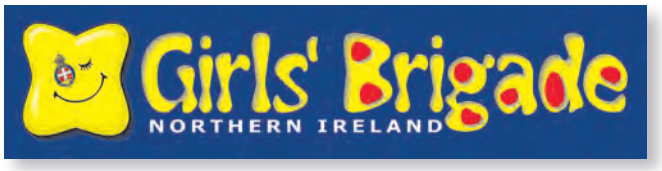
Chaplains' Manual

A Guide to Managing your Company

Girls' Brigade®

Northern Ireland

Spiritual Physical Educational Service



Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland

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The Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland is registered as a company limited by guarantee in Northern Ireland No. NI058531, registered with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland for Northern Ireland NIC 100405 and recognised as a charity for tax purposes by HMRC Reference No. XR34309. VAT Registration No. 254684143.

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Chaplain's Foreword

Being a Chaplain is one of the greatest privileges of service. The leadership of Girls' Brigade NI is delighted that so many churches across Northern Ireland have chosen GB to be part of their youth ministry. On behalf of the GBNI Executive Team, I wish to thank you for running a company in your church and extend our thanks to each Chaplain for all the time and energy devoted to encouraging and guiding Officers and girls. It is in an effort to assist you in that supportive role that this manual has been revised.

Youth ministry presents an ever increasing challenge to churches in this fast changing 21st century. In Girls' Brigade we are passionate about working in partnership with local churches to present the Good News of Jesus Christ to girls and young women in modern, relevant ways to share the dynamic message it has for all. Our mission to challenge girls in their Christian faith and enable them to grow in Christ has remained constant over the years and yet, like all organisations we have to adapt our approach to remain relevant, dynamic and Christ centred.

This manual provides guidance for church leaders on managing an effective Girls' Brigade company that is a vibrant part of the overall youth ministry of the church. It includes an overview of how Girls' Brigade works and guidance on the key issues involved in managing a GB company. In the light of some new companies being formed this year I hope you will all find the information useful so that you can enjoy maximum benefit from this ministry and find optimum support to the valued leaders and volunteers in your company.

It is amazing to know Girls' Brigade has been in various church denominations for almost 125 years and we are pleased to be working with your church in this ministry. I pray that this on going partnership will continue for many years; under God's leading; as we work together to offer the youth of today a place to "have fun, find faith and develop friendships".

Together we promote the GB aim in helping girls to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a privilege and what a partnership in which we need and value your on going prayer support.

Doreen Draffin
GBNI Chaplain

Contents

Users of this Manual are reminded that during the lifespan of this resource there may be changes to GB policies or legal requirements that may affect the accuracy of the information contained in this publication. For the latest information, please visit www.gbni.co.uk.

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About us

What is Girls' Brigade?

Girls' Brigade is a Christian ministry among girls and young women with members all around the world. We work alongside churches in providing activities for girls aged 3-18 years plus.

Principles

The Brigade acknowledges Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord according to the Scriptures and seeks to fulfil its aim to the glory of One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Brigade witnesses to the standard set by Jesus Christ and gives positive teaching on the Christian attitude to life.

The Brigade promotes a just society where all people are equally valued.

Statement of Belief

The Holy Scriptures, being the Word of God, contain all things necessary to salvation and are accepted as the final authority.

The Trinity - the unity and co-equality of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- We believe in God the Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. We believe in Jesus crucified, dead and buried, risen and ascended, who shall come to judge the living and the dead.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Eternal Life.

Aim

The Aim of the Girls' Brigade, being a Christian Organisation, international and inter-denominational, shall be: To help girls to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and through self-control, reverence and a sense of responsibility, to find true enrichment of life.

Vision

Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland will be recognised as a dynamic, relevant, Christ-centred organisation effectively reaching out to all girls to value, nurture and equip them for life.

Motto

'Seek, Serve and Follow Christ'

GB Branding

Girls' Brigade Logos

The GB Crest

All over the world, Girls' Brigade members wear the same crest. The uniforms may vary in different countries but the crest remains the constant feature. The GB Crest, also known as the GB Badge, is the sole emblem of the organisation and its design and colour may not be altered. The GB Crest is registered as a trademark in the UK in the name of GB England and Wales, GB Ireland, GB Scotland and GB Northern Ireland.

There are four important features within the crest that have special significance for us as Christians:

- In the centre a cross; the symbol of Christ and His Church.
- Below the cross a lamp; that our light may shine out upon the world.
- Above the cross a crown; that we may own Christ as our King.
- Behind all a torch; the flame of Christ's living Spirit and our devotion to Him.

Publicity Guidance

Girls should be wearing the correct official GB uniform/correct official GB leisurewear, as purchased from the GBNI Shop, in photographs which are sent out to the public domain ie. to newspapers etc. Unofficial GB uniform and unofficial GB leisurewear purchased from third party suppliers should not be worn.

GBNI Logo

Girls' Brigade NI has its own logo, incorporating the crest. The GBNI logo is a registered trademark and GB companies can use it with certain restrictions.

This logo with 'Northern Ireland' is reserved for the use of GBNI HQ only.

If GB companies wish to use this version of the logo, then it can be adapted to include the name of the GB company. Contact GBHQ for details.

Guidance on the use of GBNI Logos and the GB Crest

Logos can be downloaded from the GBNI website and can be used by any GBNI registered company for internal company use only eg. on printed programmes, orders of service, projects, PowerPoint presentations for church etc. You must apply to GBHQ for permission to use the logos for anything that you are selling, or that is going out to the public and for anything for which you will be using the services of a third party business eg. a commercial printer. It is strictly forbidden to print on any merchandise, including clothing, if the items can be purchased in the GBNI Shop. Permission will not be granted if requested.

All unauthorised use for any purpose is not permitted and is an infringement of Copyright Law.

More detailed guidelines and permission forms can be downloaded from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Structure of GBNI

Girls' Brigade NI is a company limited by guarantee, which exists to promote, extend and maintain the ministry of GB, to the glory of God.

There are three tiers to our structure: company, district and NI level. The functions and responsibilities of the district and NI tiers are summarised in this section. Full details of our structure can be found in the GBNI Constitution documents available from GBHQ or from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Company

A local 'unit' governed by a church/mission. Members include: Chaplain, Captain, Officers, Sub-Officers, Associates and girls aged 3-18.

District

Companies grouped together by location and governed by a District Executive.

Northern Ireland

- Executive Team;
- Brigade Council with representatives from districts;
- Teams;
- GEMS Youth Representatives and
- Headquarters Staff.

