



Holiday Brownies – Harnessing Student Power to Grow Girlguiding



This report has been written by the Holiday Brownie leadership team who all contributed to different sections

1 WHY IT EVOLVED

Girlguiding Gloucestershire is the leading educational charity for girls and young women in this area. It aims to build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. However one issue faced by Girlguiding Gloucestershire is the huge waiting lists due to too few leaders and/or too few meeting places. In Gloucestershire alone there are 600 girls on the waiting list. As a result this means that many girls are unable to experience the joys of Girlguiding or having been in Rainbows cannot get into a local Brownie unit for quite a long time.

2 WHAT IS HOLIDAY BROWNIES?

This led Girlguiding Gloucestershire to come up with an exciting new idea. This idea aimed at growing Girlguiding is to give girls on the waiting lists the chance to become Brownies and experience the very best Guiding has to offer. The idea involved setting up a 3 day non-residential holiday camp for girls on the waiting list and giving them the opportunity to experience a terms-worth of Brownie activities so that by the end of the camp they could be enrolled as Brownies. They would then remain in this "virtual" unit able to attend County events, earn badges, or join up with other local girls to do "Brownie activities" as Lone Guides.

So in some ways what was offered was quite a standard programme, what we believe we did differently and makes it a new initiative worth exploring in more areas was to find a leadership team who do not normally work in units and who felt able to give time to Guiding during the holidays.

3 THE TEAM – WHY IT WAS SO UNIQUE

The team was unique as it consisted of 7 university students; some of whom don't get a chance to do guiding within term times, and some who are involved in guiding with a local unit whilst at university but not necessarily with Brownies. 5 of the initial 6 had their leadership qualification, only one with Brownies. Hannah, an enthusiastic lifelong member of Guiding came in the capacity of unit helper. As the programme grew closer and we realised we had a Brownie who might need one to one assistance, we asked Jess another local 18 year old pre-university student to join us for 2 days to ensure we had sufficient cover.

There was guidance throughout the planning stages from Jennifer Wallace a local Ranger leader (and former GOLD participant) who helped the team think through the challenge and mentored them along the way to ensure that the programme was thoroughly planned and the various elements of the ALQ Module 1 for Brownies could be covered. All of the leaders could now get their Brownie Module for their Leadership Qualification. Doing the e-learning module for Brownie leaders was a helpful training opportunity for all as it did not involve finding and attending a training programme in the short space of time available. Not all of the team knew each other so getting to 'make new friends' was exciting; quick decisions needed to be made thus meaning that teamwork was paramount

Having a mentor was important because the team had never done anything like Holiday Brownies before and had limited experience working with this section, so something could have been missed. Planning for a whole term's worth of content at once was more demanding than the typical meeting or 2 that even an experienced a leader normally tackles at one time.

4 HOW DID WE PLAN AND PREPARE

There was an initial contact by e-mail with possible leaders in the early summer term using some girls known to the Commissioners and other members of the County Exec. All responded positively to the outline proposal and a first meeting was set for 26 June. The main thing we needed to agree very quickly was when we could offer the programme. The diaries of the girls were still a bit vague for the summer, but 3 x 3 day slots were found where at least 4 were available each day.

We had a couple of follow-up face to face meetings to work on the details but most work carried on between times by sub groups, e-mail and social media exchanges.

One of the County Commissioners with help from the County Join-U's expert dealt with sending out invites to parents and contacting Rainbow and Brownie unit leaders to find potential girls. This was not wholly successful, probably reflecting inaccuracies in Join Us, a late start by when parents probably had plans in place for holiday time for their daughters and also a lack of understanding about the programme. The sample letter sent out to parents is attached.

By mid July it seemed likely that we could only run one programme with the take-up we had and with hindsight that was a good thing as the planning really was not completed by then and the first programme which had been proposed for end July would not have been anything like as well prepared for.

We held our well attended parent's meeting which brought us in 2 extra participants and gave the leaders the chance to engage with the parents they would meet during the programme and address any questions or concerns.

