



# ADVANCING CHRIST'S KINGDOM

**Annual Report  
June 2024**

# Introduction



The past year has been one of significant change in the structure of Boys' Brigade in Northern Ireland. In June 2023 the membership overwhelmingly endorsed the proposal to exit from Boys' Brigade UK & Rol and set up as an independent entity.

Still part of the worldwide movement of Boys' Brigade, The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade (BBNI), a charity registered in NI (NIC109663) and a company limited by guarantee (NI694162) assumed sole responsibility for Boys' Brigade in NI and Donegal on 1st September 2023.

BBNI has benefitted from grant funding which has extended the services offered.

- Education Authority (2 grants) - contributes towards staff salaries, programme activities and a specific investment in recognising and developing volunteers.
- Dormant Accounts Grant - staff and trustee development, IT investment and Step Up/ Young Leaders' activities.
- Reta Lila Foundation - provides 'programme extras' and battalion activity days in certain locations.
- Rank Foundation - funds Admin & Media Assistant role.



**ADVANCING  
CHRIST'S  
KINGDOM**

Rooted in Christian faith, the charity's objects as detailed in the Articles of Association are:

- (1) The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among Boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness;
- (2) To encourage the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of children and young people so that they may achieve their full potential and, as responsible citizens, therefore to improve society; and
- (3) To be responsible for setting up and supervising local companies and grouping such companies into battalions to facilitate meeting these objects.

**We have this HOPE as an anchor for the soul,  
a hope both SURE and STEADFAST.**

Hebrews 6:19

# Thank You



Well, what a year it has been!

From the launch of the BBNI podcast to various 'thank you' events, culminating in a fabulous night at The National Football Stadium at Windsor Park. All of these were attended by our leaders who turn up every week to share the good news of Jesus to the children and young people in our companies.

From all the trustees and myself, we say Thank YOU!

We also pass on our sincere thanks to our Delivery Committee, Panel Chairs, Panel Members and our ever-growing staff team.

I recently took part in a leader training event at Newport and was struck anew by the passion and commitment of our leaders both old and new, and also how there is a great sense of expectancy in BBNI as to what God is doing and still to do.

It is now clearer than ever that BBNI is a great tool for churches across Northern Ireland and Donegal to reach children and young people with the good news of Jesus. As we develop our strategy one thing you can be sure of is that we will continue to engage with, and equip our leaders to ensure we provide resources, programme and support that ensure Christ's Kingdom will continue to be advanced.

