



# you

L N D O N

# NEWS

JUNE 2025



## VE DAY 80 COMMEMORATIONS





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Young people in uniformed youth groups from around the UK played a pivotal role in helping the country mark 80 years since VE Day, the end of the Second World War in Europe on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945. The war in Asia would continue for another three months – and there will be further commemorations on 15<sup>th</sup> August – but in Europe, the fighting was over.

The nation's commemorations saw a military parade from Parliament Square in Westminster along The Mall to Buckingham Palace followed by an RAF flypast on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May. A marching contingent of young people, led by the London Massed Bugle Band of the Boys' Brigade, participated in the parade and a lucky few got to watch from the VVIP enclosure on the Queen Victoria Memorial outside Buckingham Palace.



Tuesday evening saw the unveiling of the return of the ceramic poppy display to the Tower of London, and again London's young people were out in force. Cadets from City of London SCC, Albyn's School CCF, Wilson's School CCF, Lambeth and Southwark LFB Fire Cadets, 31 (Tower Hamlets) and 329 (Finsbury) Squadrons RAFAC and Tower Hamlets VPC represented their organisations with professionalism, warmth and pride to welcome and support VIPs, veterans and their families in such an important commemorative setting.





# VE DAY 80 COMMEMORATIONS

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May, a morning service was held in Westminster Abbey to celebrate and commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day, attended by 150 representatives of uniformed youth groups...



...followed by a concert on Horse Guards Parade in the evening, where again young people were well represented.





# BOYS' BRIGADE AWARDS

On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January, Boys' Brigade London District were thrilled to welcome over 160 young people, parents/carers and leaders to their spectacular Awards Celebration. Hosted at the iconic City Hall, with wonderful views overlooking the Royal Docks, the event recognised and celebrated the incredible, diverse achievements of Boys' Brigade young people and their dedicated leaders, highlighting their hard work and outstanding contributions.

Boys' Brigade London District were honoured to have two special guests: Craig Haslam, Deputy Lieutenant, and Jonathan Eales, Chief Executive of The Boys' Brigade UK & Rol. A remarkable 82 recipients were celebrated with awards including the prestigious King's/Queen's Badge, President's Badge, Jack Petchey Achievement and Leader Awards, and Deputy Lieutenant Certificates.



After the event, recipients had access to a small grant to help them make a day of it. Groups took the chance to do a range of activities including going for lunch, walking over the O2 Arena, riding the Thames Cable Car, and going for a boat trip.

The Awards Celebration was a resounding success, and Boys' Brigade London District are thrilled that this will now be an annual highlight!

## KING'S BADGE PRESENTATIONS

Seven young people from 1<sup>st</sup> Barnet Boys' Brigade were presented with their King's Badge in The Alderman's Court Room at The Guildhall on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June. The badges were presented by His Majesty's Lieutenant Alderman Vincent Keaveny CBE KStJ KCSG, 693<sup>rd</sup> Lord Mayor of the City of London (2021-2022).

The King's Badge is the highest award a member of the Boys' Brigade or Girls' Association can gain. It aims to challenge and equip the individual, provide new opportunities and expand horizons by encouraging young people to engage with the local community, take on responsibility, develop new skills and interests, set personal goals, build self-confidence and experience a sense of achievement.





# YOU CROYDON CHALLENGE

On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June, over 60 young people from Girlguiding Croydon, Royal Russell School CCF, 66 (Croydon) Squadron RAFAC, Croydon Scouting, Croydon Sea Cadets and Croydon VPC took part in a number of challenges generously hosted, as always, by Royal Russell School. In what has now become an annual day of sunshine, the young people competed in mixed teams to conduct a police area search, move objects from one place to another without touching them, cross a 'minefield' and construct the tallest tower they could (using the STEM kit provided), amongst others. The winning red team were presented with Gold YOU London pin badges by the Civic Mayor of Croydon, Councillor Richard Chatterjee.





# TROOPING THE COLOUR YOUTH ENCLOSURES

On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June and Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June, young people from around the country were given the opportunity to watch Trooping the Colour, the King's Birthday Parade and the full-scale dress rehearsal the weekend before, the Colonel's Review.

In a dedicated safe space brilliantly run and organised by the Metropolitan Police Service, young people had a prime spot on the corner of The Mall and Horse Guards Road to watch the military and Royal procession as it passed. Scouts, Guides, Boys' and Girls' Brigades, Army, Air, Sea, Police and St John Ambulance Cadets travelled from Colchester, Stafford, Derbyshire and Dorset to watch this impressive ceremonial display – although the prize for travelling the furthest has to go to 4<sup>th</sup> Lossiemouth Boys' Brigade who travelled from Moray. Being escorted up The Mall to watch the Royal balcony appearance and RAF fly past was an experience some will never forget!





