

Service & Defence

Working in partnership with
The Methodist Forces Board

the **GIRLS'**
BRIGADE
ENGLAND & WALES



**FOREWORD by
Chaplain to the Forces, Padre Jo Critchley**

For leaders:

‘I am impressed with the work that GB has done to bring this new badgework to fruition. Having been a member of GB for 25 years from age 5, as well as a Trustee in the past, I know both the benefit of badgework and the work that goes into producing the guidance. As an Explorer through to Warrant Officer, I always took pride in my armband as it held the badges that demonstrated the breadth of opportunities GB offered me. I have it in a memory box still as a reminder of those days!

‘My hope is that those groups who engage in this material will grow in empathy of the vital role that so many men and women play in the military, from front line efforts to create peace and stability, through to those of us working together to provide welfare and pastoral support to those serving, and their families. There are such a diverse range of trades and professions in our Services all working together for the greater good. This diversity showcases the skills and gifts that our service men and women gain through their own time in uniformed organisations – led by people just like yourselves.

‘I recognise that for some of you the topics might be uncomfortable, but I would encourage you not to be afraid of the conversations that will come from this material. Younger generations are growing up in a rapidly changing world and need to be able to think through difficult topics with people they trust. Please be assured that for the girls in your groups who have parents, friends and family members serving in the Royal Navy, Army or Royal Air Force, they will share their stories with pride and delight knowing that they have personal links to the ethos in this new badgework.

‘May I also ask that you pray for those families who are part of our armed forces as we collaboratively seek a safer world.’

To be read to the girls at the start of the programme:

‘I really hope that you enjoy these new topics in your groups; lots of great work has gone into them to help you think and be challenged about the families who are part of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

‘I was in GB from age 5 - for over 25 years! In my day, we sewed our badges on armbands. My armband in the 1980's & 1990's was filled with badges, and I wore it with such pride as I grew in greater understanding of the world in which I lived.

‘If you have family members or friends who are in the forces, why not ask them to tell you some of their stories, and you can then tell them what you find out through this badgework. Sharing these things helps us all to understand each other more and develop a better knowledge of the work that the UK military does to bring about peace and stability all across the world.’

Leader's note (ethos):

This badge does not promote militarism or recruitment but rather offers balanced, age-appropriate exploration of the Armed Forces as one part of public service, recognising complexity, ethical tension, peace-making, safeguarding, and pastoral care. It affirms that young people may respond differently and that conscientious objection, non-violence, and alternative service are valid Christian responses, alongside the importance of our Armed Forces and the career options it can offer.

Session 1 - What Is the Military For?



Spiritual Element

Bible focus: Micah Ch.6:8

Leader blurb:

The Bible often holds together two important ideas: the longing for peace and the responsibility to protect the vulnerable. Micah reminds God's people that faith is not about power or dominance, but about acting justly, loving kindness, and walking humbly. These values shape how we think about all forms of service, including the military.

Today, the UK Armed Forces are involved in many roles such as Soldier, Sailor and Aircrew in tradition combat roles, but they do so much more alongside this, though, including disaster relief, peacekeeping, cyber protection, humanitarian aid, and supporting communities at home and abroad. Christians can ask thoughtful questions about how justice, restraint, compassion, and accountability shape these roles, while remembering that God's hope is always for peace and flourishing.

Discussion questions:

1. What does 'acting justly' look like in situations of conflict or danger?
2. Why might some people see military service as a way of helping others?
3. How can peace be worked for even when violence exists in the world?



Skill Element

Skill 1: Roles Matching Game:

- Prepare cards showing modern military roles (e.g. medic, engineer, cyber analyst, logistics, chaplain, pilot, disaster responder)

- In small groups, match each role to a way it helps people
- Younger children can use pictures; older ones can add their own ideas

Skill 2: Build a Base

- Using LEGO, cardboard, or recycled materials, build a 'base'. You might want to focus on support areas, such as medical tents, food storage, communication hubs. These elements are there for defence and support of service personnel but also promote justice/recovery/wellbeing at the same time.
- Ask each group to explain how their base helps support the armed forces living there.