Glen Miller  
Chair, The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade



# MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT



As per capitation return

**246**

BB Companies  
in NI &  
Donegal

**2,485**

Volunteer Leaders

**11,357**

Children & Young People  
attending each week



**ANCHORS**

**Junior**

**Company**

**Seniors**

P1-P4

**4,619**

P5-P7

**3,237**

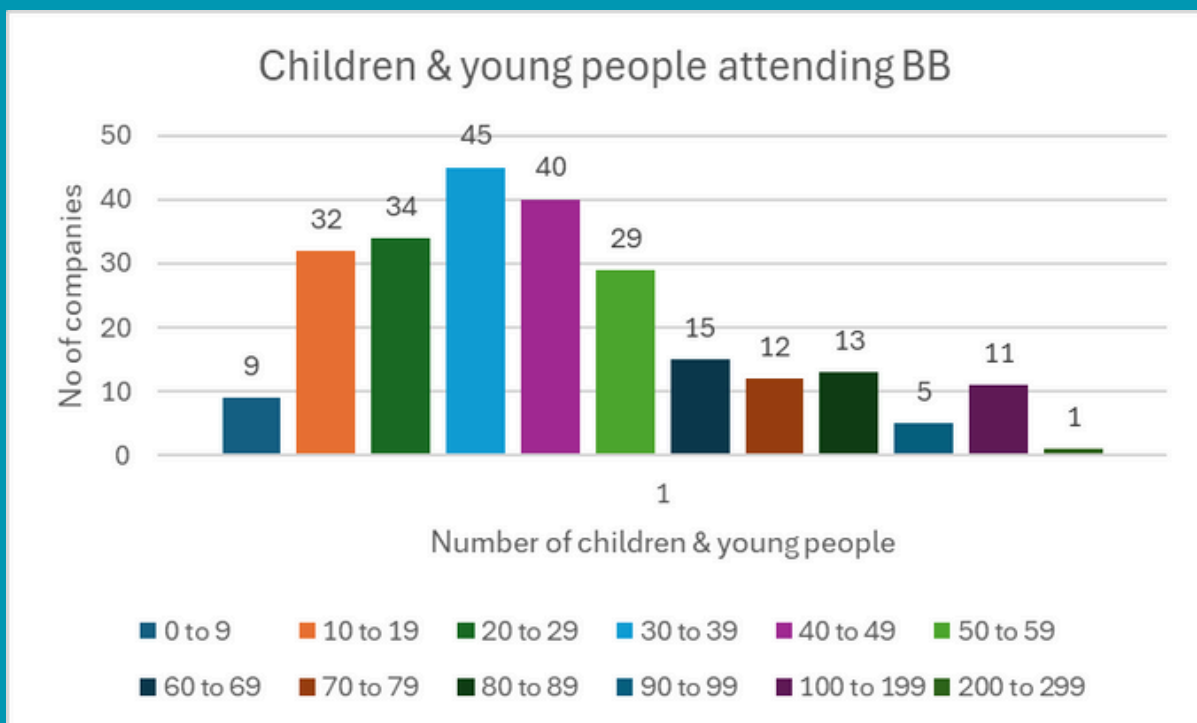
Y8 - Y12

**2,296**

Y12-Y14

**1,205**

## CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE



# A Year in Numbers



# 78

Volunteers work together with staff on various committees and panels to ensure that best practice is developed, agreed and shared throughout the organisation.

- Trustees
- Delivery Committee
- Training Panel
- CECR Panel (Christian Education and Church Relations)
- Sectional Panels - Anchors, Juniors, Company & Seniors
- Connect (Young Leaders Panel)

# 35

Leaders delivered training at adult courses and Queen's Badge courses.

# 11

New trainers were involved this year.

# 434

New volunteer leaders registered August '23- May '24

Note: Some of these leaders may previously have been involved with BB, but not registered.

# 439

Young people awarded President's Badge

# 197

Young people awarded Queen's Badge

Figures from Sept '23 to May '24

## DofE Achievements

As a Licensed Operator, the BBNI staff team provide training and support for leaders to enable between 150 and 200 boys to complete DofE awards each year.

## Bronze

## Silver

## Gold

# 76

# 74

# 25

Figures from Sept '23 to May '24

# Training



Course	Date	Attendance
Step Up	23-Jul-23	35
Autism Awareness	21-Nov-23	44
Safeguarding	15-Nov-23	56
BBNI Leader Training	25-Nov-23	46
Captains Training	10-Jan-24	5
Gambling Awareness	24-Jan-24	13
Safeguarding	05-Feb-24	52
DofE Training	19-Feb-24	24
First Aid	09-Mar-24	9
BBNI Leader Training	09-Mar-24	37
DofE Training	13-Mar-24	18
Battalion First Aid Training (funded by BBNI)	Various	63
EA Funding Workshop	10-Apr-24	28
EA Funding Workshop	17-Apr-24	10
Autism Awareness	18-Apr-24	31
Expedition & Outdoor Leadership	21-Apr-24	27
EA Funding Workshop	29-Apr-24	27
Captains Training	02-May-24	5
BBNI Leader Training	18-May-24	46
Safeguarding	22-May-24	28
<b>Adult Overall Total for Year</b>		<b>604</b>



“Great meeting new people, food lovely, lots of examples of resources to bring back and do in BB. Gave me motivation for next year!”

