



## Happy New Year!

I'm sure many people are glad to see the back of 2020, given that it was such a difficult year, but before we move on to whatever the future brings, I would like to reflect on 2020 for a moment.

Everyone faced challenges and hardships, but these weren't the same for everyone - the pandemic impacted people in different ways. However, I really think that Girlguiding Leicestershire rose to the challenge, and in a variety of ways - from those who sent out activities by post, email or hand-delivery, to

the Zoomers whose most-used phrase of the year was 'you're on mute!', to those who got stuck into risk assessments and were able to meet face-to-face either indoors or outdoors. We're aware not everyone has had the time or capacity to commit to Girlguiding during this time, but we look forward to hopefully seeing you again soon when the situation allows.

The final term of the year also saw our first virtual county day, a record number of A Safe Space trainings taking place, our virtual Christmas market and opportunities to 'meet' and chat with other leaders informally over Zoom while doing various random activities (and we still have line-dancing to look forward to!). We may be able to return to some form of 'normality' in 2021, but I hope that we will be able to take some of the good things from 2020 with us.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to tell you a bit about myself, for those of you I haven't already met. I was born and bred over the border in Nottingham but have lived in Leicestershire for over ten years now. I've always felt very welcome in Girlguiding Leicestershire, so thank you to everyone I've met so far for that. Growing up I was a Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Ranger, and since turning 18, I've run units in Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire and Leicestershire. I was previously Leicestershire's senior section adviser and have also held roles at Midlands and national level. I'm now looking forward to helping guide Girlguiding Leicestershire through the next five years as an assistant county commissioner.

However much time you've been able to give, thank you for everything you've done for Girlguiding Leicestershire in 2020. I hope that everyone has been able to take some time over the festive period to recharge their batteries and are ready to take on 2021, whatever it brings!

Megan Thomas  
Assistant County Commissioner



## New appointments



Sara Towers	Leicester South Division Commissioner
Laura Brown	Framland District Commissioner
Charlie Hodson-Cichocki	Field Head District Commissioner
Sharene Hourd	Burrough on the Hill District Commissioner

Welcome to our new commissioners,  
we wish them all the best in their new roles!

## Message from the County Commissioner

Welcome to 2021, I want to say a very BIG THANK YOU to you all for everything you have done for Girlguiding Leicestershire in 2020, your flexibility and creativeness to bring guiding to girls on Zoom or at a distance was amazing to see. You made a difference to so many of our members. I also want to thank you for ensuring your unit leadership teams are compliant with the A Safe Space programme, but please remember the 120 day reminder to complete training will be the norm. This is in line with the [Adult members policy](#) and the [Safeguarding policy](#).

Going into 2021 we will have to continue to be flexible whilst we remain in Covid-19 restrictions. If and when you want to meet with your units, please talk to your local commissioner about creating or reviewing risk assessments. Remember the Girlguiding website has lots of information in the [Covid-19 FAQ's](#).

BUT, as soon as we are able we will be putting events on at Topstones for all sections. Watch this space for more details as they become available.

This spring our Queen's Guide award participants will be bringing you a new challenge, featuring a sleepover and a badge. The challenge is still in the creating stage but will be fully available very soon via your local commissioners and our social media platforms.

Most of all in 2021, I am looking forward to getting back to face-to-face guiding and visiting units and events across our county.

Sam Harrold  
County Commissioner





## Guiding Essentials Leicester shop

May we wish all our customers a very Happy New Year.

Thank you for your continued support during the challenges of 2020 and congratulations on the way so many of you have continued to keep girls engaged with the fun and friendship of guiding. We have sold many hundreds of badges and a number of special commemorative items during the year. Thanks to social media, customers have been served from as far away as Perthshire and Devon.

Please send orders to [equipstore@leicestershireguides.org](mailto:equipstore@leicestershireguides.org)

We are currently unable to open our shop and so have had to suspend our postal service. Leaders can continue to send in orders and we will review the situation as it develops.

For up to date information check the [shop page](#)  
or email [equipstore@leicestershireguides.org](mailto:equipstore@leicestershireguides.org)

Please support our shop as surplus income from sales comes back into the county, for the benefit of all our girls and leaders.

## Grand prize raffle



Thank you all so much for supporting our Christmas Raffle; we were able to sell just over 400 tickets through a mixture of email sales and actual real-life handing over of tickets.

The lucky recipients of the hampers and the other prizes are :



Sam Harrold  
Mel Weaver  
Denise Cannadine  
Hazel Baxter  
Jeff  
Issy Offor

The money raised will be a much needed boost to the International girls fundraising efforts.