# TROOPING THE COLOUR YOUTH ENCLOSURES





# VOLUNTEERING CONFERENCE

On Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, YOU London in conjunction with The Lady Mayoress of the City of London, Florence King, delivered an inspiring conference on employee volunteering in the City, kindly hosted by the Worshipful Company of Leathersellers. The conference looked at some of the barriers and benefits to companies of employee volunteering, and ways to better articulate the benefits of uniformed youth groups to society.



Many uniformed youth groups in London have waiting lists due to a shortage of adult volunteers. Corporate-supported volunteering can have a meaningful impact on these groups, particularly those dependent on a few committed individuals to provide mentorship, life skills and safe spaces for young people to grow and develop.

Speakers at the conference emphasised how freeing employees to volunteer can not only strengthen local communities but also foster a sense of purpose and engagement within the workplace. There is

evidence that businesses which encourage volunteering gain from increased employee satisfaction, well-being and productivity, greater team collaboration and positive brand reputation. One in three job seekers say they would prefer to apply for roles that offer volunteer leave.

The Scouts, Girlguiding, Sea Cadets and St John Ambulance have joined together to campaign for a right to request up to 35 hours of paid volunteer leave each year. The Scouts have a waiting list of c. 100,000 young people nationally, for which they need around 40,000 more volunteers. Paid volunteer leave would make it easier for adults to volunteer during the working day, or leave work early to travel to a youth group, without losing pay.

In addition to delivering face-to-face activities, volunteers are also needed for administrative support to aid planning and act as trustees and treasurers; roles which can often be done in their own time or as part of a company employee volunteering scheme. There are countless opportunities for volunteers to support uniformed youth groups, dependent on their skill set and time available.



Clear messages that came out of the conference included:

- Uniformed youth groups are adapting to provide team-based flexible volunteering; many people would volunteer just 1-2 hours a month if given the opportunity.
- There is a need to simplify the DBS system and provide clearer guidance for volunteers.
- Research is needed to better understand the value proposition to employers of employee volunteering; a clear return on investment for employers needs to be quantified.
- More needs to be done to articulate the beneficial gain to young people, adult volunteers, society and businesses of employee volunteering that supports structured youth activities.

A big thank you to all our guest speakers: Florence King, Lady Mayoress of the City of London; Gary Langley, Honorary Colonel Middlesex and North West London Army Cadet Force; Dominic Pinkney, report author 'London Vision for Volunteering'; CJ Ledger, UK Deputy Chief Volunteer for the Scouts; Margaret Casely-Hayford CBE, Patron of the Girls' Brigade and Patron of the Leathersellers' Academy Schools' Supporting Trust; Silviya Kaiser-Davies, Surrey Army Cadet Force and Wing Commander Taz Bhachoo, Officer Commanding Middlesex Wing RAFAC.



# YOU LONDON IS A CHARITY!



**YOU London became a registered charity on 8 August 2024, with registered charity number 1209504.**

This will enable us to seek charitable funding to be able to offer even more opportunities to young people in London, over and above what they are already doing with their respective organisations. Each year, YOU London organises dedicated youth enclosures to watch Trooping the Colour, a leadership development weekend in partnership with a London school, a float

in the Lord Mayor's Show and various competitions and showcase events at borough level.

Costs and administration are kept to a minimum. A part-time central co-ordinator liaises between the partner organisations, signposting opportunities, lobbying stakeholders, facilitating collaboration and raising awareness of the continual need for adult volunteers. YOU London volunteers co-ordinate activities and the sharing of information and resources at borough level. More funding will enable us to do more and become even more effective.

If you know of an organisation or business that would like to support uniformed youth groups in London, please contact Debbie Wilkinson at [youlondon1@gmail.com](mailto:youlondon1@gmail.com) or 07801 720 288.



We are also now registered with JustGiving. Why not undertake a sponsored activity to raise funding for YOU London?

## NORMAN'S FUNDRAISER FOR YOU LONDON

Maj Norman Fontaine-Thompson, Officer Commanding 15 Company, South West London Army Cadet Force will participate in the London T100 Triathlon on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> August to fundraise for YOU London.

The London T100 Triathlon starts and finishes at the ExCel Centre in London's Docklands. This Olympic distance triathlon involves a 1.5km swim in the Royal Victoria Dock, a 40km bike ride as far as Big Ben passing several London landmarks including the London Eye, Tower Bridge and the Tower of London, and a 10km run through the Docklands. This diverse course not only challenges athletes with its urban terrain but also offers breathtaking views of the city's historical and cultural landmarks.