Once the programme was drafted, the costs of materials, activities and extras was run through careful budgetary controls and we were delighted to be able to afford T-shirts and Brownie badge books in the package for the girls. We borrowed some core equipment and used Baker Ross, "Pound shops" and the local "Scrapstore" to source what was needed. The leaders also had use of the county office, a laptop, printer, photocopier and laminator to help them prepare materials. A float of £100 cash was given to allow for small purchases and claim forms covered other expenses and bigger purchases.

Leaders were allocated to each session, timings and risk assessments completed so by 8.30 on day one, the poster was up welcoming the Brownies and we were underway.

5 WHO TOOK PART

Keeping in the spirit of Girlguiding worldwide, one of our aims was to ensure the total inclusion of girls from a variety of backgrounds. Before we started the programme, we made parents aware that any girl would be most welcome to attend Holiday Brownies. It was clear from the parents meeting we held, following the invitation letters which had gone out primarily based on Join Us lists, that we had girls of differing age, ability, faith, family situation and location.

As we began planning the programme, we discussed ideas about how to make sure there was something for everyone. Most importantly, we chose a venue that was fairly close to many of the local population centres: Deer Park, Cowley. We organised a taxi to enable a girl without a family car to attend and put other parents in touch with each other so they could organize car-pooling. Similarly, we offered financial support to cover these costs where required. This additional support was a result of a Growing Guiding grant we had received from the WPA Benevolent Foundation.

The programme included learning about Girlguiding in different countries, and through games and crafts, to teach the girls that any faith or nationality is welcome. We ensured that we provided food suitable for vegetarians and for families with religious diets, even down to sourcing vegetarian marshmallows

Finally, one of the girls communicated only with sign language, so during the programme we incorporated teaching all the girls the promise in sign language alongside the spoken promise. This meant that in the promise ceremony, the girls made their promise as usual followed by signing it for Tilly. We felt this was hugely beneficial to the girls in the group and very touching for the parents of the Brownie using sign language.

6 BUDGETING

We asked families to pay £12 per day for the programme plus the annual membership subscription (£24) up front as we wanted them to be very clear that this was a programme designed for Brownies not a holiday child-care scheme. As mentioned above, we and Families First subsidized one family to enable their daughter to attend.

We used WPA Benevolent Foundation Growing Guiding money to underpin some core costs (leader wear, rent of the hall and travelling expenses) but the girl's contribution covered all the programme consumables plus a T shirt, badges, badge books and activities. We could have economized and reduced the price to about £8.00 or had the fees contribute more toward some of the core costs but as a pilot scheme, we were grateful that we did not have to run it on a shoestring. When compared to similar holiday schemes run locally, we felt our charge was appropriate and in the post-event survey, parents all rated us as offering good or exceptional value for money. We also felt that we offered the equivalent of 12 Brownie meeting's worth of activities which at £3 per "night" would also be preparing parents for a future expectation of the cost of being a Brownie.

We paid each young adult leader £10 per day expenses to cover food, and half way through the programme took them out for a pub supper to give them a break from self-catering.

A summary of the programme costs is attached

7 PROGRAMME

The design remit was an “ordinary” Brownie programme in line with the 5 essentials but making as much use as possible of the outdoor facilities at Deer Park. Risk assessments were carried out and once we became aware of the special needs of one member, activities were also checked and adjusted to allow for Tilly’s inclusion wherever possible

We were blessed with remarkably good weather until the very last hour so wherever possible activities were moved outdoors and picnic lunches became the order of the day.

The full programme is attached

The event culminated in a splendid party for parents, friends, guests and girls so they could celebrate making their promise on the 3rd night. Had we run multiple programmes, we had intended to bring all the groups back together at the end of the holidays for this party but in the event it made more sense to run it immediately after the 3rd day.