The International Team



## Girlguiding Inspire - Leicestershire



Hello, I'm Naomi, the Girlguiding Inspire Leicestershire coordinator. For those of you who are unsure what Girlguiding Inspire is, this is replacing the 'offer' for those aged 18-30.

Now, I know there has been some confusion as to what the offer and Girlguiding Inspire was/is, so let me try and explain; Inspire is NOT a section. It combines all of the opportunities on offer to those aged 18-30, whilst providing events throughout the year as well as a support network.

Opportunities include qualifications, awards and roles to name a few. As mentioned, there will also be a handful of social events throughout the year, starting with our launch event for the county in January (more

details to follow). There is absolutely no obligation for young women in this age bracket to attend if they do not wish to do so; it is simply a network which is available to them.

In addition to county, we have our Midlands 'Your Hub' Inspire team. If you haven't already, search for them on Facebook and join their group. They host events, training and workshops throughout the year. The idea of this is that wherever you are in the county, you can attend ANYTHING! If you're a student in Nottingham, but Leicestershire is the county where you are registered, you can attend things wherever you are. This will also be the case wherever people are in the country, for example people in the Girlguiding Inspire age bracket can access events and information wherever they are located at the time.

Going forward, we will be building a team and looking for division coordinators. If you, or anyone you know, would be good for this role, or you would like to find out more, please email using the address below. I am looking forward to seeing you all at our virtual launch event in the New Year.

Naomi Lowe

[gginspire@leicestershireguides.org](mailto:gginspire@leicestershireguides.org)



## Meadows district wild winter

Following on from Summer Slumber, Meadows district had the pleasure of hosting another virtual camp in November called Wild Winter. We opened it up to the whole of Hinckley Division and had over 70 girls plus leaders join us.

There was shaving foam rain, banjo making, crazy baking and so much more.

The girls loved the mix of zoom calls and offline activities to fill their weekend. We're excitedly making plans for another one in 2021!



Tillie Graves  
Meadows District Commissioner



# Upcoming Trainings

## 1st Response



Girlguiding has now released the new [1st Response training](#).

This course comes with some changes, including a new online virtual training option for the full 1st Response course, a new e-learning and updated guidance on the practical training elements of the course.

The refresher will no longer be available.

Your 1st Response training is valid for three years. You'll then have to redo the full 6 hour training course and e-learning in order to make sure your training is up to date to keep all members safe. You will need to attend a local training session for 1st Response and complete the 1st Response e-learning.

How long will it take?

e-learning: 10 to 15 minutes.

training session: 6 hours or 3 x 2 hour sessions.

The 1st Response training session can be delivered both in-person or virtually using an online platform. The training is 6 hours long and can be delivered in one day or split into 3 x 2-hour sessions. Anyone attending a virtual training will need to meet a trainer in-person to complete some practical elements.

During the restrictions due to Covid-19, Leicestershire training team will be running virtual sessions with a 20-minute face to face session to follow when restrictions have eased. See page 7 for dates and times.

### 1st Response e-learning

The e-learning can be completed before or after the full training course and must be completed in order to be recognised as a first aider in Girlguiding.

### External first aid qualification

If you already have an external first aid qualification, you may not need to attend our 1st Response course. All recognised prior learning or external courses need to be verified by your division commissioner to check that they cover the 1st Response syllabus. This can be done virtually through a short chat.

If you have a qualification or you have prior learning that has been accepted as an equivalent, you will still need to complete the 1st Response e-learning which covers the policies and procedures you need to know when you are a first aider at Girlguiding. You will need to complete this e-learning before your qualification can be recorded on GO.



# Upcoming Trainings

## 1st Response

Separate sessions split over three weeks, you need to attend all three.

**Tuesday 12 January**

7pm - 8.40pm

**Tuesday 19 January**

7pm - 9pm

**Tuesday 26 January**

7pm - 9pm

Sessions in one day.



**Saturday 23 January**

9am - 4pm, including breaks

**Saturday 28 February**

9am - 4pm, including breaks



Virtual training sessions via Zoom

## Virtual Gift Aid session

**Monday 25 January**

8pm - 9pm



To book a place on a training, please complete the online booking form via [our website](#)

- Bookings will be *provisional* until you have received a *confirmation* email from County Office.
- Please do not just turn up - courses could be full.
- Uniform/guide wear is worn at all trainings.
- There is no charge for the training sessions. However, for 1st Response only, if you fail to let County Office know that you are unable to attend, then your division will be charged £5 per place.
- There is often a waiting list so PLEASE tell us, if for any reason, you have to cancel.