Districts

Companies are grouped together in local areas to form districts. Officers from local companies are appointed to run the district, providing activities and events for girls and leaders eg. training, praise services, competitions, prayer and fun days; where they can meet, have fun, compete and share friendship and fellowship. There are currently 15 districts in Northern Ireland:

District 1 Castlewood
District 2 Shaftesbury
District 3 Cavehill
District 4 Ards
District 5 Strangford & Mourne
District 6 Lagan
District 7 Mid-Ulster
District 8 Glenabbey
District 9 East Antrim
District 10 North Antrim
District 11 North West
District 12 West Ulster
District 13 Riada
District 14 Bann
District 15 Lough Neagh

District Executive

Each district is governed by an Executive that is responsible to the Executive Team of GBNI for the general running of the district within the Constitution and Rules of GBNI.

Each District Executive is made up of:

- A representative from each company in the district. Ideally, the representative should be a Commissioned Captain or Officer but a Sub-Officer may take on the role if no one else is available;
- A minimum of two Chaplains;
- A minimum of two Youth Representatives age 18-25; and
- Reserve Officers may be co-opted on to the District Executive and may hold positions of office for a period of one year at a time.

District Office Bearers

The District Executive elects personnel from among its members to take on various key roles to help the district function smoothly:

Chairperson - must ensure that the District Executive functions properly; that there is full participation during meetings, that all relevant matters are discussed and that effective decisions are made and carried out.

Chaplain - oversees the pastoral support of the district. Includes leading district services and liaising with company Chaplains.

Commissioner - is a Commissioned Officer with at least five years' experience of GB leadership. She is responsible for the smooth running of the district and the provision of support for company Officers. She must ensure the general efficiency of the district is in accordance with the GBNI Constitution.

Assistant Commissioner - is a Commissioned Officer whose role is to assist and support the District Commissioner in ensuring the smooth running of the district.

Secretary - is responsible for the adminstration of the district. Includes communicating all relevant information to companies regarding meetings, events and competitions; also relaying GBHQ correspondence and any minutes from meetings.

Treasurer - is responsible for the financial adminstration of the district. Includes collecting annual contributions from companies, paying expenses and producing end of year accounts.

All District Executive members are eligible to hold any office within their district for a three-year term. At the end of the three-year term they can be re-nominated for one further period of three years, or nominated to serve in any other office for a period of three years. This must be followed by a break of one year before being nominated to any office within the district. Whilst the term of office is three years, Office Bearers may choose to serve for only one or two years.

Representing the District

Decision-making for the whole organisation depends on the participation of members at NI level. District representatives can also be nominated to sit on GBNI Brigade Council, various GBNI teams, GEMS GBNI Youth Forum and Prayer Coordinator. The term of office for these roles is similar to that of a District Office Bearer as detailed above.

District Annual General Meeting

Each district holds an AGM which all leaders within the district, including Chaplains, are eligible to attend. Meetings are held during May and the relevant information is sent in advance to all Officers within the April edition of the GBNI Newsletter.

At their AGM each district makes plans for the next session, discuss current issues and elects representatives for the following roles:

- District Office Bearers;
- Two Brigade Council representatives;
- One representative on to each GBNI team;
- Two Chaplains to serve on the District Executive;
- Two GEMS representatives; and
- One Prayer Coordinator.

District Service

Most districts arrange a church praise service each year with or without an associated parade to church. Local districts can decide whether to include a parade or not.

Many companies have their own colours symbolising their identity. Subject to agreement of the church, companies may bring their colours into church at the start of a parade service and retrieve them at the end. Arrangements are flexible and must suit local needs and sensitivities.

Parades are the responsibility of the District Executive. Ceremonial uniform must be worn at church parades. **Explorers do not parade.**

Please refer to GBHQ for further information on District Parade Procedures.

Guidance for Chaplains on colours and saluting

If your company or district choose to march with colours, here are some guidelines :

- Colours are usually carried by an Officer with an escort of older girls. The eldest member of the party carries the Queen's colour.
- Colours are normally paraded into the church, received by the Minister and placed at the front of the church.
- The Queen's colour should always be taken last from and returned first to the flag bearer.
- The Queen's colour should always be carried on the right of the party and should fly on the right side of the Minister as he/she faces the congregation.
- Colours are returned during the singing of the last hymn, followed by the National Anthem and Benediction. The colours are then paraded out of church. The congregation usually remains standing until company members leave the church.
- There should be no saluting in church.

Northern Ireland

GBNI Executive Team

GBNI is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors known as the Executive Team that exists to provide leadership for the organisation. Executive Team members have a legal responsibility for the organisation and are ultimately accountable for the activities of GBNI.

Collectively, Executive Team members make decisions about the overall purpose and direction of the organisation; ensuring that money and property are properly used (and managed) to meet its aims and objectives; ensures that it operates within the law; abides by the organisation's governing document; and finally, ensures that staff and volunteers best carry out the organisation's services.

Members are appointed by the Brigade Council and at least two places are allocated to young people between the ages of 18-25. Officers can refer issues to the Executive Team through the National Secretary at GBHQ.

GBNI Brigade Council

This is a representative body of GBNI. The Brigade Council meets periodically each year for fellowship, training, discussion and decision-making regarding the ministry and strategic direction of GBNI. The Brigade Council entrusts the vision and policy formation and the management of GBNI to the Executive Team.

Each district appoints two representatives to the Brigade Council to provide a vital link between the district and Brigade Council. The Brigade Council offers support and guidance to the Executive Team and appoints members to the Executive and key positions.

GBNI Teams

Activities Team

- Plans and coordinates a range of physical and educational events which reach a wide range of girls within GB;
- Provides a programme of activities to enhance the all-round development of our members;
- Looks after competitions (other than PE), social events, sporting activities; and
- Develops new activities.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Team

- Runs the Award in Girls' Brigade.

PE Team

- Plans and coordinates the annual PE competitions.

Programme Team

- Plans, prepares and delivers the Girls' Brigade programme, including development of new badgework ideas;
- Equipping companies with material which helps them to achieve our vision; and
- Reviews and revises the programme for each section.

Queen's Award Team

- Plans and runs the Queen's Award in GBNI; and
- Looks at new and innovative ways to increase the impact of the Award.

Spiritual Team

- Plans and prepares the annual Scripture Course;
- Develops the spiritual aspects of the GB calendar; and
- Encourages companies to work towards our vision.

Training Team

- Responsible for the programme of training offered to new and existing leaders in GB.

GB Headquarters

The day to day running of the organisation is delegated to staff at GBHQ under the leadership of the National Secretary. GBHQ operates from premises in Antrim providing training, resources and administration facilities for our members. A shop which includes an online service is also managed from GBHQ supplying uniform, gifts and resources to members and leaders.

Staff at GBHQ carry out a range of functions to support and service our members including:

- Production of badge work programme books and other resources for leaders including Bible teaching resources;
- Designing and implementation of the GB leadership training programme;
- Providing additional training courses and workshops;
- Managing the GBNI website;
- Managing the shop;
- Development support and marketing;
- Coordination of events and competitions;
- Administration of award schemes such as the Queen's Award and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award;
- Administration work such as record keeping, insurance provision and policy development, implementation and review;
- Health and Safety support;
- Finance management; and
- Coordination of GEMS (GBNI Youth Forum).