8 PR AND MARKETING

For us it was important to highlight what Guiding is offering in Gloucestershire and to get the message across about needing more leaders so we contacted the Gloucestershire Echo (part of the Glos Media group) who sent along a reporter and photographer on day 1. This resulted in a very well written article appearing in each of the local papers. We asked region to loan us their photographer and Russell Sach, an outstanding cameraman came for 2 days and has helped us build an exceptional portfolio of pictures which we will be able to use for publicity purposes.

We invited Jacqui Dixon, the region Growing Guiding coordinator to join us to see what we were up to and also our contact within WPA so that he could see and report back on how the funding was being used.

Before the event we had a Growing Guiding blog which had a number of followers and we also tweeted about the programme. We gained a number of interested followers within Guiding which we hope will further encourage contact to find out more and to replicate the programme elsewhere.

The leadership team have been invited to speak at a Growing Guiding regional conference in November and individually they plan to make contact near to where they study. We have built a short presentation, are creating a mini-movie and have photo albums that can be used to promote it. Without doubt the leaders themselves will be the best ambassadors for this initiative but we have to recognize that once they are back at university their availability will be limited.

9 FEEDBACK

9.1 METHODOLOGY

We gained feedback throughout the programme in different ways from the girls and each evening the leadership team took time to carry out a review of how it was going and anything that needed to be tweaked for the following day.

The principal methods of collecting data from the girls was by a postcard they wrote on day 2 to the Chief Executive and Chief Guide, a daily pow-wow to reflect on what they had enjoyed each day and an autograph book they put messages into at the end. The parents were asked to complete a 10 question on-line survey built using Survey Monkey.

9.2 RESULTS

As hoped, the girls had a fantastic time. We could see from the laughter and smiles in the Brownies' faces that they were enjoying every second. Following on from this were the amazing photos taken by the region photographer. They captured moments that we may have missed or overlooked as we were so busy, so looking back at these is magical.

We captured the girls highlights and opinions about the programme during their Brownie Skills Badge. They wrote letters to the Chief Guide and Chief Executive on the 2nd day about their favourite moment. Many included activities such as painting a photo frame to put a photo they had taken themselves in, whilst many mentioned more adventurous activities such as low ropes and grass sledging. Many of the activities were entirely new to the Brownies so were both challenging and exciting for them. On some of the letters, were memories such as making new friends and enjoying spending time with the leaders, which was of course lovely to hear.

From the autograph book

It was lovely to see the parents' comments because some of them mentioned things the girls hadn't written in their messages, such as a story they had told them in the evening. Examples of parents messages include..

- Carys has had a fabulous time at holiday Brownies. She says she has enjoyed everything and was very excited to be making her promise. Thank you all
- Thanks for organizing this brilliant event which Aadiya has extremely enjoyed
- Amy has really enjoyed the whole experience and has come home full of bounce and smiles
- What a great idea. Eliza has wanted to be a Brownie since she was 6.... She sometimes lacked confidence and this camp has helped with this. She has loved meeting and making new friends
- Ella has had a fab time – 18 new friends! The crafting and running around seem to be highlights
- Tilly had the very best of times and made lots of new friends. She will be back!

From the survey monkey on-line survey 2 weeks later.

- 100% said their daughter had learned something new and
- 80% said she had grown in confidence over the programme.
- 100% said she got help when she needed it and most importantly,
- 90% said their daughter had fun.
- More than 75% of the parents who completed the online feedback said the leaders acted responsibly, were caring and thoughtful, made the event fun and set consistent standards for behaviour at all times.

When asked what they suggested we change for next time, we got 1 key message – nothing except make it longer.

Moving onto our own evaluations.

Emily: We had an incredible three days and could clearly see how our time and efforts had come together. We were exhausted but didn't want it to finish as it was exactly how we had imagined, if not better. We got to know each other better as a team, whilst boosting our confidence and skills that we had perhaps not used to our full potential in the past.