# Upcoming Trainings



## Today, tomorrow, together

### Leicestershire virtual county training day Saturday 20 March

Following the success of our October event, we are holding our second virtual county training day online in March.

We want to 'empower our volunteers to be inspired to deliver good guiding in changing times'.

Join us on Zoom from the comfort of your own home to take part.

Timings for the day	
9.30am - 10.30am	County commissioner's welcome
10.30am - 11am	Change over break
11am - 12noon	Today
12noon - 1.30pm	Extended lunch with online coffee bar and 'meet the adviser' sessions
1.30pm - 2.30pm	Tomorrow
2.30pm - 3pm	Change over break
3pm - 4pm	Together

Girlguiding's  
Strategy



# Upcoming Trainings

## County Day Information

- All sessions are 1hr long. There will be breaks between each session to allow time for everyone to log out, have a screen break and log into their next session in time.
- We will also have an online 'coffee bar' where you can pop in to say hello and have a chat with others.
- Each session will have a minimum and maximum number of attendees. Where possible, we will attempt to run multiple sessions for popular topics. See page 10 for info on the topics.
- Attendance can be for one, two or three sessions depending on what times you are available. Please note we cannot promise your first choice session is running at a particular time, so please give alternatives just in case.
- Cost is free. Please book via Eventbrite on the [County website](#). Bookings will be open from Wednesday 20 January.
- Young leaders are welcome but must have the correct permission forms in place with the County Office.
- Bookings close on Sunday 7 March.
- Hot and cold drinks and refreshments are available from your own kitchen at any time.



Rewarding  
volunteer  
experience



# Upcoming Trainings

## Today

Help with meetings for anyone new to delivering virtual guiding... including help with Zoom, activities that work, what to do if things don't go to plan. (Separate sessions for Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers.)

New ideas for virtual meeting... using outside providers, non-programme ideas and adapting programme resources. (Separate sessions for Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers.)

Ideas for guiding at home... no tech? Not a problem!

Running joint meetings for more than one section... how do we ensure every girl gets the opportunities they need and deserve?

Ideas for socially distanced activities... indoors and outdoors.

Our promise... ideas for activities and celebrations in a virtual setting.

## Tomorrow

Doing our best... to help us all deliver good guiding.

Virtual overnight sleepovers and events... what you need to consider, ideas etc.

Writing and reviewing risk assessments... keeping everyone safe in these uncertain times.

Challenging the older girls to stay with us and encouraging them to move up... how do we challenge the older girls to get them to move to the next section when we can't meet?

Fundraising and grants - what can you do to increase your units income? Help with finding sources of grants and writing applications.

Managing mental health is everyone's responsibility - hints and tips for supporting girls and adults.

What else can I do as a leader? There are lots of opportunities available, come and find out more!

## Together

New to guiding... for new volunteers to have to opportunity to find out about guiding and our history and traditions, why they are important and how we celebrate them.

Managing mental health is everyone's responsibility - hints and tips for supporting girls and adults.

How to support each other... including young leaders, district and division teams and other adults who help.

Supporting others - become a mentor for the leadership qualification.. find out more, there is no commitment.

Cooking... ideas to use for yourselves and the girls.

Crafts... just for you!

Taskmaster... do you fancy a challenge?



# Upcoming Trainings

## A Safe Space

A Safe Space training needs to be completed by everyone, the level depends on your role.

Level 1 and Level 2 training can be completed by e-learning, see the [Girlguiding website](#), it takes less than an hour to complete.

There will also be an opportunity to complete Level 1 and Level 2 via Zoom webinar during February - details will be on the [Girlguiding Leicestershire website](#).

Level 3 and Level 4 are webinar trainings hosted by Midlands region and Girlguiding. To book visit the Midlands region website and click on [calendar](#) for all the upcoming dates, using the filter to select particular trainings. Or log into GO and click learning opportunities. Here you will find all the available trainings.



If you need any help booking training please contact County Office for advice.

### Levels 1 and 2

Introduction and creating a safe space

Required for everyone including assistant leaders, occasional helpers, young leaders, unit helpers and home contacts.

### Level 3

Recognising, telling and taking action - for unit leaders, residential leads and event coordinators, mentors, advisers and trainers

At least one leader, assistant leader or leader in training in every unit needs to complete this training.

