

FAITH IN YOUNG PEOPLE



August 2020 – Project Update

Stronger, Safer, Together...

Our last project update from March was at the very beginning of Lockdown and a period of uncertainty. We have all been through a lot over the past months and huge uncertainty remains in our lives. The full consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic are still to be completely understood, but the positive actions that we have seen so many people take in their local and wider communities has been inspiring and gives us all hope.

We have hope that our relationships with one another will become **stronger** as we develop a renewed appreciation for the simple things in life. We have hope that society will become **safer** as we continue to learn about how we can protect ourselves and others from the virus. We have hope that it is not too far in the future that we will come **together** and start to live our lives to the full once more. **Stronger, Safer, Together** – that is our wish for the future of The Boys' Brigade, and our wider communities.

#BBatHOME...

After the introduction of social distancing measures all face-to-face BB activities were suspended on the 16th March. Little did we know at that moment in time that we would still be without face-to-face youth work five months later. The normal work of the BB may have come to an abrupt halt in March, but the pandemic did not stop us continuing to live out our vision, mission and values.

Our Mission: The Boys' Brigade has faith in young people and provides them with opportunities to learn, grow and discover in a safe, fun and caring environment which is rooted in the Christian faith.

On Friday 20 March we launched #BBatHOME – an online programme of activities for young people to take part in at home with their parents/carers. Made freely accessible on our website, the programme has been used by members and non-members alike. For 18 weeks, we sent out weekly activity packs. Roughly 300 brand new activities have been designed and



#BBATHOME

shared with our members and their families in recent months, and we have had wonderful feedback:

"As a family, we've really appreciated the efforts made by the leaders and volunteers during these uncertain times. Their commitment to weekly Zoom meetings and staying in touch with the young people has been a really positive experience for our son. I think the BB activities will feature strongly and positively in his memories of this time."

– Parent's Feedback on #BBatHOME

"BBatHOME has done so much for this family's mental health during Lockdown. They've kept us laughing together, even on tough days. I can't thank you enough."

– Parent's Feedback on #BBatHOME

Next Steps...

We have been working hard to create guidance for BB Companies to follow to ensure a safe return to face-to-face activities. Our guidance framework prioritises the safety of our members, their families and our leaders whilst ensuring that we work together with the local Church and relevant local authorities.

Many Companies' end-of-year fundraising events were cancelled as a result of the pandemic, added to this they will also have new costs to support as they look to restarting – like hand sanitiser, extra cleaning materials and video conferencing facilities to support a blended return. For Companies in areas of high deprivation, these costs will be difficult to manage on already limited budgets. As such, we are opening a special round of the mini-grants scheme that we have been operating in Scotland to support with these costs. The mini-grants scheme is entirely funded from donations we receive through our partnership with the Church of Scotland Guild, and we are incredibly grateful for every penny of support that the Guild has generously given to us so far.

Thank you...

In spite of these turbulent times we are living through, there is reason for optimism for the future of the BB. The past months have proven that we are an organisation that can continue to innovate and adapt – very much following our history and heritage.

The value and impact of the BB is as important as ever. As we move into the new 2020/21 BB session - which will bring with it new and different challenges - we can surely be confident that our work has something meaningful and important to offer as children and young people adjust to the 'new normal'.

We will continue to support and care for young people – journeying alongside them as they learn, grow and discover. We will continue to live out our values and be an important part of local communities across Scotland and beyond. We will be stronger, safer and together. We can only do these things, however, with the support that we receive from our partners, like the Guild. Thank You.

Prayer Points...

- We pray for children and young people in Scotland as they start to return to school and begin to think about going back to extra-curricular activities, clubs and youth organisations, like the BB.
- We pray for encouragement and guidance for BB leaders as they start to deal with the different challenges to restarting face-to-face activities.



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