Social Element

Social 1 (in group): Team Navigation Challenge

- Set up a simple obstacle or route indoors/outdoors
- One child gives calm, clear instructions while others follow
- Reflect on trust, listening, and responsibility

Social 2 (at home):

- Interview a family member about a job they see as 'service to others'
- Share one learning next week

Session 2 - Who Serves? People, Diversity, and Belonging



Spiritual Element

Bible focus: 1 Corinthians Ch.12:12–27

Leader's blurb:

Paul describes community as a body made up of many different parts, all valuable and necessary. This reminds us that no role is more important than another, and that diversity strengthens any team.

The UK Armed Forces today include people of different genders, ethnicities, faiths, abilities, sexualities, and backgrounds. Understanding this helps challenge stereotypes and supports a culture where dignity, safeguarding, and inclusion matter.

Discussion questions:

- Why is diversity important in teams that work under pressure?
- What happens when some voices are ignored?
- How can faith communities support those who serve?



Skill Element

Skill 1: Role Web

- Write different service roles on paper.
- Use string to connect roles that depend on each other.
- Notice how removing one affects the whole system.

Skill 2: Values Sorting

- Provide cards with values (respect, courage, obedience, compassion, honesty).
- Sort into 'essential', 'important', and 'challenging'.
- Older groups discuss tensions between values.



Social Element

Social 1 (in group): Inclusion Charter

- Create a short charter of how the group commits to inclusion and safety.
- Display it each week.

Social 2 (in your community): A Display of Peace

- Attend or research a local remembrance or peace event
- Reflect together

Session 3 - Careers, Skills, and Pathways



Spiritual Element

Bible focus: Proverbs Ch.22:29

Leader blurb:

The Bible values skill, learning, and dedication. Developing abilities can be a way of serving others, especially when guided by wisdom and care.

Military careers today include apprenticeships, leadership training, engineering, healthcare, cyber security, logistics, combat and pastoral roles. Many skills are transferable to civilian life and emphasise lifelong learning.

Discussion questions:

1. What skills do you enjoy developing?
2. Why is training important for safety and responsibility?
3. How can skills be used for good beyond one job?



Skill Element

Skill 1: Career Path Map

- Choose one role and map the training, skills, and future options
- Younger children draw pictures; older ones research pathways

Skill 2: Problem-Solving Drill

- Present a scenario (flooding, power outage)
- Groups plan a calm, step-by-step response



Social Element

Social 1 (in group): Fitness & Wellbeing Circuit

- Gentle stations (stretching, balance, walking laps)
- Emphasise wellbeing, not competition

Social 2 (at home): Career Journeys

- Talk with family about different career journeys and changing paths.



Session 4 - Ethics, Peace, and Difficult Choices



Spiritual Element

Bible focus: Matthew Ch.5:9

Leader's blurb:

Jesus calls peacemakers blessed, not because peace is easy, but because it is brave. Christians have long disagreed about war and violence, and the Bible contains honest wrestling with these questions.

Today, ethical decision-making is central to military training: rules of engagement, international law, safeguarding civilians, and accountability. Asking hard questions is part of faithful living.

Discussion questions:

- What makes peace difficult?
- Can you think of ways conflict might be reduced?
- Why is it important to question authority sometimes?



Skill Element

Skill 1: Ethical Scenarios

- Share age-appropriate dilemmas
- Discuss options, consequences, and values

Skill 2: Peace Toolkit

- Create a toolkit of non-violent responses (listening, mediation, rest)