“It was good to hear from other BB leaders and how their companies operate, as well as learning about some elements of BB that I didn't know.”

“A well organised and informative session! Enjoyed finding out the materials I hadn't been using!”

“Was good to get refreshed as it's been years since I did my original course.”

“Fantastic training that has helped refresh my enthusiasm and encouraged me for working with BB.”

“An encouraging and challenging experience that prepares and guides us in advancing Christ's kingdom. Very enjoyable and has given lots of information and ideas to take back to my company. ”

“Good to learn how to effectively share my faith and what to do when a child wants to give their life to the Lord. ”

# Young Person Training



Course	Date	Attendance
Skills for QB	18-Nov-23	34
Skills for QB	19-Nov-23	37
Skills for QB	13-Jan-24	35
Skills for QB	14-Jan-24	36
Skills for QB	24-Feb-24	38
Skills for QB	25-Feb-24	40
QB Completion	27-Jan-24	23
QB Completion	28-Jan-24	18
QB Completion	10-Feb-24	36
QB Completion	11-Feb-24	36
QB Completion	16-Mar-24	42
QB Completion	17-Mar-24	42
Youth Overall Total for Year		417



# NEW

Aside from the introduction of a new suite of policies developed specifically to align with our new governance arrangements, a number of new initiatives were developed by staff and panels. Many of these were in response to feedback gained from engagement with leaders.



Item	What's New
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New course developed for BBNI to replace YLT. Course delivered on one day and offered at £15 (early bird) or £20 per person.</li><li>• Captains training redeveloped.</li><li>• Autism training delivered by Eden Consultancy.</li><li>• Gambling Awareness training developed and delivered by GamCare.</li><li>• New elements introduced to Queen's Badge training course.</li><li>• First Aid training funded by BBNI and delivered through battalions.</li></ul>
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy developed in consultation with safeguarding leads from main church denominations.</li><li>• New one hour Zoom training designed to complement church training.</li><li>• Church Designated Officers were written to, advising them of the change of policy.</li><li>• Policy documents were shared with EA and ETI in advance of 1st September.</li></ul>
Capitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rate reduced for 23/24 and further reduction proposed for 24/25.</li><li>• Capitation process simplified with introduction of new online form.</li><li>• We received full payment from all companies.</li></ul>
Newport Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refurbishment of training room to create a more youth friendly space.</li><li>• Upgrades to our network and Wi-Fi infrastructure to improve operational resilience and ensure reliable connectivity within Newport for both staff &amp; guests. (IT investment funded through Dormant Accounts Grant.)</li><li>• Investment in the Audio-Visual setup to enhance the experience in the Nevin Hall and the quality of training we can offer.</li></ul>
The BBNI Podcast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creation of podcast studio at Newport</li><li>• Podcast launched with 12 episodes and over 1,500 listens.</li><li>• Podcast enables us to invite guests to share their journey of leadership and faith and extends the reach of BB beyond the membership.</li></ul>



Item	What's New
Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full range of activities produced to complement scripture teaching for all age groups.</li> <li>• Programme Extras – range of activity providers booked for several BB companies. These included drums, sports, arts and crafts, online safety and mental health workshops.</li> </ul>
Thanking Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank you gift for all volunteers.</li> <li>• Thank you event for office bearers and volunteers that serve on panels and committees.</li> <li>• Thank you event for leaders involved in training and DofE.</li> <li>• Thank you event for leaders, attended by 150 volunteers. It was wonderful to have many attendees who do not regularly engage with BBNI activities and some travelled from the far side of Enniskillen to attend.</li> <li>• New BBNI badge sent to all leaders.</li> </ul>
Digital Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New website launched.</li> <li>• Customised logos designed for every BB company and battalion.</li> <li>• Social media extended to include LinkedIn.</li> </ul>
Strategy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of new strategy for BBNI which will be launched in September '24.</li> <li>• Strategy workshops held with Trustees, Delivery Committee and Staff.</li> <li>• Chaplains' breakfasts held in Omagh, Newport and Coleraine with great input gained for the strategy.</li> <li>• Consultation survey sent to all BB leaders - responses gave valuable feedback to add to our ongoing leader engagement.</li> </ul>
Increased support with EA application process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivered 3 webinars on EA funding with 65 leaders attending</li> <li>• Delivered 13 individual 1-1 sessions with companies</li> <li>• Ad-hoc phone/ email support with numerous companies</li> </ul>
BBNI Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of BBNI Family which aims to connect people with the BB network in NI who want to support the work in prayer and with an annual financial contribution.</li> </ul>