Further Information

Full details of our Constitution and Rules are available from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

GBNI Headquarters Income

The Girls' Brigade is a voluntary youth organisation and is responsible for raising its own finances. Grants are available from public funds but are such that the greater part of the finances must be raised from other sources. The main sources of income and expenditure for GBNI are as follows:

Public Funds

GBNI receives a grant from the Education Authority towards its work.

Membership Subscriptions

Each year an amount is charged per member and per company towards operational expenses in Northern Ireland and a contribution to the work of GB International and GB Europe.

GBNI Shop

Uniforms, gifts, awards, badges, trophies, programme materials and other items are sold through the Girls' Brigade Shop. The shop makes a modest profit each year which is all reinvested into the organisation, supporting the provision of resources and other services, benefitting all members. All products are available instore at the GBHQ Shop or online at www.gbnishop.co.uk.

Expenditure

Northern Ireland Headquarters. The Brigade requires an administrative headquarters, which is currently located at:

C2 Kilbegs Business Park
Fergusons Way
Antrim
BT41 4LZ

This requires a staff team and associated expenses relating to the services detailed here.

GB & your church

How GB fits into your church

GB works in partnership with churches and missions to help girls discover more about God. The GB company is very much an integral part of the local church playing a part in the overall youth work and outreach programme of the church. With a huge number of girls now coming from families with no church connection, GB offers a wonderful opportunity for outreach. The local church leadership has ultimate responsibility for the operation of the GB in its church and it should be managed in the same way as the church's other youth groups.

Church Responsibilities

We are here to help churches in their ministry among girls. Girls' Brigade is a 'package' that can be customised to suit each local church and local community. The leadership of the church has ultimate responsibility for the operation of its GB company in these main areas:

Leadership and Overall Management - ensuring that the company is operating in a manner that complies with the church and the GB aim and vision; ensuring legal responsibilities are met; company finances; selection and vetting of suitable leaders; and managing the leadership team.

Pastoral Support - for the leadership team, girls, prayer support, encouraging and motivating leaders, dealing with sensitive issues and nurturing the spiritual health of the company.

Premises - suitable for the number of girls/young women taking part and the activities they will engage in.

Health and Safety - risk assessment of the premises where the company meets and for the health and safety of those attending the company. Providing a safe environment with provision of; fire safety regulations, first aid and maintained facilities.

Insurance - adequate insurance cover in addition to that provided by GBNI.

Support and Resources Available

- Prayer support through our network of Prayer Coordinators;
- Training and support for GB leaders;
- Network of support from volunteers within 15 regional districts;
- Tailor-made scripture resources:
  - new material annually,
  - relevant and meaningful Christian teaching for girls,
  - non-exam resources for assessing understanding and application eg. workbooks, journals and memory jogs.
- Programme resources that are age-appropriate for each section within the company;
- Access to information and resources via the GBNI website;
- Supplies and resources from the GBNI Shop;
- District, inter-district and NI events and activities, including competitive and non-competitive events;
- Policies and guidance eg. anti-bullying, child protection, alcohol and other drug education;
- Marketing and communication support:
  - quarterly newsletters and regular eNews,
  - GBNI website,
  - PR in regional press and church magazines,
  - publicity material,
  - social media.
- Development support in the form of support and resources available to the company.

How we will communicate with you?

GBNI uses a variety of means to communicate with Chaplains including :

- Facebook
- Twitter
- eNews
- Regular newsletter for all commissioned officers
- Quarterly eNews only for Chaplains
- Chaplain only events eg. Chaplain's Breakfast
- Direct mailing/letters
- Email and/or text

Company Roles

Role of the Chaplain

The Chaplain is the highest ranking Officer in the company and he/she should attend Officers' meetings and be fully involved in the decision-making process of the leadership team. In practice, it may not be possible for the Chaplain to participate fully in company life but the relationship between the Chaplain, Captain and Officers must be such that you have every confidence in the work of the company. Regular visits by the Chaplain to the company are appreciated by members and it's great for the children to get to know you. If you join them in an activity or lead them in an activity the girls will get to know you more as a person and not just 'the minister'!

The Chaplain may be an ordained minister, deaconess or other suitable person appointed by the oversight of the church/mission. He/she is responsible to the leadership body of the church. The Chaplain is responsible for the overall spiritual and pastoral leadership of the company affiliated to his/her church/mission.

Chaplain's Responsibilities include:

- Appointing new leaders in consultation with the church leadership and company Captain;
- Visiting company meetings when possible to support, encourage and to get to know the members;
- Providing a link between the church and the company;
- Offering advice on the worship and Christian education material used;
- Advising GB leaders on church policies and procedures regarding Child Protection, Health and Safety etc. and ensuring that all leaders are complying with those procedures;
- Ensuring that adequate insurance cover is in place; and
- Ensuring that the company is operating within financial limits and that property is adequately maintained.

As a GBNI Chaplain, your views on Girls' Brigade and how it impacts the life of your church are very important to us.

Should you have any comments, suggestions or issues you would like to discuss please contact GBNI National Secretary on 028 9454 8054 or email nationalsecretary@gbni.co.uk.

Summary of other roles
For full details refer to GBNI website.

Captain

The Captain is a Commissioned Officer of at least 20 years of age and a committed Christian appointed by the church and trained by Girls' Brigade. She is responsible to the company Chaplain and is responsible for all members in the company. The Captain's main role is to coordinate, plan and lead the work of the company.

Officer

A Commissioned Officer is a committed Christian of at least 18 years of age, appointed by the Church and trained by Girls' Brigade. She is responsible to the Captain and responsible for members appointed to her care by the Captain. An Officer's main role is to assist and support the Captain in the running of the company.

Sub-Officer

A Sub-Officer is a young leader of at least 16 years of age, appointed by the church and trained by Girls' Brigade. She is responsible to the Captain and her role is to provide practical help with the younger girls in the company and to act as a link between girls and Officers.

Young leaders under 18 years of age do not need to be checked through AccessNI but they must be advised as to the limitations and boundaries of their role eg. no unsupervised activities. It would be good practice for the church to provide a basic child protection awareness course to young/junior helpers.

Associate Leader

An Associate is at least 18 years old, appointed and trained, if applicable, by the church. The role is flexible and could include leadership/supervision duties or it can be a participative role for young people who are not ready or interested in leadership but who wish to remain associated with their GB company.

In practice you may have an Associate who is helping with leadership or an Associate who is just a member. Both aspects of the role are to be regarded as 'regulated positions' and subject to background checks with AccessNI.

