

Case studies

Hannah Thomas-Davies, 1st Brick Lane Guide leader

Hannah moved to London just over a year ago and signed up to setting up a new Unit with Youth United before securing a job in the capital. She now works as a town planner for a property consultancy in the West End by day and spends her evenings leading 1st Brick Lane Guides.

Hannah first became involved in Guiding as a Brownie, aged 9 and she enjoyed camping trips with the Guides until she was 14. Hannah returned to Guiding at university through the Student Scout and Guide Organisation (SSAGO), who connected her up with a friendly unit in Cardiff where she achieved her leadership qualification.

Guiding provides Hannah with an opportunity to indulge in her favourite things; enjoying being outdoors, do-it-yourself activities and eating toasted marshmallows.

Lionel Brooks, Leader of the 1st Hackney Boy's Brigade

Lionel is the leader of the junior section at 1st Hackney Boys' Brigade at the New Testament Church of God. A fairly new section, starting their Boys Brigade journey in May 2014 and in a short time have registered 56 young people.

Lionel said:

"It is an absolute pleasure to have the opportunity to work in the community that I grew up in.

"During my time with The Boys' Brigade, I have learned to be more creative, disciplined and diligent in my works. Working as a mentor in a secondary school, I have found these skills to transfer perfectly.

"It has been a challenge that I have enjoyed rising to and I look forward to many more exciting, challenging and God blessed years working with the wonderfully unpredictable young people of Hackney (and who knows where else)."

Michael Berrisford, Commanding Officer at 235 (City of Stoke-on-Trent) Air Training Corps

"I first joined the Air Training Corps in 1994 after seeing 238 (Hartshill) Sqn (Squadron) in the Hanley shopping centre handing out leaflets for new cadets. I went down the following Tuesday night and was hooked from the first

moment. I stayed in the cadets for 3 years where I left as my college work was getting rather full and keeping me working late most nights.

“Being a volunteer in this organisation is exciting to say the least, different things are happening all the time, from teaching in a classroom to playing sports with the cadets, kayaking, walking going on camps. I wanted to be one of those people that helped with the youth of today develop into something they thought they could never be.

“As an officer I can make sure that no opportunity is being passed up, we can't force things onto people however, what we try and do is encourage. I am always trying to do the same things as the cadets as I believe you should lead by example, I find this helps them succeed.

“I feel that with the organisation we have the youth of today will always have support throughout their lives. They make new friends from all over the country with the different camps they go on and different competitions we do.

“I have had some cadets that people say are trouble makers and people have given up with them, we take them and give them rules and regulations to live by but, unlike school – as we on individual squadrons have a lot less to deal with – we can give more time and energy to some that struggle. It is rewarding for me when I speak to parents and they thank the staff for how their son/daughter has changed, not only at home but at school.

“All the volunteers are just that, we give up our time to help others. The reward is that we get to see 12 and 13 year olds grow into adults and knowing that we had something to do with how they turned out.”