



The Bridge of Don Brigade
Trustees' Annual Report
August 2025 to July 2026

Contact information

Your charity's name: The Bridge of Don Brigade

Scottish Charity Number: SC050686

Address: 10 Forvie Way, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen

Postcode: AB22 8TJ

Telephone number: 07891 605 333

Email address: contact@bridgeofdon.org.uk

Website: www.bridgeofdon.org.uk

Charity Trustees

1. Brian Robb
2. David Gray
3. Stuart Shand
4. Allan Cunningham
5. Cameron Garden
6. Neil Tough
7. Nicola Adam
8. Ross Edgley

Governance

We have a written constitution and are registered with OSCR.

Trustee appointment

None

Objectives and activities

The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among young people and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-Respect and all that tends towards a true Christian way of life.

We are a uniformed co-ed youth organisation focused on promoting a positive disciplined outdoor life and developing each and every member of our organisation regardless of their ability to achieve all they can and to enjoy their time with us, showing improved communication skills, teamwork, physical fitness, new skills being achieved, self-development and confidence as a young person. Children have the choice to participate in activities and have a voice in the type of activities that are led to ensure maximum engagement. We deliver Duke of Edinburgh awards, and John Muir awards and spend time in the Cairngorms National Park on frequent trips and the outdoors in the Bridge of Don area of Aberdeen. We meet weekly and in addition undertake weekend residential camps, promoting nature conservation and STEM programmes.

We are an entirely self-funded charity, and our outdoor trips require specialise equipment and the use of our own minibus. We work to reduce barriers to participation such as socioeconomic status.

We aim to benefit the youth within our organisation, the youth in our community and all within our local catchment area who see how important the work we do is. Our volunteers receive training and improve their own personal skills when working in an intergenerational environment. With over 98 members aged between 5 - 18 years old we reach hundreds of friends and family, wider community groups, and other Youth Groups and demonstrate how the image of young of young people can be different to what some have. All too often young people are seen to be lazy, trouble making, threats, up to no good and not a key part of the local community. Through working with local groups, churches and Aberdeen Council we actively encourage the young people to talk, take part in organised events going some way to change people's views to show how young people can add value to their local community. One example is when the young people attend Aboyne Highland Games to act as programme sellers & gate marshal. Here they interact with people from around the local area, tourist from many countries and young people from many different backgrounds. Within our organisation, we support a number of young people who have varying needs and/or challenges. We understand that all children have had different experiences and upbringings, and we ensure that staff give the children the best experience.

Achievements and performance

Member numbers of children and young people have increased over the year.

We still have healthy numbers of members which remains extremely healthy for a uniformed Christian organisation in a climate with all uniformed organisations seeing a big downturn in membership and a large number closing their doors.

We currently have a membership of 98 children and young people

We currently have 16 volunteers. Recruitment of volunteers is still a challenge as seen across the board with other uniformed organisations. New PVG legislation may still cause issues however this has not been so through the support of Brian Fowler and St Columba's Church.

Annual Camps

Camp 1 2026

At the start of May 2026, forty-five members attended a 3-day 2-night residential weekend at Newtonmore Active Outdoor Adventure centre. This was provided at no cost to any family.

Again a huge achievement for The Bridge of Don Brigade. Many positive feedback comments from the children. At least 30 have taken part in activities they would not have attempted if not for the weekend. More than 25 families have said they have seen an improvement in the young people's mental health and wellbeing. Many of the families again commented that they would not have been able to afford to send their children and young people if we were not able to provide the camp for free.



Camp 2 2026

Friday 12th June 2026 marked a major milestone for The Bridge of Don Brigade.

Thirty-four young people and volunteers departed from Aberdeen Airport on our very first international residential weekend, travelling to Amsterdam.

This achievement is the result of many hours of dedication, planning, and coordination by our volunteers, who worked tirelessly with airlines, venues, coach providers, and the young people themselves to make this exciting trip a reality.

Unfortunately, we had two very late call offs on the day of departure which was costly to The Brigade in the region of £1,400. Recovery of these costs is ongoing.

Weekly Meetings

During the period we have held the following activity evenings along with our regular weekly meetings:

- Christmas crafting
- Cinema trip
- Bouncy castle evening
- Play Park visits
- Biscuit decorating
- Pancake making
- Sandwich making
- Basic cooking skills evening
- Take away evening
- Pizza evenings
- Crafting

We still experience a very challenging trend within the older young people's attendance levels. Very irregular attendance occurring unless there is a specific free event or free activity, they wish to take part in. This was clearly visible when 45 young people attended the cinema trip just before Christmas, usual attendance numbers were 30 in the weeks prior.

All volunteers continue to be offered online training in various topics related to the work we do each week. Currently 39% have completed 1 or more modules.

Financial review

As an organisation we endeavour to retain a reserve of approximately £7,500 to cover any unexpected expenses. Our operating costs per year are in the region of £6,500 - £7,500 excluding annual camp(s) costs and this income is ring fenced.

Fee donations from all families have shown a healthy increase with more paying by monthly standing order and more paying slightly more than the requested amount.

We have seen a decrease in families asking for discount and delayed payments.

We are constantly indebted to The Bridge of Don Brigade's volunteers and members families for identifying potential areas or applications for Charitable Donations.

Future plans

We continue to plan a varied range of activities for the children and young people. We do plan to look at other types of experiences for the children and young people with a committee being formed to discuss future plans.

Additional information

We are always looking for personal recommendations for volunteers to join our organisation. Please can all volunteers actively ask parents, work colleagues, neighbour and friends if they wish to be a volunteer.

Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Print name BRIAN ROBB

Designation Trustee & Secretary

Date 10th July 2026