

## **Opening a Brownie unit**

Hi everyone, I am Amber and I have just started to write blogs for The Guiding Vibe! A few things about me; I am 19, I live in Cheshire and I work as an Assistant Buyer where I am completing a L4 Apprenticeship in Buying and Merchandising. I have been involved in Guiding nearly my whole life and I can't wait to share it with everyone through these blogs. I started Rainbows when I was 4, and have been involved in every section growing up. I became a Young Leader for my Guide unit once I turned 14, then did my LDP at a Brownie unit in a neighbouring district. I went on to become a fully qualified leader and still volunteer at both of those units. I am also completing my Queen's Guide Award, as well as my Going Away License, and on top of everything I have just opened my own Brownie unit which I am going to share some details about in this blog!

The Brownie unit I opened was actually the one I went to as a Brownie! It unfortunately closed just after Covid-19, leaving 2 other units open in the district but they soon developed big waiting lists as everyone was returning to Guiding post-Covid. I always knew I wanted to open my own Brownie unit one day - that day ended up being a lot sooner than I thought!

My Brownie unit is a feeder to a Guide unit. This was a big factor in me deciding to open a unit, as it means the girls will be used to the place we meet as well as the leaders, and will hopefully feel more comfortable moving up to Guides once they turn 10. Another reason I chose to open a unit is to give as many girls as possible in our area an opportunity to experience Brownies, to make memories and new friends.

At the moment we have 17 girls, increasing to 19 after Easter. For our first few meetings, we have been doing lots of activities based on getting to know each other and working on the Promise, building up to our Promise Party on the last meeting of term! I wanted to make sure that the girls knew how important the Promise was and make the party really special for them, hopefully creating a memorable occasion.

It is a big decision to open your own unit as there is so much to consider, but at the same time it is so rewarding! Balancing everything means you need to be organised and work efficiently, but once you are in the swing of things everything falls into place and it is honestly so much fun. You get to meet so many new people and know you are making a difference!

Being a Young Leader, Leader in Training and now Leader means that since turning 14, I have had a great space to work on my leadership skills. Starting by just running games, then working up to planning and executing entire meetings has really pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me grow in confidence, and has given me valuable, transferable skills I can use both in and out of Girlguiding.