

February 2024



**Trefoil House
2 Ellis Street
Birmingham
B1 1HL**

Hello All,

How quickly January has flashed by. I hope you have all had fun being back with your units or if you are not with a unit your other guiding responsibilities. It has certainly been busy here at Trefoil House. Two First response trainings, Brownie training, GO problems solved and a chance for me to have a chat with some of you.

We have some events coming up –

- 10th February is **Mardi Gras** time for Guides; I heard a rumour that there will be a steel band and there are still some spaces so book now.
- 25th February **Thinking Day treasure Hunt** for all sections starting with renewing our promise. Book now.
- 6th March **Singing Circle**
- 9th March **Faiths for Fun** – a Birmingham Guide and Scout event at Trefoil House – flyer to follow
- 16th March **Commonwealth Award** – come and find out about it 11-2 at Trefoil House. Please book via the County Office
- 22nd–24th March **Tuptonia Training weekend** – for skippers and confident crew
- 23rd March **Crafts for adults** – extend your skills, learn something new more info to follow
- 23rd March – **Have your say** – come along and help to shape the next 4 years' County plan. If you don't tell us what you want, we won't know.
- 24th March – **Young Leader Forum** at Trefoil House
- 26th–28th April **Tuptonia Training Weekend** – for skippers and confident crew
- 11th May – **First Response, sectional training, County Commissioner drop in and GO problems.**

We have been working behind the scenes on the **new county website** The planning and design took longer than expected but we are really pleased that we are now at the “checking” stage and hope to be able to go live with our new look website very soon. We still need lots of up-to-date photos (with photo permissions of course) from all our sections, units, advisors and divisions so if you have something you would like to see online to help illustration the wonderful things we have been doing, please email me c/o countyoffice@girlguidingbirmingham.org.uk

You may have seen the news that we have a **2-step verification system** coming for GO and the Learning Platform, like the system banks are now using when people log in online. We will be able to choose whether to receive the verification code by email, text message, mobile phone call or by using the Microsoft Authenticator app. You will need to be able to access your mobile phone or your emails every time you log in, so it is essential that your email address / mobile number on GO is correct. Now is the time to check to prevent problems when the new system comes in. More information is available here: [Improving the way you log in to GO and the learning platform | Girlguiding](#)

I have had to spend some time doing appeals and requests for extensions for **Safe Space**; Anne has been sending out reminders too. Please check your records not just for safe space but also first response and your DBS dates. Midlands Region is part of a pilot project particularly for safe space where if you have not completed them within 2 weeks of the expiry date you will have your membership removed without further notice. It is really upsetting to get the letter and we don't want to lose any of you and all the wonderful work you do for the girls and Girlguiding Birmingham.

Yes, it's that time of year for **annual subscriptions** – as you know it is £50 each. We have again reduced the Birmingham levy to help keep costs down at the same time as both HQ and Region have increased their portions. The annual subscription pays for the running of the organisation for the year ahead.

This year we have been awarded a small grant to help those units who are struggling. Applications need to be made through Division Commissioners to send to me with the last two years' signed accounts and a short paragraph of what the issues are. We will then look at each application after the final invoices have been issued. As the funds are limited it will only be a contribution to help lighten the load. But if you don't tell your commissioner we won't know you need some help

Emails have been sent out saying your trial invoice is available. Please make sure you download and check these and make any changes on GO before **7pm on February 19th**. Remember any changes made on GO will reflect on the trial invoice the following day. From **midday on February 20th**, you'll be able to download the final invoice and make payment by card or cheque. **All payments must be made by midday March 28th.**

Girlguiding Midlands are holding their first ever **Girlguiding Open Door week 13th – 19th May**. The aim of Girlguiding Open Door Week is to promote how amazing it is to volunteer for Girlguiding, and to advertise all the ways that this can be done from unit leader to unit administrator to residential helpers.

Girlguiding Midlands will be releasing a pack of ideas on how you can get your unit involved, from bring along an adult night to hosting community events showing just how great it is to volunteer for Girlguiding. Please tell us what your plans are so we can share the ideas.

Are you aged between 16 and 30 and looking to challenge yourself? **The Queen's Guide Award** might be for you! The Queen's Guide award is the highest award you can work towards in guiding. The programme can also be matched with activities you are already doing in guiding, such as the Adult Leadership Qualification, Going Away with License or even the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Queensguide Get in touch with Sarah - queensguide@girlguidingbirmingham.org.uk

Haaniah our **Young Leader** Coordinator is busy planning evens for young leaders. This will start a young leaders forum next month, a social event in the summer and a residential in the Autumn. Haaniah will be getting in touch with Young Leaders and their leaders - So watch this space.

Commonwealth award - we have had some interest in the Commonwealth award recently, it has been a long time since anyone in the county has done it. The Commonwealth award is open to Guides aged 13 and over, Rangers, young leaders and adult members aged 18-25 Who are keen to learn more about the rich history of our organisation - and to explore countries and cultures unfamiliar to them.

We are as always looking for help with, there are lots of opportunities, you can help one off or longer it's up to you:

International - do you want to help to organise an international trip?

Adventure team - holidays, camps, big days out

Admin and Finance - come and help in the office

Training - supporting, planning or even becoming a trainer - its good fun.

Let me know c/o countyoffice@girlguidingbirmingham.org.uk

Until next time, wishing you all a Happy Thinking Day

Janice