### Level 4

Managing concerns, allegations and disclosures - for commissioners only

Please note: you must complete Level 3 before starting this course.

The closing date for the next issue will be

**Monday 8 March**

Please send all articles to [office@leicestershireguides.org](mailto:office@leicestershireguides.org)



## The International Team

We are still hopeful that the Iceland trip will go ahead in July 2021, and the participants would like to thank you for supporting our fundraising so far!



Our Iceland Challenge Pack will be available soon along with our fabulous whale-tail badge. We do hope that you will join in to learn more about this fascinating country and have fun at the same time - ideas are included for virtual meetings and face-to-face - it's for all age groups from Rainbows to Trefoil Guild.

Lucy Faulds  
Group leader

## Do you know an Everyday Hero?

Girlguiding Leicestershire would be nothing without our volunteers and we know that many have been doing amazing things in 2020, despite all the challenges we've faced. We want to collect examples of how our volunteers have been #EverydayHeroes during 2020 so that we can shout about them and let them (and the world!) know how much we appreciate them.



It doesn't have to be a big thing - it could be teaching someone how to use Zoom, continuing to deliver a great experience to girls during lockdown, or being a (virtual) shoulder to cry on when needed! It doesn't even have to be guiding-related - maybe a leader hasn't been able to run unit meetings but has been doing a fantastic job as a key worker in healthcare, food production, retail etc.

We reckon each district and division has at least a few #EverydayHeroes and we'd like to know about as many as possible.

We look forward to your nominations so please send the following details to [socialmedia@leicestershireguides.org](mailto:socialmedia@leicestershireguides.org):

The first name of your Everyday Hero, the local area name, one or two brief sentences about why they're an Everyday Hero, and confirmation that you've got permission from them to nominate them. A photo would be great, but not essential.

We'll then celebrate our #EverydayHeroes with a series of social media posts so we can share all the amazing things our volunteers have been doing!

Megan Thomas  
Assistant County Commissioner



## Awards

Congratulations to the following who have been successfully nominated for the Region Chief Commissioner's award 2020. The presentation event will hopefully take place in person in May.

Sandra Andrews

Elizabeth Lowe

Mike Clarke

Sue Mayhew

Alison Cross

Emma Parr

Anna King

Donna Stephenson

Mandy Tomsett



Congratulations also to Nichola Resoli who was presented with the County Appreciation brooch by county commissioner, Sam Harrold, for, amongst other things, her assistance with county virtual guiding during lockdown. The presentation took place, socially distanced, on a dark, wet night, outside at Topstones, before Nichola's planned departure from Rutland for her new home in New Zealand.

Maggie Silver  
County Awards Adviser



## Topstones shop

We have an enjoyable pastime to pass on as the time has come to hand over the baton to someone younger. Everyone enjoys seeing happy children, I'm sure, or you wouldn't be reading this.



We are talking about the Topstones shop. When Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts come to spend time at Topstones, they all love to bring spending money and come to the shop to choose something to buy - without Mum or Dad telling them what to spend their money on - a first for many of the younger ones. It is such a lovely job and we feel very proud to be helping them take another step along the way.



We started the shop in 1999 with just Topstones coasters, but it has now grown and has a wide variety of choice. The enjoyment comes with the diversity of children, some very confident in what they want, others who can't decide and go round

and round a few times, then there are those who are shy and need a little help from us or their leaders.

As most groups arrive on Friday the shop is usually open Saturday mornings from 10am to 12noon. But if there is a county event or a busy weekend it may be needed more.

If you think this is something you could do:

- It really needs two people.
- Nothing is set in stone.
- Ordering stock is all done online or by phone.
- Paying bills can be done online or in a bank.
- We can work with you over a 12 month period.
- The shop is not operating at present owing to the weird way we are living,

Contact the County Office if you want to know more.



Thank you,  
Janet Mills and Gill Boulter



## Our guiding year

Tugby Guides ended this very strange year with a final outside meeting one cold Saturday in the middle of December, where we adapted the cowboy breakfast described elsewhere in the bulletin into a full-blown Christmas dinner - just replaced the baked beans with chicken slices, a sprinkle of stuffing, a bacon-wrapped sausage et voilà!



While this was cooking the girls occupied themselves with a Santa-based relay race and then swapped secret Santa presents using a giant inflatable dice, some dodgy rules and a great deal of cheating. Quite pleased to see that nothing had really changed during all the times we were a virtual only unit.

