards to their members!

1st Guildford joined 1st Guildford BB group in online sessions – including a virtual camp. Leaders from these groups have also led a community response to COVID-19, providing free cooked meals to vulnerable families across Guildford and surrounding villages.

Lots of GB volunteers worked hard to deliver gifts to their young people. 2nd Arnold were pleased when their girls joined them online after creating invitation leaflets and hand-delivering them to their members. 1st Clacton-on-Sea members received Easter cards, chocolates and activity packs from the leaders. The young people at 21st Castleford were even treated to goody bags every month.



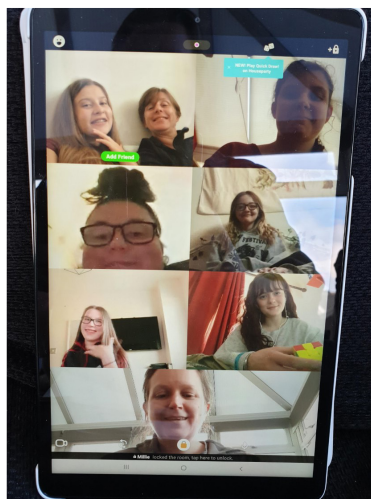
Staying connected during lockdown (cont.)



1st Flimby members decorated windows for the anniversary of VE Day. The group also won first prize during lockdown in their village scarecrow festival! 1st Larkfield sent sunflower seeds for a tallest sunflower competition; 1st Kidderminster sent Easter cards and a 'hug' token; 8th Portsmouth posted pictures for a colouring competition; 10th Plymouth sent gifts and miss you postcards; and the members of 4th Sheffield filmed clips for a 'staying in touch' film.

As at the end of every GB year,

awards and parade services took place. An awards evening was held for 1st Hawkwell where parents and girls were invited online to see photos and videos accompany a retelling of the activities and fun that the girls had over the past year. When the time came for the special awards, girls who'd been chosen were asked to go to their doors where GB leaders had placed a trophy and prize!



1st Hinckley GB and BB joined with their Messy Church team to produce their first Messy Parade service featuring songs, a virtual drama, a cake, photos and videos of prayers and readings from the members. Hinckley also joined with nearby group 1st Huncote for their activities. Jackie, Team Leader at 1st Hinckley said 'It's been great getting to know children and parents from another group.'

In Hull & East Yorkshire District Emily, who is doing her Queen's Award, has produced bi-weekly devotion videos that have been shared on social media.

Upcycled face masks

Dawn Tattersfield, Team Leader of 21st Castleford, has previously upcycled old uniform to make a variety of bags, but this time she's used her spare time during lockdown to make face masks.

She says 'The first pattern I used was simple pieces of fabric layered together, then pleated and sewn to make a simple expanding face mask. However, I had a number of oddments with the embroidered crest that wouldn't press and so I searched the internet and came up with a slightly more "complicated" pattern which didn't need folding.'



Volunteering award for GB leader



A Girls' Brigade community group leader won the Staff Volunteer of the Year award from the University of Gloucestershire.

Barbara Rainbow, Team Leader of 1st Charlton Kings GB group and District Team Leader for the Cotswold District, won the award under the University's Bank It scheme in which staff record their volunteering hours.

She says 'The University of Gloucestershire, where I work as the co-ordinator of the Sustainability Team, has for many years encouraged volunteering amongst the staff and students, and for the past few years has given an award to the five members of staff with the highest number of volunteering hours.'

'This year they made a shortlist of the top five but decided only to give an award to the member of staff with the highest number of hours, which was me!'

Barbara attended a virtual awards ceremony and, in recognition of her achievement, the university is making a donation of £50 to GB.



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