

15th January 2024



Trefoil House
2 Ellis Street
Birmingham
B1 1HL

Dear All

Happy New Year.

I hope you all had an enjoyable break. I went back to Guides last week and we did a quiz about events that took place in 2023. I am ashamed to say the leaders' team got the lowest score, which the girls thought was hilarious. But we did our best which is what it is all about.

Thinking Day 22nd February is during school term time for the first time in a long time. We have had a number of requests for letters to ask schools for permission for girls to wear their uniform. If you want a copy please email the county office

countyoffice@girlguidingbirmingham.org.uk

- The **Archives team** have put together a quiz about 1924 which is attached, it will be interesting to test our Guiding knowledge.
- News from the **Adventure team**
 - Thank you to Emma Cooper our Walking Advisor, for arranging and leading our first social walk which took us along the canals. There was a really good turnout of 30 intrepid walkers, it helped to blow away the cobwebs. Emma has more walks planned so keep an eye on the calendar.
 - Join the Adventure Team for a Thinking Day Treasure hunt on [Sunday 25th February](#). We are hoping that we can raise a flag in Victoria square to set you all off. Bookings open.
 - Midlands have organised the following outdoor trainings - 16 hour Outdoor First Aid course (20th-21st Jan) and Girlguiding Water Safety module (11th Feb). Book via their website.
- The **Arts team** have planned a Mardi Gras extravaganza for our guides on Saturday 10th February. I have heard all about the plans and it sounds really good. Bookings are open.
- The **Singing Circle** are meeting at Trefoil House [7:30 pm on the 30th January](#).
- **County Planning** - We want your ideas and support. Do you want to help shape the next few years of Girlguiding in Birmingham including opportunities for adults? Please come

and share your views on [Saturday 24th February between 10am and 2pm](#). There will be more information available soon.

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- **International appeal** – Beth Millman has been our International Advisor for a number of years and although still very passionate about it says it's time for someone else to take it on. Thank you Beth for all you have done. We are now looking for a new advisor and a small team to support leaders and County trips planning to take girls away and giving them the adventure of a lifetime. Please get in touch if this is for you.
- **The Sarah Gould Challenge** – I spoke at the AGM about the support Sarah from Cole Valley has been giving Karis Baby Bank collecting items and fundraising for them. She thinks as a county we can do more and issued a community service challenge to us for 2024. Ansley Stenning from Edgbaston has stepped up to help her. They will be organising regular collections of donations. Details to follow. Hannah from Karis has offered to come and talk to units and groups about their work and would also welcome visits to the centre. There will be a badge available for those who take part.
- **The Girlguiding Birmingham Shop** is now open on Saturdays only – 10am until 2pm until March 16th (closed March 23rd, 30th & April 6th). We are not closing at February half term
- **Guiding Open Doors Week 13–19 May** – The aim of this is to attract prospective members to visit or see some guiding in action so please think about what you can do when you are doing your planning. There will be some regional ideas and promotional material, and possibly a badge!
- **Grants** – Keep making those applications for individual members (not groups) who need financial support to participate. We are for ALL girls and women.
[Making a Difference Fund – Girlguiding Midlands \(girlguiding-midlands.org.uk\)](https://www.girlguiding-midlands.org.uk)
 For new leaders, Trefoil Guild Midlands have some funding you can apply for £30 towards anything your new leader needs in her role.

Now for the elephant in the room – **the annual subscription 2024**. Thank you for working on your unit details on GO in preparation for this. The amount this year is £50 per person the same as last year. GGUK £31 (up £3) + region £8 (up £2) +Birmingham £11 (down £5) = £50 + £? Division and District.

GGUK have notified commissioners that it is now possible for them to add any levies for their District or Division by noon on 12th January. Not long after that we'll be told when trial invoices are available to enable totals due 22nd February to be seen.

If you haven't already, it is important that you speak to your commissioner if you are struggling and fear a short fall in your unit's payment. There will be some funding available from the

County for those units. To access this you will need to send in a request explaining why, the last 2 years of your accounts and a copy of your invoice. [The closing date for this will be 29th February and we will notify of our decision by the 8th March.](#)

I am looking forward to seeing some of you on Saturday 20th January at Trefoil House at the [County Commissioner drop in 10am to 12noon](#), I will be joined by Tracey Branch to help answer any burning questions about GO and the Learning Platform. If you are struggling with any of the online safe space, please bring a mobile device or your laptop and we will help you out.

Finally, please invite Anne or I to your events or award giving or just to visit, we enjoy meeting you and your girls.

Until next time, take care

Janice