

Hello Everyone,

I know that we are over halfway through June and you have not heard from me! Every time I start to write, something else happens – so no more procrastinating.

Volunteers week has been and gone. Do you know we have 2952 girls in 210 units and 765 wonderful volunteers doing a variety of roles? I want to thank each and every one of you for all you do to support Girlguiding in Birmingham helping “all girls know they can do anything”. We don’t always know the impact we have on girls’ lives but we do know the impact they have on ours. Please keep on doing what you do best.

The past few weeks have been a difficult and emotional time for Girlguiding with the two major announcements about BGO closing at the end of August and then the news about the TAC’s at the end of the year.

Many of us have contacts with girls and leaders overseas and have been to visit the TAC’s. On a personal level, I am sad about them and have written to HQ following a discussion at the last County Exec expressing our concerns about the loss and the impact it will have for all girls, adults and our reputation. Since then we have been advised rather than emailing HQ to write directly to Tracy Foster, the Chief Guide, Angela Salt the CEO and Catherine Irwin the Chair of the Trustees. Some of you will have listened to the Calls and may have attended the vigil and protest at HQ last week. Please express your opinions if that is what you want to do, email me or get in touch for a chat if you want to talk about it – after all we do say “We give Girls a Voice”.

So what is happening in the county? We have been in our new building for 3 months and are still getting to know it and ironing out the snags. There have been lots of lovely comments from you and our outside bookings. We have ordered some County banners and gazebos which you can book and borrow for events, hopefully they will be here soon.

The shop is open now on Saturdays until 22nd July with some extra opening times on Thursdays 4–7 from June 29th to July 20th.

We still have a lot of leaders in training who need to hand their portfolios in by the end of July: please don’t leave it too late.

We are writing to all the **assistant leaders** to find out what you want to do.

County mentors – we are still waiting for some of you to tell us if you wish to continue or not.

If you hold a **GAW qualification**, we are looking for mentors. Please let the office know if you are interested – there will be some training to support you.

There is a **First Response** training on Sunday 2nd July. Email the County Office countyoffice@girlguidingbirmingham.org.uk if you want a place or to put your name down for one in the future.

The **Singing Circle** are here on Wednesday July 12th at 7:30 – all welcome.

Have you heard about or seen the **Safe space 3** e learning module via the Learning Platform? It is only available if you need to renew it so not if it is the first time or if yours has expired. It is really quick: I have done it and it only takes about 30 minutes. You can do it as soon as you get your reminder and the expiry is 3 years from the end date of your current one.

The Guides are having a county sleepover in October – flyers are being sent to all Guide units.

We have two new advisors: Tamsin Lane who is leading the adventure Team and Sarah Pitchford for Queens Guide.

We are going to look at a different way of organizing events going forward, so if you have volunteered to help with events I will be in touch soon. I am looking for a team to plan and deliver Brumopoly in the Autumn. This way you are not committed for the next 3 years but by events.

Three Counties camp 2026 – invitation to fill camp team roles. As you will probably know, Girlguiding Birmingham, Warwickshire and Worcestershire have been having positive discussions about putting on a big camp, making the most of a wider pool of volunteers and expertise. This would be early in the school holidays in 2026 at Blackwell Court for 800 Brownies, Guides and Rangers.

We are now looking for people to be part of the Camp Team. What role would you like to fill? What skills and expertise can you offer? Let me know and if there are any questions I will do my best to answer them.

Until next time,

Happy Guiding and thank you for volunteering

Janice