Maj Fontaine-Thompson completed his first triathlon just one year ago in July 2024 in order to lose some weight and challenge himself. Since then, he has completed 6 Sprint Triathlons (0.75km swim, 20km bike and 5km run) and gone from 176Kg to 117Kg in 18 months. This will be his first Olympic distance triathlon – double the distance of anything he has done before and therefore a much greater challenge.

Please consider sponsoring Maj Fontaine-Thompson to raise vital funds to enable YOU London to continue to deliver events that benefit members of uniformed youth groups in London: [Norman's fundraiser for YOU London](#)

More information on the London T100 Triathlon and the routes can be found here: [London T100 Triathlon](#). Why not go and cheer him on?





# GL RFCA AWARDS

On 13<sup>th</sup> March, 49 London Cadets, Reservists and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers were recognised by the Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London, Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE, for outstanding service to London's Reserve and Cadet units.

To Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, the Lord-Lieutenant presented certificates for 'Meritorious Service to London's Cadets', 'Commendation for Adult Instructors to London's Cadet Movement', 'Commendation for Civilian Instructors to London's Cadet movement', 'Most Outstanding Sea Cadet Corps Unit Commander', 'Most Outstanding Royal Marines Cadet Detachment Commander', 'Most Outstanding Army Cadet Force Detachment Commander', 'Most Outstanding RAF Air Cadets Squadron Commander', 'Most Outstanding CCF Contingent Commander' and 'Most Outstanding CCF Section Commander'.

He also appointed four Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets for 2025, one each from the Sea, Army, Air and CCF Cadets.



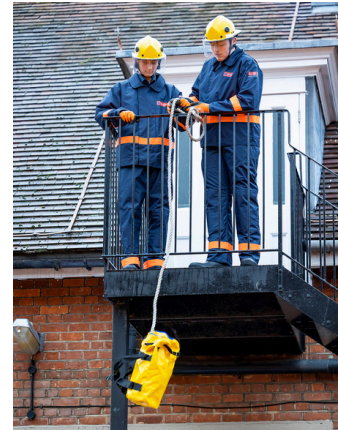


# YOU LONDON LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



This year's YOU London Leadership Development Conference will take place at Trinity School in Croydon over the weekend of 1-2 November.

This inspiring weekend of motivational talks and practical challenges is designed to stimulate and develop leadership skills in 15 to 17 year olds. Look out for more details through your chain of command in the coming weeks...



## BROMLEY 60 IN 60



Bromley Scouts have launched a '60 for 60' initiative, aiming to recruit 60 new volunteers this year to celebrate the London Borough of Bromley's 60th anniversary. Leaders and young people from Bromley District Scouts met the Mayor, Councillor David Jefferys, and local councillors to promote the launch of '60 for 60' at Bromley Civic Centre on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

Bromley Scout District is the largest in the UK, with over 3,000 active young people enjoying activities each week, made possible thanks to the many volunteer leaders. But they still need more. With waiting lists for places, new volunteers are sought for any level of contribution, from occasional evenings lending a hand, to helping with adventures on camp. Those with skills, hobbies or an interesting job that could be shared with a local group are especially sought.

But it is not just in Bromley that more volunteers are needed. Every Scout District in London has waiting lists of young people wanting to join. More volunteers will give more young people the chance to enjoy structured activities that will provide them with skills for life. Volunteers do not need previous Scouting experience as training and guidance will be given following the necessary DBS safeguarding checks. Find out more and discover your nearest Scout group via: [www.londonscouts.net](http://www.londonscouts.net).





# LONDON VISION FOR VOLUNTEERING

On 20<sup>th</sup> March, the London Volunteering Strategy Group launched the '[London Vision for Volunteering](#)'. This new report aims to provide a blueprint for developing volunteering in London. With 36 recommendations, the goal is to make meaningful change, while also understanding that more work and time will be needed in some areas.

The report was produced through collaboration with many stakeholders across London, including YOU London. Debbie Wilkinson, YOU London Co-ordinator, sits on the London Volunteering Strategy Group to represent the interests of the YOU partner organisations. She was delighted that Dwayne Fields, the UK's Chief Scout, agreed to write the foreword for this report and that Margaret Casely-Hayford CBE, Patron of Girls' Brigade Ministries provided a quote featured in the report.

The London Vision for Volunteering "*contains so much that I have advocated for many years. The recommendations are really positive and are sensibly directed to encourage, promote and support volunteering.*"

You can read the [summary report](#) or [full report](#) here. #LondonV4V.