An Associate taking on leadership duties should be regarded as a non-commissioned leader working in the company on a regular basis. Associates are responsible to the Captain.

The option of being an Associate 'member' is restricted to young people who are already members of the company and wish to stay on as members rather than leaders.

Officers Transferring Between Companies

It is possible for GB leaders to move between companies, however, their commission is not portable. It is up to the local church to decide whether to accept/decline a transferring Officer and the full recruitment procedure must be applied as for any leader that's new to your company.

Officers Returning to GB After a Break

An Officer returning to GB after an absence of less than five years may do so without further training. An Officer returning to GB after an absence of between five and ten years is required to attend refresher Officer training. Should the absence be greater than ten years, the entire Officer training programme should be completed.

Retirement

Officers who retire and are keen to maintain links with GB may wish to join the Past Members' Association or assist in a more informal capacity.

Training for Leaders

GBNI offers basic training for new leaders as well as a wide range of in-service training opportunities that all leaders are encouraged to participate in.

Officer and Sub-Officer Training

- Training courses are offered annually in venues across Northern Ireland.
- Officer and Sub-Officer courses combine practical experience with direct training.
- There are basic entry requirements for Officer and Sub-Officer training and the parent church may add to these as necessary to help select the most suitable people to put forward for training.
- Courses are planned by the GBNI Training Team, administered by staff at GBHQ and delivered locally by districts.

In-Service Training Courses

A range of courses are offered each year which include:

- New Captains' Seminar;
- Camp training;
- Expedition and Outdoor Leadership; and
- Various skill workshops.

Check the GBNI newsletter for regular training opportunities and updates.

Managing Leaders

The responsibility for selecting suitable adults to work in the company rests firmly with the local church and should be conducted in accordance with the recruitment and selection procedures of the church. That procedure must include: application form, interview/chat with applicant, references and an Enhanced Disclosure Check through AccessNI. A 'clear' disclosure certificate is required before a new appointment is confirmed. Training is offered by Girls' Brigade for leaders appointed by the church.

Guidelines for Selecting Leaders

- Bearing in mind the aim and vision of Girls' Brigade you should select leaders who will uphold the Christian ethos of the organisation and set a good example to the young girls whom they will serve;
- New leaders should be identified through consultation between the Captain and Chaplain;
- To treat everyone fairly and to avoid disputes, it is useful to have clear guidelines on the recruitment process and criteria for the kind of people you need in leadership roles;
- Church child protection procedures must be followed for appointment of all new GB leaders;
- Once the appointment has been made, leaders who meet the course entry requirements can be directed to GB for leadership training;
- The church should provide child protection training for any Associates who are not planning to complete GB leadership training; and
- It is recommended that the church's leadership policy is well known and understood – notably by the Captain and Officers in charge of each section who will normally be on the lookout for suitable additional help - knowledge of the policy can avoid difficulties that sometimes may result from an initial approach to someone who subsequently is found to fall outside the local requirements.

Criminal Background Checks

Anyone being appointed to a leadership position within a GB company must be checked through a robust recruitment and selection procedure, including an Enhanced Disclosure Check with AccessNI.

Roles that require checks will include Chaplain, Captain, Officers, Associates, Bible Class teachers and any other person in a role that has leadership responsibility. The procedure of the church's own governing safeguarding policies and procedures is to be followed in line with GBNI. In the case of young leaders (or young adults with learning disabilities) who are given elements of responsibility for their personal development (eg. Brigaders helping out with Explorers) formal checks are not required.

Captain Appointments/Resignations

The church to which the company is affiliated is responsible for appointing a new Captain and informing GBHQ of the change. On receipt of written notification of a change in the captaincy, a form is issued from GBHQ to be completed by the Captain, signed by the Chaplain and returned to GBHQ. This form is also available to download from the Leaders' Section of the website.

Captains resigning from GBNI companies must send a written resignation to the church and GBHQ. Officers should send written resignation to the church only. Should any volunteer leaving the organisation wish to comment/share their experience of GB, feedback forms are available for download from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website. Captains and Officers who resign from company work, but still wish to be involved in Brigade activities, may be placed on the Reserve Officers' list. Contact GBHQ or go to the Leaders' Section on the GBNI website for a registration form. Retiring Officers can join the Past Members' Association.

Leadership Role Guidelines

Guidelines for volunteer roles in GB can be viewed online at www.gbni.co.uk. This includes a list of generic requirements that apply to all roles followed by guidance on specific roles.

It is recommended that you use our role descriptions as a guide and add points to suit your company/church. Please do not alter what is already on the role guidelines but you may add to the list of responsibilities to suit your local situation. This ensures a level of consistency among our companies and provides for volunteers who wish to widen their roles to include work for district or GBNI.

Children and Young People

Young members of the company are divided into four different age groups:

Explorers:	3*-7 years
Juniors:	8-10 years
Seniors:	11-13 years
Brigaders:	14-18 years

Girls are placed into sections based on their age as at 1st July each year.

**Minimum starting age ~ local companies may decide whether to accept girls on their third birthday (at any stage during the year) or accept only those who are three on or before 1st July. A consistent policy must be applied within the company.*

Once a girl has reached the age of 18 she can be directed into other roles within the company. These include leadership roles or through the Associate role.

Leaders are all volunteers appointed by the local church following their recruitment procedures.

- Chaplain (highest ranking Officer in a company)
- Captain
- Officers
- Sub-Officers
- Associate Leaders/Members

The 4-Sided Programme

'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.'
Luke 2:52

This verse forms the basis for the Girls' Brigade programme, which seeks to promote the development of the individual spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially.

All age groups are given the opportunity to achieve goals and growth in each of the four aspects of the programme each year, as well as earning awards.

The Four Themes

Spiritual - Understanding the basics of Christian faith and coming to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, growing in the relationship and coming to understand God's will for life.

Physical - Learning how to care for oneself and participate in physical activities.

Educational - Increasing knowledge and understanding – developing new skills which will equip girls for adult life.

Service - Learning to relate to others and to work as part of a team. Showing care and compassion to others in the home, community and church.

Achieving badge awards

- The girls have opportunities throughout the session to take part in activities covering each of the four themes which are part of a badge system;
- The badge system is designed to reward faithful attenders and those who take part in Brigade activities - awards should not reflect academic or physical ability but rather serve to encourage participation and commitment;
- Formal testing and assessment are not required - leaders in each section will be able to evaluate the contribution made by each girl and the value she has gained from the programme;
- The programme should be adapted to suit the needs of each girl; and in particular girls with special needs; and
- The Programme Files offer ideas and suggestions for activities - leaders can adjust the material to suit local needs.

A programme should be planned that will help girls discover God, deepen their faith, have fun and develop their potential. The programme should be arranged to make best use of resources available (leaders, facilities etc.), to offer a good balance of activities and to suit the needs of the girls in the company.