Hannah: The thing I loved most about the holiday camp was the opportunity to work with young girls aspiring to be Brownies and showing them how much fun guiding can be. It was fantastic to watch them make new friendships and by the end of the camp it was amazing to enroll them all. *Hannah has subsequently signed on to do her ALQ and we will use evidence from the programme to kick start it.*

Belinda: the thing I loved most about holiday brownies was giving girls the opportunity to experience guiding when they wouldn't have otherwise.

Charlotte: I loved that the majority of the girls had never met each other and yet by the end of the 3 days they all had 19 new Brownie friends! I also loved hearing the reactions from the parents, especially those that said their daughter's confidence and self-esteem had improved. *Charlotte has completed her module 4 ALQ qualification through the programme by looking after record-keeping and the accounts and also gained her low ropes instructor qualification which will allow her to work at Deer Park as a paid instructor.*

Other leaders have amassed significant evidence towards their Brownie leadership qualification, but all now have confidence to volunteer with this age group.

Helen (CC): I loved watching this team create this amazing programme and run it confidently and professionally whilst maintaining a real atmosphere of fun and excitement for the girls. I don't think they quite appreciated the effort it would take to plan, run and then wrap up and evaluate this programme but they have been genuinely excited about being the first to do something like this and are very keen to pass on the message about what students can do to help give girls a chance in Guiding. I hope to give them as many chances as possible in their already busy lives to do so. I am very proud of the sensitivity

and care with which they handled some of the more shy girls and especially the one with learning needs, integrating them as fully and naturally as possible. I have seen them grow personally and I really hope that they can continue to contribute in a similar way in the future.

10 WHAT WOULD WE CHANGE?

- Next time start earlier and engage local leaders better so they are aware of the programme and can identify girls to invite
- Maintain a high ratio of leaders to girls to ensure there is enough support for the shy, quiet or girl who has additional needs. It is also very demanding when run over 3 consecutive days so we need to build in breaks for leaders
- Slim down the programme a little to provide more girl choice and to let some sessions run for longer or just give the girls time for positive play
- Build in time as part of the “contract” with the leaders to complete the administrative paperwork and evaluation afterwards
- Look at how Join Us and GO! Could better support this kind of programme and make recommendations to CHQ

10.1 WHAT WOULDN'T WE CHANGE?

- The core programme design, though we might tweak individual activities
- The empowerment of the students
- A small per diem to the students plus expenses

11 WHAT IS NEXT.....?

11.1 FOR THE SCHEME LOCALLY

- Make sure we have a Lones Brown Owl in place to ensure there is immediate follow up and ongoing support for girls who stay in the Holiday Unit
- Get forward dates into the diary from students before the end of the holidays.

11.2 TO GROW THE SCHEME

- Promoting this programme within the County to Commissioners with a view to rolling it out to other areas of the County next summer.
- Promoting the initiative in the Region at their Growing Guiding Conference in November
- Sharing our experience with CHQ to see how they can help take it forward

11.3 FOR THE GIRLS

- Inviting them to 2 County-run events in 2013 (Rustle Bustle & Squeak and Fame)
- Organising a one-day Xmas holiday event
- Giving them the support to continue to complete Brownie activities as lones including celebrating the Big Brownie Birthday in 2014

- Continuing to monitor their transition into regular units and passing on their annual subs to their leaders

11.4 FOR THE STUDENT LEADERS

- To acknowledge their contribution within Guiding. A county certificate of appreciation has been awarded to each, they have appeared on our website and written for the County newsletter and the Chief Executive and Chief Guide have their names and addresses!
- To acknowledge their contribution to those outside Guiding. A letter has been sent to their employers to tell them about what they did in the summer and they have been promised any requested references or input to personal statements or similar
- To promote this internally in Gloucestershire so that we have a ready band of students in place earlier next year.

12 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This programme could be taken on as an ambitious pilot thanks to the generosity of the WPA Benevolent Foundation which has given us a substantial grant to support our Growing Guiding initiatives. We are particularly grateful to Mr. C MacEwan for his personal encouragement and commitment to our plans.