Watching the food cooking gave us grown-ups the chance to reflect on trying to keep our unit open and active through complete closures, partial reopenings and Zoom. All accompanied by a raft of risk assessments pored over by our long-suffering and supportive district and division commissioners.

I suspect most units have had much the same experience, we have made it though with an odd mixture of Zoom, challenges posted on Facebook, activities sent out by email and by actual post. We have used our very willing Rangers to hand deliver stuff; Raechel and I have driven round the county; we have managed some outdoor meetings and even a couple of real, actual face-to-face -in-the-village-hall ones, although only a couple of those.

And these things we have learned:

All children love scavenger hunts.

All children, and their parents, love Taskmaster challenges. Special mention to Issy's dad Kev who has mastered the hat-from-a-cushion challenge perfectly. And before you ask, he went for Nelson rather than Napoleon.

Some kids really, really don't like Zoom and won't join in.

Cooking over Zoom means you don't have any clearing up but beware of children without microwave ovens.

Origami over Zoom is extraordinarily tricky.

You can't go wrong with a Disney escape room.

Don't fill your home-made party poppers with lentils; I am still picking them out of my keyboard.

You can learn to surf with a bodyboard resting on your office chair.

Emailed instructions only work if parents actually read them.

The mute all button. Just that.

Happy New Year everyone.



Seonaid McPhail  
Tugby Guides leader



## Diary Dates

### Leader Social on Zoom

Following on from some successful evenings in 2020 we are pleased to have Lisa B leading us into line dancing on **Friday 22 January at 8pm**. Details will be available on the [Leicestershire Leaders Facebook group](#).

### Young Leader Support on Zoom

The next meeting will take place on **Friday 29 January at 7.30pm**. Please encourage YL's to join us, its always fun with a little bit of help towards the YLQ. Invites are emailed directly to YL and Ranger leaders, where emails are available.

### New Commissioner Evening

**Tuesday 2 February**. Invites will be sent out from County office during January.

### Presentation evening

As we cannot hold presentation evenings at this time, we will be holding our second virtual presentation evening on **Thursday 11 February** for girls receiving awards. These will include Guide Gold awards, Commonwealth awards, Duke of Edinburgh awards and Queen's Guide awards. If you have any questions about these evenings please contact [Stacey via County Office](#).

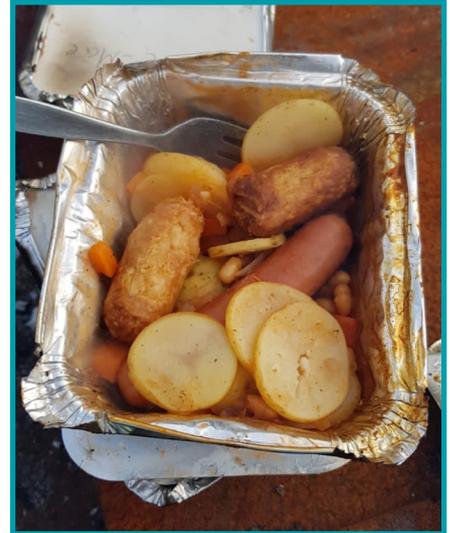
All of these events will continue through the year virtually until the time comes that we can meet face to face. Please check out [the county website](#) or the [leaders Facebook group](#) for the latest information.



## Topstones Rangers - the final frontier

It has been a challenging year but one of the benefits of a Ranger unit with no actual meeting place other than a field, is that we have managed to continue meeting in our field when circumstances (and the weather) allowed.

And so, the final meeting of 2020 took place at the beginning of December. Well wrapped up and suitably waterproofed, we first lit a fire (it was cold), snacked briefly on Amanda Hana's delicious Danish biscuits and then, utilising a suitably socially distanced production line, prepared the sumptuous cowboy brunches illustrated here.



The girls first layered thinly sliced potato, carrots and onions in a foil dish then topped it with hot dog sausages, baked beans and a good splash of stock. The lids, suitably named, were then tucked in and the whole ensemble put on top of the fire to cook while the Rangers were sent forth with GPS handsets and instructions to track down the 'difficult' Bugs and Beasties geocaches. And also it gave us (the leaders) the chance to gossip round the fire and catch up with each others' news without interruption or cries of 'you're on mute'.

And then we ate. As you do. Cautiously, because the pots were hot.

And so this year ended.

We have learned a lot this year but perhaps the final item is .....don't put your foil cases directly into the fire because the lids will burst into flames.

A very happy new year to everyone!



Raechel, Laura, Seonaid and Sheila  
Topstones Rangers leaders

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