MAYOR OF LONDON



## London Vision for Volunteering



A blueprint for developing volunteering in London

## THE IMPACT AND VALUE OF SCHOOL-BASED CADET UNITS



### The Impact and Value of School-Based Cadet Forces in the UK

Research Commissioned by the Ministry of Defence and the Combined Cadet Force Association



Simon Denny, Richard Huxford and Claire Peterson Young  
The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact  
The University of Northampton

March 2025

Young people who join the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) do better at school, have improved attendance and behaviour and are more likely to go to university, a new report has found.

The Ministry of Defence, in collaboration with the University of Northampton, launched [The Impact and Value of School-based Cadet Forces in the UK](#) in March. It highlights the transformative impact of the Cadet Forces on social mobility, employability and mental health, demonstrating the immense value cadets bring to wider society, but particularly to schools. The key findings are divided into two categories: Impact on the School and Impact on the Cadet.

### Impact on Schools

- Adds to enrichment offering helping to build character, resilience, practical skills and camaraderie in staff and students
- Significantly lower levels of absence
- Integral to some schools in attempting to reduce exclusions
- Develops positive relationships within the school environment
- Instrumental in creating a sense of community and belonging for students
- Access to additional opportunities and qualifications such as DofE, Vocational Qualifications and First Aid programmes
- Increase in teacher competence, confidence and understanding of pupils, resulting in better relations with them
- Reinforcement of values and standards of school

Overall, CCF contingents were seen as a significant resource investment for a school, but one that was a good investment for the school to make.

### Impact on Cadets

- Skills development
- Greater career aspirations
- Increased confidence and self-efficacy
- Positive wellbeing
- Greater resilience





## It's all about YOU...

The aim of YOU London is to work collaboratively to support young people by maximising the benefits of the existing youth organisations.

Working together takes many forms including inter-group competitions, sharing premises, sharing information, exhibiting together at recruitment events or simply being aware of who's who within each borough.

Working together often produces for the groups much more than the sum of the individual parts.

Organisation	Contact Name	Email Address
Army Cadet Force	Debbie Goodall	gl-se-ao2@rfca.org.uk
Boys' Brigade	Bethany Goddard	Bethany.Goddard@thebbinlondon.org.uk
LFB Fire Cadets	Johnny McDonald Millie Celeste	Jonathan.McDonald@london-fire.gov.uk Millie.Celeste@london-fire.gov.uk
Combined Cadet Force	Carl Crane	Carl.Crane934@mod.gov.uk
Girls' Brigade		
Girlguiding LaSER	Rachael Dixon	RachaelD@girlguidinglaser.org.uk
Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade	Anthony Moran	Anthony.Moran@jlgb.org
RAF Air Cadets	Squadron Leader Taz Bhachoo	Tarandeep.bhachoo100@rafac.mod.gov.uk
Scouts	Steve French	you@scoutslondon.org.uk
Sea Cadet Corps	Lt Cdr Cliff Lewis RNR	clewis@ms-sc.org
St John Ambulance Cadets	Rosemary Herbage (West London) Hazel Shirley (South London)	Rosemary.herbage1@sj.a.org.uk Hazel.shirley@sj.a.org.uk
Volunteer Police Cadets	Carol Young PC Paula Cooper PC Liam Masterson	Carol.Young@met.police.uk paula.cooper@met.police.uk Liam.Masterson@cityoflondon.police.uk
YOU London Co-ordinator	Debbie Wilkinson	youlondon1@gmail.com
YOU London Admin	Donna O'Halloran	gl-offcadets@rfca.mod.uk

## Z-CARDS

Fold out business-card sized 'Z-cards' which advertise all of the YOU London groups are available from Donna at [gl-offcadets@rfca.mod.uk](mailto:gl-offcadets@rfca.mod.uk).



## Upcoming dates:



- 18 Jun – YOU London Development Workers' meeting
- 28 Jun – Armed Forces Day
- 14 Aug – A Level results day
- 21 Aug – GCSE results day
- 8 Sep – YOU Lambeth and Southwark networking event
- 9 Sep – Emergency Services Day
- 17 Sep – YOU London Development Workers' meeting
- 1-2 Nov – YOU London Leadership Development Weekend
- 8 Nov – YOU London float in the Lord Mayor's Show
- 9 Nov – Remembrance Sunday
- 11 Nov – Remembrance Day
- 12 Nov tbc – YOU East London networking event
- 10 Dec – YOU London Development Workers' meeting
- 1 Jan – New Year's Day Parade

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of YOU London News, please send articles and images to [youlondon1@gmail.com](mailto:youlondon1@gmail.com) by 30 November 2025. We're particularly after stories of collaboration between 2 or 3 organisations of no more than 200 words with a good digital image of at least 500KB in size.