The Guider in charge at Deer Park Cowley who gave the leaders free rein to design the programme around the fantastic facilities and was available throughout the event to provide practical support.

To the instructor team at Deer Park, Roger, Steph and Dan who enabled Charlotte to complete her low rope instructor training and gave all the other leaders a good start on achieving their qualification.

To the Region Growing Guiding Coordinator and Chief Commissioner who encouraged and supported throughout

To the Chief Exec whose visit in July gave the leaders the personal encouragement to pursue their ambitious plans and who supported during and after the programme through tweets and messages.

To the disability adviser Sue Simpson and another expert in the field Jacque Dent who were on call and provided us with resources to help us with integrating Tilly so successfully.

To the parents and girls who made this a remarkable summer and one we will be delighted to repeat.

Dear Parent or carer,

I would like to invite your daughter who is on the waiting list to join Brownies to take part in a special short programme which is being created to give girls the chance to experience the very best of Guiding during the summer holidays. We are offering an action-packed 3 day programme which will cover the activities needed for a girl to understand and become ready to make her promise.

The "meetings" led by qualified leaders will be held at our lovely outdoor activity centre at Deer Park, Cowley and have a strong emphasis on out of doors activities though there will be a mix of crafts, challenges, a small service project and lots of other things that we know Brownies enjoy.

If you would like your daughter to participate, please select one of the programmes from the dates below. If you could attend more than one date, please indicate your first, second and third preferences as we hope to get at least 50 girls onto the programme in groups of about 18-24 and may need to balance numbers. We are also going to try to "cluster" girls to make car-sharing easier for you.

The cost of the programme is the same as a typical Brownie term of activities at £36 (£3 per meeting equivalent). Girls will receive Brownie books and as this is our first running of this programme, a special T-shirt. Drinks and snacks will be provided daily (but not lunch). In addition we are asking for the Association membership fee of £24 as we will register your girls with the association.

Each day the programme will run from 0900-1700 and girls will need to bring a packed lunch, re-fillable drinks bottle, sun-cream and wear clothing suitable for the weather conditions and activities (a non-specialist kit list will be provided at the parents meeting). We hope girls will choose to buy an item of official Brownie Wear from our shop (which will we tell you more about) before the final night of the holiday programme at Cowley on 30 August when all the Holiday Brownies and Guides will be offered the chance to make their promise with their new Brownie and Guide friends and their family present.

If girls join Holiday Brownies, they can either remain Holiday Brownies and enjoy a similar 2 day programme at Christmas or they will remain on the waiting list for their local unit and when a place becomes available their membership record and fee will transfer with them.

We do hope your daughter will be able to join us so she can start to enjoy being a Brownie and making new Brownie friends. There will be a parents meeting (for one parent or carer) on 22 July at Churchdown Community Centre at 7PM when more information about the programme will be shared and you will be able to complete all the other registration, permission, health and information forms that will be needed. In the meantime, please could you return the attached slip with the 3 day event fee and the Girlguiding permission slip to the above address by 19 July. An e-mail to let me know your decision would be welcomed to helen_rangers@yahoo.co.uk and this would secure a place, with payment following by post or at the parent's meeting

Helen Welsh

County Commissioner

Monday 19th August

“Brown Owl”: Charlotte (am) Sam (pm)

Leaders: Jess, Sian (3-5pm)

Tilly’s helper: Hannah

First Aider: Jen

- 9:00-10:00 = Welcome.
Icebreaker games (Charlotte)
- 10:00-10:30 = Craft – decorating name badges and craft bags (Charlotte)
- 10:30-11:30 = Group activity – Making sitters (Sam)
- 11:30-12:30 = Activities –
(1) Cress (Jess)
(2) Brownie Books (Charlotte)
(3) Circus Craft (Sam)
- 12:30-13:00 = Lunch
- 13:00-14:00 = Activities –
(3) Cress (Jess)
(1) Brownie Books (Charlotte)
(2) Circus Craft (Sam)
- 14:00-15:00 = Activities –
(2) Cress (Jess)
(3) Brownie Books (Charlotte)
(1) Circus Craft (Sam)
- 15:00-15:30 = Break
- 15:30-16:30 = Outdoor games (Sian)
- 16:30-17:00 = Pow-wow (Sam)

Staying overnight: Charlotte, Hannah, Sian?

