



We run the 180th Brownie Unit which normally meets in St John's primary school. Our unit is made up of 4 voluntary leaders, 1 young leader and 24 girls aged between 7 and 10 years old.

At our weekly meetings the girls play games, do various craft activities, work towards Brownie badges and develop skills setting them up for the future whilst focussing mainly on ensuring they are having fun. We also try to take them on a sleepover or weekend away at least once a year.

Like many organisations we had to rethink how best to meet the girls needs during COVID. As we were unable to use the school we had our Brownie meetings in the Figgate park but had to stop in October from poor weather and dark evenings. We managed to meet on the beach in December for a campfire which the girls enjoyed and since then we focused on providing activities and keeping the girls engaged.

We know the girls miss meeting up as they all come from different schools in Portobello so have not had the chance to see each other at school and there are strong friendship bonds with their friends from Brownies.

As we are a voluntary charitable organisation each year we fundraise by Christmas carol singing in Morrisons and Asda in December. The public are always very generous and we raise enough money to give the girls a well earned treat before we break up for the summer holidays. We also sing at community or school fairs within the area and spend a day singing at a local nursing home. We have regularly taken part in litter picks as we take pride in the fact we are a part of the Portobello community and many Portobello residents may know us or recognise us from our work within the community.

This year we were unable to do any carol singing or our usual fundraising due to COVID-19 and as we still have to pay for census with Girlguiding covering insurance and other things, our bank account is empty!!!

We understand this is a very tough time for many but this pandemic has especially hit clubs like ours hard. There are other units who have simply had to close and we do not want to let this happen to our unit because we have been a staple within the Portobello area for 88 years.

We are hoping that an outing in the summer, just before the summer holidays, will be possible and give the girls something to look forward to after this very difficult year. Last summer we had booked a sleepover in JumpIn trampoline park but this was cancelled which the girls were very upset about. In previous years we have gone on summer trips including East Links family park, Blair Drummond safari park, Deep Sea World and many more.

Any money we were allocated would go towards a summer trip for the girls to attend hopefully and restore some normality back into their lives and also pay for craft supplies for once we can get back into the school to allow the girls to do fun activities again.