The Captain, Officers and girls can all be involved in the planning process using ideas from resources produced by GBNI available for each age group. The guidelines in the Programme Files can easily be adapted to suit the needs of the local company and its members.

Attendance Awards

The Girls' Brigade annual session must be at least 26 weeks duration. Attendance awards are gained only when girls achieve the required number of weeks attendance at Girls' Brigade in any one session. (See GBNI website for details of attendance requirements per GB section).

Open Bible Award (OBA)

Explorers, Juniors, Seniors, Brigaders, Sub-Officers and Associates can all achieve this award. Girls must attend Christian Sunday worship on at least 22 occasions during the 26 week GB session. Sunday worship can include Sunday School, church, Youth Fellowship, praise service, youth rally and special services. The OBA can be awarded for attendance until 15 years have been achieved.

Scripture teaching forms a vital part of company life and attending GB Bible Class enables a girl to grow in her knowledge of God. Each year, resources are prepared by the GBNI Spiritual Team that can be used with all age groups to teach what the Bible has to say on a range of relevant topics. It is not necessary for companies to use these resources every year, but it is recommended that the course is offered to girls at least once every three years.

Worship is an important part of the company meeting, when Officers and girls gather together to worship God. Worship can take many different forms and all girls and Officers should be encouraged to take part.

Prayer

Leaders should take time to pray for the weekly programme and for individual girls. Times of prayer and shared fellowship will help to strengthen relationships between leaders as well as focusing on the spiritual needs of the girls.

Chaplains should encourage leaders to share issues for prayer for the company within the church eg. feeding issues into prayer meetings or through prayer chains etc. Perhaps prayer partners could be identified to pray for particular leaders or groups of girls.

Each district has a Prayer Coordinator who is responsible for raising prayer awareness within the district, encouraging prayer triplets between companies and collecting company prayer requests so that they can be prayed for by the GBNI Spiritual Team and the wider chain of prayer coordinators. Prayer Coordinators may also organise a special focus on prayer such as a prayer breakfast. Prayer requests can also be sent via a link on the GBNI website.

GBNI staff team are committed to praying for all our GB companies and leaders and set aside time each day to pray for Girls' Brigade. Specific prayer requests can be sent via the GBNI website as above or emailed to spiritual@gbni.co.uk.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

GBNI is an approved operating authority for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Over 100 companies take part in the scheme. The Award is open to young people between the ages of 14-25 and the activities fit well with the Brigader programme.

Expedition Work

Leaders must be qualified to train and supervise groups for expedition work, including The Duke of Edinburgh's Award activity. Training is available through the BB/GB Expedition and Outdoor Leadership Award.

Officers' Meetings

The smooth running of the company is greatly assisted by regular Officers' meetings, to which the Chaplain should be invited. The entire running of the company may therefore be kept under review and the work apportioned to each Officer and helper.

Meetings should be held as often as required by the Captain/Chaplain and a full planning meeting should be held in the summer to plan for the session ahead.

Regular meetings will give leaders an opportunity to pray for the girls and for each other; to plan activities and build relationships between leaders.

Administration

Personal Information and Consent

Written consent must be sought each year for every girl and leader wishing to attend the company. This includes all leaders, Captain and Chaplain. Consent is required for all personal contact details, date of birth, relevant medical information, emergency contact numbers and permission to take photographs/videos. Consent is also required for using IT to contact young people. Please refer to Information Commissioner's Office via www.ico.org.uk for the latest changes to data protection. Please use the latest GBNI Annual Parental Consent Form or if using a generic church consent form, please ensure all aspects of the GBNI form is incorporated into that form.

All up to date records must be stored securely by the company in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Forms for company administration are available to download from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Attendance and Progress records

Accurate weekly roll attendance and progress records should be kept for each girl.

Financial Records

The recording of accurate accounts is essential. All income and items of expenditure must be recorded and receipts retained for auditing through the church as required by The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Annual Returns

Companies are required to submit Annual Returns to GBHQ each session detailing leaders contact details, membership statistics and other relevant data. For insurance purposes, it is important that all information supplied either on the paper or online version is accurate.

Membership figures supplied in the Annual Returns are used to calculate the Annual Assessment.

The Annual Partnership Agreement which forms part of the agreement between the church and GBNI should be completed and returned annually.

Health and Safety and First Aid

GBHQ should be informed annually of the company nominated person for health and safety and first aid. First aid training is recommended but not necessary. Weekly safety checks should be carried out and recorded for future reference. Any risks should be raised by the Health and Safety Representative to the company Captain. Health and safety resources are available to download from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Health and Safety Records

Risk Assessments

A general risk assessment should be carried out at the start of the year and be periodically reviewed during the year and at the start of each succeeding year. We have a duty of care to identify any potential risks that could cause harm to anyone and put procedures in place to safeguard them. Risk assessments should also be carried out for all extra special events, trips or camps. All risk assessments should be kept in a safe place for future reference. They should be shown to all leaders prior to the commencement of the GB session/special events. A variety of sample risk assessment forms are available to download from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Camps and Outings

Taking time out from the routine company activities can be very beneficial to building relationships within the company and keeping the interest of the girls. Camps provide a fantastic opportunity for Christian teaching with a captive audience for a whole weekend. Of course the fun of camp needs to be balanced with efforts to make it as safe as possible. GB has full guidelines relating to camps including a requirement for leaders to attend camp training.

Uniform

Girls' Brigade believes that wearing a common uniform encourages a sense of belonging and encourages equality among members.

Our uniform is available through our shop which is both walk in and online. Full details of correct uniform for each section including the wearing of awards is available to download from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Church Services & Events

It is usual practice for the church to hold a Service of Enrolment and Dedication each Autumn. Arrangements are made by the Chaplain and Captain and the date should be chosen in consultation to find a date suitable for all.

The service should include a time for leaders to renew their promises to serve God in the company; time to praise God and to ask for His help and strength. The girls can also take part perhaps with readings, songs, prayers or a drama.

The service provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the company with the congregation and to ask for their support during the year, for example, with prayer, finances or practical assistance.

Parents are usually keen to attend to see their daughters take part in the service and for some of them, this could be one of the few times in the year that they attend church. So the outreach potential is obvious.

The Enrolment Service is often a time when leaders and girls want to look their best with a lot of effort put into uniforms and how the company presents itself in public. However, the focus must be on God and glorifying His name. Parading at this service is optional.

Where other youth organisations exist, this service can be adapted to include all. There are no hard and fast rules and the Chaplain can plan a service as appropriate. An Enrolment Service should be held annually before 15th December. It is usual for the Chaplain to enrol the company.

New companies must be affiliated prior to enrolment and have met at least ten weeks prior to holding an Enrolment Service. An existing company should meet at least a month before being enrolled.