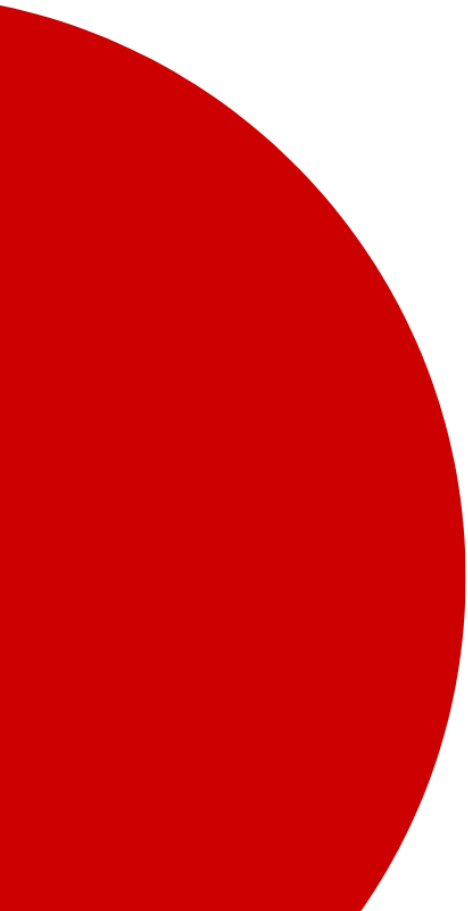
Social Element

Social 1 (in group): Listening Circles

- One speaker at a time, others listen without interruption

Social 2 (at home): Conflict Resolution

- Practice conflict resolution at home
- Share one story next session



Session 5 - Support, Wellbeing, and Life Beyond Service



Spiritual Element

Bible focus: Galatians Ch.6:2

Leader's blurb:

The Bible reminds us to carry one another's burdens. Service can involve stress, separation, and change, and care for mental health and families is essential.

Chaplaincy teams offer pastoral care, safe spaces, and advocacy. Supporting those who serve – and those who choose not to – is part of loving our neighbour.

Discussion questions:

- Why is asking for help important?
- How can communities support wellbeing?
- What does 'service' look like in everyday life?



Skill Element

Skill 1: Wellbeing Plan

- Create a simple plan including rest, connection, and support.

Skill 2: Letter of Thanks or Peace

- Write to a service organisation, chaplaincy, or peace charity.
- Invite a member of the local Royal British Legion or a Veterans Charity to speak about their work.



Social Element

Social 1 (in group): Gratitude Walk

- Walk together, naming things you are thankful for.

Social 2 (at home): Local Acts of Service

- Take part in a local act of service (litter pick, food bank support).





Leader's Notes

Using the Girls' Brigade Badge Programme

Purpose of the Badge Programme

The Girls' Brigade badge awards are designed to nurture the whole person—spiritually, emotionally, socially, and practically. The aim is not only to impart knowledge or teach skills but to create space for young people to explore faith, build relationships, and grow in confidence and compassion.

Spiritual, Social, and Skill Elements in the Badge Programme

Each Girls' Brigade badge is designed to contribute meaningfully to three areas of personal growth:



Spiritual Element

Helping young people explore faith, ask questions, and grow in their understanding of God and themselves. Each **Spiritual element** has:

- A **theme** rooted in life experience and Christian values.
- A **focus section** to guide session design and intention.
- A **biblical reference** to root learning in Scripture



Skill Element

Equipping young people with practical, emotional, and leadership skills that help them navigate life with confidence and creativity.



Social Element

Supporting young people to build relationships, grow in empathy, and learn how to contribute positively to the community around them.

Each badge and each session are based around these elements. It is not imperative that you complete every skill or social element in each session. Some elements will take up a whole session. This badge work is designed to be flexible and adaptable to suit each group setting.

How to engage with each element



Spiritual Element

Look for moments when a session helps young people:

- Explore a **biblical truth or story**
- Ask **questions about faith, God, or purpose**
- Reflect on values like love, justice, and peace
- Experience **stillness, prayer, or worship**
- Think about **how faith connects to everyday life**

Leader prompts:

- “Where do you see God in this?”
- “What do you think this story is saying to us today?”
- “What kind of world does Jesus invite us to build?”



Skill Element

Badge sessions often introduce or build on:

- **Practical life skills** (e.g. finance, safety, communication)
- **Creative skills** (e.g. drama, design, storytelling)
- **Leadership skills** (e.g. planning, presenting, decision-making)
- **Critical thinking** and self-awareness
- **Problem-solving** in group or individual tasks

Leader prompts:

- “What new thing did you try today?”
- “What would you do differently next time?”
- “How could you use this skill at home or school?”



Social Element

Each badge includes opportunities for:

- **Teamwork** and relationship-building
- Practising **kindness, respect, and empathy**
- Discussing **community, diversity, and justice**
- Building **confidence to speak and listen** in groups
- Understanding **how our actions affect others**

Leader prompts:

- “How can we help each other this week?”
- “What does it mean to be a good friend, even when it’s hard?”
- “How could we use what we’ve learned to help our community?”

Putting It All Together

Each badge is different, and one badge may lean more heavily on one area over another, but all three elements are included.