# What does Boys' Brigade mean to the children & young people?

All quotes from  
BB leaders



"A sense of belonging, self worth. Bible teaching. Fun and friendship a safe place for them to be."

"Boys' Brigade is a fun place where the boys come together to learn about God and enjoy themselves with their friends and learn and take part in activities they normally wouldn't do at home."

" A space for them to meet, make new friendships/ build ones already made and hopefully learn new skills etc."

"A place to attend each week where they can be themselves in a safe, happy and controlled space . Where they can engage in a variety of interesting, challenging and fun activities as well as experience a sense of adventure through trips, overnights, weekends away, camps and DofE."

"To them BB is a place to see friends, to play games, hear stories, take part in activities and have fun. It's also a place where they get to feel safe, loved, respected and valued. They get to see regardless of home life and situation outside of BB that their leaders and most importantly God loves and cares about them."

"An outlet to grow and learn things they would not necessarily be taught at school."

"The Boys' Brigade is a fun and exciting organisation which allows the boys to be themselves, have fun and learn new things in a safe and caring environment. They enjoy learning new things and learning more about God and they just enjoy making friends developing themselves."

"Fun and friendship."

"It is a fun way to spend an evening with friends and others, where they also get to hear from the Bible. It is a safe environment where the leaders care for, and look out for the boys."

"First item on the programme every week is Christian Faith - they know that is one of the things that sets BB apart from other organisations. They know it as a place with variety, the badge programme encourages this; equality of opportunity; fairness and with a required standard of conduct."

# What does Boys' Brigade mean to you as a leader?

All quotes from  
BB leaders

"I have been a leader in Anchor Boys for over 30 years and love how the enthusiasm for Boys' Brigade hasn't diminished over the years."

"To provide a safe environment for the boys to make friends, take part in all aspects of BB and to learn about the love of Jesus and hope that a seed of Christianity will be sown in their lives."

"It is a wonderful organisation which allows us Leaders to try to help the boys grow and develop a relationship with God. It is also an opportunity for us to try to help them navigate the world we live in today as well as providing an evening of fun and fellowship."

"Safe space for children to learn new skills, develop character and grow in faith! As a leader, an opportunity to give back and play a small part in extending God's kingdom through the mission of BB."

"Boys' Brigade is a steadfast organisation which teaches boys how to live their lives through Christian principles and teachings.

It is a chance for us to teach the boys different skills and attributes which they can use in their lives as they grow and develop and the activities are so beneficial to them as they grow up. It is a disciplined but fun way to teach the boys God's ways in their lives and gives them a fantastic start in their young lives."

"A place where boys can come together safely and learn about God and practical things in life like first aid, loyalty friendship etc"

"It's a privilege to be a leader and to serve God in the BB ... never a chore."



# Coming Soon....

- Dedicated online area for accessing BBNI resources
- Ulster Scots resource pack for all age groups
- God's Masterpiece - a series of activities and programme ideas
- Inclusion Toolkit - tips and techniques for working with children and young people with additional needs
- Enrolment Pack - a resource to help churches and companies plan an enrolment service
- The Beatitudes - scripture teaching and activities for all age groups
- The Anchor - a Bible resource created in partnership with LMI
- Series 3 of The BBNI Podcast
- Back to BB - series of video to equip leaders for the new session



**BBNI**  
THE NORTHERN IRELAND BOYS' BRIGADE