For a suggested Act of Enrolment, please refer to Appendix 1 on page 28.

End of Year Events

An event to mark the end of the session is a great opportunity to invite parents along to meet the leaders and find out more about the company. A display or parents' night are the traditional methods used to mark the end of the Girls' Brigade year. However, some companies have opted for alternatives such as praise services, concerts, musicals, sports days or a BBQ.

If planning an end of session event here are some things to keep in mind. A good end of year event should:

- Promote the aim of Girls' Brigade;
- Be fun for the girls, their parents and the leaders;
- Not last longer than about two hours;
- Be inclusive with all girls having a chance to take part;
- Be well supervised; and
- Mark the end of your year on a positive note.

Any costumes being used should be suitable for the activities and appropriate for use in front of a crowd (bearing in mind child protection issues and taking care not to compromise the dignity of any individual). In addition, girls must be supervised whilst changing without compromising their privacy.

Time spent preparing for an end of year event such as a display should not become the entire focus of the GB year. Regardless of the format selected, an end of year event can be great fun and an ideal outreach opportunity when the good news of Jesus can be presented to parents and friends who may have no other church connection. However, if your company decide not to run an end of year event that is also fine.

Display ideas are available in the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Please also refer to 'Guidelines on Photographs and Video' policy in the Child Protection policy on the GBNI website.

Managing Finances

GBNI is a voluntary youth organisation and is responsible for raising its own finances. Grants are available from public funds but are such that the greater part of the finances must be raised from other sources including membership fees and a shop. Main areas of expenditure include running Girls' Brigde Headquarters, providing affordable training for leaders, programme materials and resources, events and activities for members and the work of GB internationally. A fee is set by the GBNI Executive and companies are notified in advance so that they can plan for payment. Payment is required by February each year. The membership figures supplied by companies are used to calculate the annual assessment.

Company Finance

Finance is a vital part of every GB company. Each company is responsible for its own finances, under the management of the church leadership. The keeping of simple, but accurate accounts is essential.

The company must have its own bank account where all company monies are held;

- Company funds should never be kept in a leader's personal account;
- Keep any cash in a safe place until lodged in the company account;
- All receipts should be kept and accounts updated regularly;
- A company treasurer should be appointed to take charge of finances;
- Accounts should be audited annually by the church; and
- Volunteers should be able to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the delivery of service within their own company directly from the GB company.

It is possible that companies can gain financial assistance by registering with their local Education Authority.

Raising Company Funds

Each company needs a certain amount of funds to cover operating costs and they can work out which is the most appropriate method. Possible sources of company funds:

- Church support — the church may be able to contribute financially to the company.
- Subscriptions/Subs – a weekly amount that girls bring each week.
- Joining fees — an amount per girl or per family could be set at the discretion of the company and paid at the start of the year.
- GB Week— in February of each year GB Week is held and cards are obtained from GBHQ. This is an opportunity for girls and Officers to ask parents and friends for a donation to help the work of the company.
- Fundraising - fundraising events should never be held without the approval of the Chaplain.

Centenary Trust Fund – Small Grants Programme

This fund is available to provide assistance to new companies, assist companies in financial difficulty and to aid those who may be representing The Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland at events outside Northern Ireland. Companies experiencing financial hardship may apply for a grant from the fund. Information is available upon request from the National Secretary at GBHQ.

Company Property

Property of the GB company belongs to the parent church. In the event of a company closing, its property and funds remain with the parent church or for their disposal. Surplus items of uniform or equipment could be donated to another company either locally or further afield.

Company Insurance

GBNI has a comprehensive insurance policy which covers members for all regular GB activities. An insurance premium is included in the company's annual membership fees. This policy provides cover for any claim that may arise as a result of an action or policy of The Girls' Brigade, but this is separate from a church insurance policy that must also be in place.

GBNI has public liability cover for GBNI property and centralised events but this cover does not include the church premises where companies meet. Therefore, churches must have insurance cover in addition to that provided by GBNI. The two complement each other but both are essential.

If leaders want to try out more adventurous activities with their members, the insurance company can be contacted directly to check out cover. Contact details for our insurance company are available from GBHQ.

Policies

All information in this section is correct at going to press but may change during the lifespan of this resource. You will be notified of updates through the GBNI Newsletter and on the GBNI website.

Child Protection Policy

GBNI is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so that they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

GBNI has a full policy statement with supporting procedures and guidelines which should complement the policies of local churches. Each company has a copy. It is recommended that the church policy is followed, subject to approval by GBNI.

The Policy includes guidance on:

- Use of church/GB policy;
- Recruiting volunteers;
- Running camps or holidays;
- Video/photo guidelines; and
- Anti-bullying guidelines.

For full details refer to Child Protection Policy on the GBNI website. Please also check GBNI website regularly for updates to the Child Protection Policy.

Child Protection Training

Training in child protection issues is available for all new Officers and Sub-Officers as they complete child protection awareness training during leadership training. All leaders should attend refresher child protection training through their church at least every three years.

Churches Joint Protocol

The Church of Ireland, The Presbyterian Church in Ireland and The Methodist Church in Ireland agreed a Common Protocol for churches relating to independent organisations working with children and young people.

The Common Protocol seeks to clarify the expectations and responsibilities of both the churches and the independent organisations, especially in the areas of child protection policy, appointment of leaders, information sharing and reporting of concerns that may arise within an organisation. The Common Protocol refers to uniformed organisations. The Common Protocol is available to download from the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

Disclosure and Barring Service

Backgound checks have to be requested for all new leaders through your church for those who work with children and adults at risk or in need of protection. AccessNI forms will be available from your church and it should be processed according to their guidelines. Once a clear check has been confirmed, you should be informed that the leader is able to take up their role.

For further information: www.nidirect.gov.uk.

Disability Policy

One of the basic principles of Girls' Brigade is that people are equally valued. We want everyone to feel welcome and appreciate leaders doing their best to accommodate members with disabilities. Our programme is flexible enough for girls of varying abilities to take part. Leaders should be fully aware of each girl's condition, her treatment, diet and any other essential details.

This information can usually be obtained from the girl's parent/carer. Leaders should implement the disability policy of the church.

All service providers are impacted by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Therefore, your church and GB company must comply with the legislation and adhere to these duties:

- You should not treat a person with disabilities less favourably because of their disability;
- You should make reasonable adjustments to the services you provide to include people with disabilities;

- These adjustments should be made in advance rather than waiting to see if a person with disabilities comes to your company; and
- To remove physical barriers by removing a feature, altering it or avoiding it eg. putting in ramps to provide access to buildings, altering doors to make them wide enough for wheelchair users to move around your building.

What are 'Reasonable Adjustments'?

Your church and company must make reasonable adjustments where it is impossible or unreasonably difficult for a person with disabilities to use your service.