For example:

Badge	Spiritual	Social	Skill
Money	Trusting God with resources; values around money	Discussing generosity; teamwork in budgeting games	Budgeting, understanding accounts, practical money tips
Heritage	Faith stories in GB's past; Hebrews Ch.12:1	Learning from women of faith; building GB identity	Research, storytelling, presentation
Friendship	Love and kindness in the Bible	Making and sustaining healthy relationships	Communication, empathy, conflict resolution
Caring	Caring as part of discipleship (Philippians Ch.2:4)	Encouraging service and compassion	Basic care skills, understanding needs, volunteering

General Guidance

1. Badgework is for all ages.

Girls' Brigade badgework is mostly all age - recognising that many Girls' Brigade groups have a wide range of ages in their groups.

You will see these logos throughout the badge guidance to help you recognise the different elements of the badgework.



Spiritual

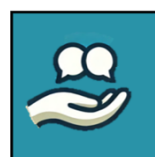


Skill



Social

When you see these logos are square (below), that means that badgework is intentionally **written for older young people** and may cover themes that are not appropriate for younger people.



Sessions are written to be all age in mind, but leaders should feel free and confident to adapt:

- Use **storytelling, crafts, games, and sensory play** for younger groups
- Use **discussion, roleplay, creative media, and deeper reflection** for older groups
- Offer **choice and leadership roles** to older young people within a session (e.g. planning an activity)

2. Session Flexibility

Each badge includes multiple sessions, often designed around **5-week blocks**. However:

- You can run them weekly, monthly, or in condensed formats
- Sessions can stand alone or build on one another
- You may choose to focus more on a particular theme if it fits local needs
- Some badges, such as the Church Year badge, are intentionally written to be spaced out throughout the year.

3. Faith Engagement

The biblical references are chosen to support the theme and invite reflection, not to impose belief. Leaders are encouraged to:

- Share the Scripture in an age-appropriate and inclusive way
- Allow time for **open-ended wondering questions** ('What do you think this means?')
- Model faith as a journey, not a set of fixed answers

4. Inclusion & Safety

Sessions are written to reflect **GB's commitment to inclusion**. This includes:

- Creating a safe and welcoming space for all young people, regardless of background or belief
- Addressing topics like **mental health, LGBTQ+ inclusion** and **gender justice** with sensitivity and confidence
- Allowing room for **personal stories, questions, and disagreement**

The Girls' Brigade safeguarding policy, EDI guidance and gender guidance can be found in Life to the Full, [click here to read them](#).

If a session covers a potentially sensitive topic, leaders should:

- Check in advance what support is available if a young person is affected
- Remind the group of ground rules and confidentiality
- Signpost where further help is available

Practical Tips for Leaders

Prepare Well

- Read the session materials in advance.
- Adapt activities to your group's size, space, and needs.
- Have resources (e.g. Bibles, paper, craft materials) ready beforehand.

Start With Connection

- Always begin sessions by checking in - how are they feeling today?
- Build trust before diving into deeper content.

Make It Fun and Meaningful

- Use **games and activities** as tools for connection and reflection.
- Mix physical movement with quiet time.
- Include creative expression - art, drama, storytelling, song.

End With Prayer or Reflection

- Offer a moment of stillness at the end of each session.
- Encourage young people to write, draw, or quietly think about what they've learned.
- Keep prayers simple and invitational.

Awarding Badges

- Badges are awarded not just for attendance, but for engagement, reflection, and growth.
- Celebrate learning with the group: you could hold a **badge ceremony, parents' evening**, or make space for young people to **share what they've learned**.
- Encourage peer encouragement – 'What did you notice others doing well this term?'

Encouraging Leadership

- Older young people can and should be encouraged to **co-lead sessions, mentor younger groups**, or help design part of the badge journey.
- This supports leadership development and gives them agency in their own growth.

Final thoughts:

- When planning or reflecting on a session, ask yourself:
'Where is the spiritual moment? What social connection is happening? What skill is being learned?'
- You might want to **highlight or debrief** at the end of each session, helping the group name what they've experienced or learned.
- Celebrate growth in **all three areas**, not just the visible outcomes.

Over many years our dedicated leaders will have come up with or used a variety of games and activities. We encourage you to use them all in your groups. The activities, games and tasks are related to the theme of the week but they are by no means the be all and end all. Your experience is valuable and we encourage you to draw upon it.

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