Tuesday 20th August

“Brown Owl”: Sian (am) Emily (pm)

Leaders: Charlotte, Belinda, Hannah (UH)

Tilly’s helper: Sam

First Aider: Jen

9:00-9:30 = Welcome and games (Sian)

9:30-10:30 = Group activity – Parachute games (Sian)

10:30-11:00 = Break (can do activities in Brownie Books)

11:00-12:00 = Activities – (Sam with Tilly’s group, Hannah with one, Emily with another)
(1) Low ropes (Charlotte)
(2) Photo-frames (Belinda)
(3) Brownie Skills Badge (part 1) (Sian)

12:00-13:00 = Activities – (Sam with Tilly’s group, Hannah with one, Emily with another)
(3) Low ropes (Charlotte)
(1) Photo-frames (Belinda)
(2) Brownie Skills Badge (part 1) (Sian)

13:00-14:00 = Lunch
Start owl bracelets

14:00-15:00 = Activities – (Sam with Tilly’s group, Hannah with one, Emily with another)
(2) Low ropes (Charlotte)
(3) Photo-frames (Belinda)
(1) Brownie Skills Badge (part 1) (Sian)

15:00-16:00 = Craft – uniformed people (Emily + Hannah)

16:00-16:30 = Break
Group activity – scavenger hunt (Emily + Hannah)

16:30-17:00 = Pow-wow (Emily)

Staying overnight: Charlotte, Hannah, Emily, Belinda? Sian?

Wednesday 21st August - Charlotte, Sam, Belinda, Emily, Hannah (UH), Sian (PM only)

“Brown Owl”: Belinda (am) ? (pm)

Leaders: Charlotte, Sam, Hannah (UH), Sian (AM only)

Tilly’s helper: Emily

First Aider: Jen

- 9:00-9:30 = Welcome and games (Belinda)
- 9:30-10:30 = Group activity – World Badge beetle drive (Belinda)
- 10:30-11:00 = Break
Sunflower handprints (Emily + Hannah)
- 11:00-12:00 = Activities –
(1) Promise and Law (Sam + Hannah)
(2) Brownie Skills badge (part 2) (Belinda + Sian)
(3) Cupcake decorating (Charlotte)
- 12:00-13:00 = Activities –
(3) Promise and Law (Sam + Hannah)
(1) Brownie Skills badge (part 2) (Belinda + Sian)
(2) Cupcake decorating (Charlotte)
- 13:00-13:30 = Lunch
- 13:30-14:30 = Activities –
(2) Promise and Law (Sam + Hannah)
(3) Brownie Skills badge (part 2) (Belinda + Sian)
(1) Cupcake decorating (Charlotte)
- 14:30-15:30 = Shop and Play area (Emily)
- 15:30-16:30 = Break
Grass sledging (Charlotte)
- 16:30-17:00 = Pre-promise prep (tbc)
- 17:00-18:00 = Snack and any last minute prep for the girls. (tbc)
- 18:00 onwards = Promise Celebration (tbc)

Attachment 3
Programme Budget

Income

Fees 19 x £36 + 1 x £24 £708.00

Programme Expenditure

Materials £174.83

Food and party £95.37

Equipment £41.84

Badges & Books £150.00

T shirts £98.00

Postage £1.20

Activities £66.00

Total £627.24

Surplus to be carried forward £80.76

Covered by WPA grant

Student leader expenses (travel and food)

Leader clothing (carried forward)

Cowley donation for use of hall

Giant Jenga and bag