This includes:

- Changing policies, practices and procedures that might exclude a girl with disabilities from taking part in your company;
- Providing auxiliary aids and services eg. ramps, equipment or one to one assistance; and
- Providing a reasonable alternative where there's a physical barrier.

Practical features to consider for your building:

- Steps, kerbs, stairways, exterior surfaces and parking areas;
- Building entrances and emergency exits;
- Internal and external doors, gates;
- Toilet and washing facilities, public facilities such as telephones, counters, service desks; and
- Lighting and signage.

When physical barriers have been identified, you should consider whether it is reasonable to remove the feature, alter it or void it.

Data Protection Policy

The Data Protection Act 1998 requires anyone who handles personal information to comply with a number of important principles. It also gives individuals rights over their personal information. As GB companies store information about members, leaders must pay attention to data protection principles. Full guidelines regarding storing and use of personal information for leaders are detailed in the 2017 edition Leaders' Manual - a guide to running your company.

It is important to note that General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will apply in the UK from 25 May 2018. It is the responsibility of the church leadership to ensure the GB company are compliant with data legislation.

For the latest changes to data protection and consent please refer to the Information Commissioner's Office : www.ico.org.uk

Further information is also available at : www.gov.uk/data-protection.

Drug Education Policy

The Girls' Brigade recognises the prevalence of drug use and the demands this problem places on its members. The organisation also realises that it is in a prime position to provide drugs awareness and education in a safe, secure and spiritual environment.

The policy of The Girls' Brigade is to provide positive alternative experiences to drug use and to discourage any behaviour which is in any way anti-social or detrimental to society. The Girls' Brigade seeks to demonstrate the benefits of a disciplined lifestyle in a Christian environment and context.

Food Hygiene

Leaders who are involved in cooking at GB must handle food safely. Those responsible for preparing food eg. at camp, making dinner at the church hall for local senior citizens, must ensure that food hygiene regulations are implemented and use good food hygiene practices at all times. For more information: www.food.gov.uk.

Health and Safety Policy

Safety is of prime importance during any activity. This is not only the responsibility of the leader in charge but of every leader. Volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with the contents of the GBNI Volunteer Safety Handbook and implement its procedures. The Safety Handbook seeks to ensure that Captains are fully conversant with all aspects of health and safety.

Each company must have a Health and Safety Representative and first aider who will be able to support and assist leaders in this area. The Health and Safety Representative has a copy of the GBNI Volunteer Safety Handbook and will be kept up to date with any amendments to it. All leaders must read the Volunteer Safety Handbook and sign the declaration that they have done so.

Risk Assessment

It is essential that risk assessments should be carried out annually and checked regularly to identify areas of potential risk or danger. This needs to be done for all activities and when planning activities such as day trips, camps or expeditions. From September 2017, all GB companies are required to submit a copy of their company night risk assessment annually to GBHQ for insurance purposes.

The Company Health and Safety Officer should go through a GB safety checklist each week and assist leaders with risk assessment for special activities or events.

If an accident/incident occurs a copy of the signed risk assessment to GBHQ along with a completed Accident Report Form must be sent to GBHQ within three days of the incident.

Risk assessments are designed to encourage a proactive approach to health and safety. By applying a step by step, logical approach to the risks associated with activities you will be able to identify the high risk areas within your company.

Volunteer Drivers

All leaders or parents who transport girls to GB events or outings in their own cars must annually give a copy of their driving licence and valid insurance to their Captain. Leaders should check with their insurance company that 'Category 1a' is included to cover this use of their cars.

Booster Seats

The law requires all children travelling in the front or rear seat of any car, van or goods vehicle must use the correct child car seat until they are either 135cm in height or 12 years old (which ever they reach first). After this they must use an adult seat belt. There are very few exceptions.

It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that children under the age of 14 years are restrained correctly in accordance with the law.

The law is different for buses, coaches and minibuses with seat belts fitted. Details are provided on www.childcarseats.org.uk.

Driving a Minibus

Rules were introduced in January 1998 regarding driving minibuses and much depends on whether you charge for the service, the number of seats on board, the type of driving licence you have and when it was issued. For further information: www.nidirect.gov.uk.

Dealing with complaints

We hope that everyone involved in your company will enjoy being part of the organisation but we also realise that things can go wrong. Therefore, we have some guidelines for dealing with general complaints.

If a girl or parent/carer has a general complaint about the running of a company, such complaints should be directed through the Captain or the Chaplain. The complainant should be assured that the matter will be dealt with in a prompt and appropriate manner. They should be informed as soon as possible of the decision and the action, if any, that will be taken.

Anyone wishing to appeal a decision made regarding a complaint or grievance should address their complaints to the local church leadership.

Problem Solving Procedures

We value your willingness to volunteer with Girls' Brigade and hope that you will find the role to be a rewarding one. However, it is important to bear in mind that sometimes things can go wrong and, in case problems arise, we need a procedure to deal with these problems in a fair and consistent way. To ensure that this aim is fulfilled, Girls' Brigade has adopted a problem solving procedure. This procedure is designed to help and encourage all our volunteers to achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of conduct and performance, and to provide the opportunity for improvement where necessary.

The following procedures will apply to allegations of unsatisfactory performance or conduct that may arise after confirmation of your placement in a volunteering role.

If a Volunteer has a Complaint

If a volunteer thinks they have been unfairly treated this procedure explains what to do.

Stage 1: Verbal Complaint

The volunteer should discuss their complaint, whether against a member of staff, the organisation or another volunteer, with the company Captain. If the complaint is about the Captain, then the matter should be referred to the Chaplain or Elder in charge of the company.

During this meeting the volunteer can be accompanied by a nominated person of their choice, if they wish.

If the issue cannot be resolved at this stage then the volunteer should make a formal complaint in writing to the Chaplain.

Stage 2

Any complaint should be dealt with by the church leadership in a timely manner. If the Chaplain is unable to resolve the problem then they can appeal to the leadership body of the church (eg. Session). The volunteer can have a nominated person present at this meeting. The leadership body of the church must respond in a timely manner and their decision is final. At any stage GBNI can provide support, advice or guidance as required. Where necessary GBNI Chair/President/Vice President/National Secretary will facilitate a meeting with either or both parties to try to address the problem informally. They will try to address concerns in an informal manner and will do everything they can to resolve issues.

GBNI will endeavour to address any problems in an informal manner, in order to maintain relationships in line with Christian ethos, ensuring the smooth running of the company.

Some Points to Remember:

- All complaints must be treated confidentially, and should only be discussed amongst those who are directly involved in trying to resolve the issue.
- Complaints and warnings should be recorded in writing.
- Ensure that you allow enough time for all meetings, and that they are conducted in a private place.
- Keep complainants informed at every step of the procedure.
- If the person making the complaint is a member or parent of a member, reassure them that their complaint will not affect their right to enjoy GB. Volunteers should also still be able continue their involvement in GB, unless they are suspended while an investigation into an act of gross misconduct is carried out.
- Volunteers have the right to be accompanied by a colleague, friend or family member in any meetings that form part of the problem solving process.

GB Europe

the girls' brigade europe

seek serve follow

'To support, encourage and equip our member countries in their desire to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

In order to achieve this mission, GB Europe is working to promote growth, encourage discipleship, develop communication and nurture emerging leaders.

The Fellowship Executive meets twice a year.

The Fellowship Executive is made up of:

- Chairman (International Vice President)
- Vice Chairman
- Youth Coordinator
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Director/National Secretary of each country
- National Chair/President of each country
- One delegate from each member country
- Youth Representatives

The Fellowship has a number of goals and objectives:

- Empower emerging leaders
- Communicate effectively
- Inspire discipleship
- Explore cultural relevance

The methods and tools for the outworking of these goals include:

- FIZZ Teams
- GB Europe Blog
- Sole Stories Book
- Prayer Initiative

Resources

GB International and GB Europe resources can be found in the Leaders' Section of the GBNI website.

GB Europe Websites

www.gbworldwide.org/where/europe

GB Europe Blog - www.gbconnect.wordpress.com

GB England and Wales - www.girlsb.org.uk

GB Ireland - www.girlsbrigadeirl.ie

GB Scotland - www.girls-brigade-scotland.org.uk

GEMS GBNI Youth Forum

Youth Representation

GBNI Youth Forum (GEMS) was originally formed in 2008 to encourage the young women in Girls' Brigade to participate in decision-making within the organisation. GEMS' dream is to see a generation of girls who have had a real encounter with their Saviour which empowers them to become mighty women of God. We want our girls' voices to be heard in the decision-making within GBNI leadership. Through GEMS, it is our prayer that they will inspire and be inspired to grow in Christ and be an example for generations to come.

Every girl and young woman between 16-25 years of age is part of GEMS. There is also a core GEMS Team where each district can appoint two District GEMS Representatives aged 18-25 to look at issues that affect our youth and influence the decision-making of GBNI. Furthermore, our GBNI Executive Team can appoint up to three young women aged 18-25 who apply to act as Executive Youth Representatives on the GBNI Executive Team.

GEMS is committed to:

- Reaching out to girls with the Gospel;
- Following the motto of the Girls' Brigade; to 'Seek, Serve and Follow Christ' in everything we do;
- Listening to the voice and opinions of our girls in order to empower mighty servants;
- Actively assisting the leadership of Girls' Brigade as they seek to extend His Kingdom; and
- Creating opportunities to meet new sisters in Christ for fun and fellowship.

GEMS has its own Facebook page and an online youth blog for young women. Leaders can encourage young women to 'like' the Facebook page and regularly visit the blog to get spiritual encouragement plus stay up to date with what is happening within the GB family. Girls can use these spaces as an avenue to share their views on any GB issues and these will be passed on to their youth representatives.

'We're not keeping this to ourselves,
we're passing it along to the next generation –
God's fame and fortune,
the marvellous things He has done'.
Psalm 78:4 (The Message)

Appendix 1

Act of Enrolment

This is intended as a suggestion. Chaplains may include wording they feel is appropriate.

CHAPLAIN: The great commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ to the church was to go into all the world making disciples of all people. The Girls' Brigade endeavours to carry out this work among girls and young women, challenging them in their Christian faith and helping them to grow in Christ.

We are delighted to have members of the <<name of company>> with us in church today for their annual service of enrolment and dedication. We have girls of all ages and leaders who together make up this company.

(Ask leaders to stand or come to the front)

Volunteering as a GB Officer is not just about keeping the company running, it's about service, obedience, putting faith into action and growing as a Christian. The leaders standing before us today are using their gifts and talents as they try to share God's love with our young women and encourage them to Seek, Serve and Follow Christ themselves.

<<captain's name >>, as Captain of this company we know that you will devote many hours to this ministry with all its rewards and challenges. As a church we affirm you in this work and appreciate all you do for our young people and in leading your team of Officers and helpers.

<<captain's name >> realising the responsibility of the duties involved as Captain, do you promise by word and example to serve God in The Girls' Brigade for the extension of His Kingdom and for the promotion of the GB aim?

CAPTAIN: With God's help, I do.

CHAPLAIN: I now enrol you as Captain of this company and, on behalf of this church, promise to support you practically and with our prayers so that the aim of The Girls' Brigade may be achieved, to the glory of God.

(Shake hands with Captain. Now address Officers.)

CHAPLAIN: Your support and help to the Captain is crucial as you work together as a team. You have the great privilege and responsibility of presenting the truths and promises of Jesus Christ to the girls. The task is challenging but God will help you to lead girls to Seek, Serve and Follow Christ.

<<names of officers >> realising the responsibility of leadership, do you promise to support your Captain, and by word and example to serve God in The Girls' Brigade for the extension of His Kingdom and the promotion of the GB Aim?

OFFICERS: With God's help, I do.

CHAPLAIN: I now enrol you as Officers of this company and may God grant you grace to be faithful and fruitful as you serve Him in Girls' Brigade.

(Shake hands with Officers who then return to their seats. Sub-Officers come forward).

CHAPLAIN: <<names of Sub-Officers >> you have been given this position of responsibility. Do you promise to support your Captain and Officers and to set a good example to the girls as you work with them in the company, striving at all times to be faithful to Jesus Christ and the aim of The Girls' Brigade?

SUB-OFFICERS: With God's help, I do.

CHAPLAIN: I now enrol you as Sub-Officers of this company.

(Shake hands with Sub-Officers who then return to their seats. Ask girls to stand.)

Note to Chaplain: If there are Associates (ie. untrained leaders) in your company you could include something appropriate for them here.

CHAPLAIN: Girls, do you promise, with God's help, to be loyal to your company; to be honest, kind and helpful to each other?

COMPANY: I do.

CHAPLAIN: I now enrol you as members of the Girls' Brigade. We hope you will have great fun at GB this year and pray that God will help you in everything you do.

The Captain and Officers (and Associates) of our GB company are all appointed by the church. As a congregation we have the responsibility to support them and the girls they work with by our prayers, encouragement and practical help. To indicate your acceptance of this commitment please stand.

Prayer of Dedication.

Notes

For all the latest updates follow us here :

www.gbni.co.uk/gbni-news

www.facebook.com/gbni1

www.twitter.com/gbni

www.flickr/gbni

www.gbni.co.uk/youthblog

Sign up for our weekly eNews via www.gbni.co.uk/leaders

www.gbni.co.uk

WWW.GBNI.CO.UK