



Girlguiding Leicestershire

LOOKING FORWARD 2026/2027

Issued Aug 2026



Girlguiding
Leicestershire county



www.girlguidingleicestershire.org

We are delighted to share our Looking Forward 2026–2027 booklet with you. Our county teams have planned an exciting

year of opportunities, adventures and experiences for members of all ages.

Inside you'll find activities for every section, along with events for adult volunteers, all designed to inspire, challenge and connect members across the county. This booklet brings together everything we currently have planned to help you look ahead and prepare for the year. Some details are still being finalised, but we've included provisional information wherever possible.

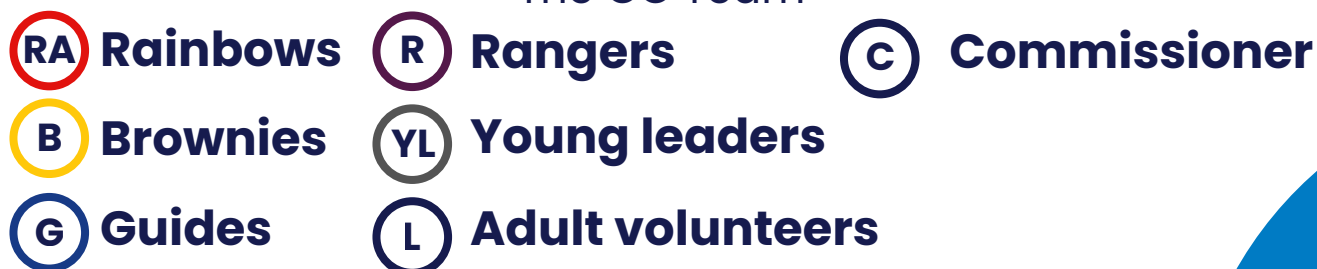
Simply click on an activity to visit the relevant page on our website. As each event approaches, we'll add booking dates, costs and further information online and in our newsletters.

You'll also find a handy colour key throughout the booklet, making it easy to see which section each event is aimed at. Alongside our Leicestershire events, Girlguiding Midlands offers even more exciting events, opportunities and activities for you to get involved with.

To help with your planning, we've also included a selection of festival and special days for which Girlguiding produces badges. This isn't a complete list, so please feel free to explore and celebrate other festivals and events too.

Thank you for everything you do to make Girlguiding such a positive experience for girls and volunteers. We hope this booklet helps you plan another fantastic year, and if you'd like to volunteer at one of our events, we'd love to hear from you!

Janet, Hollie and Sue
The CC Team



September 2026



Christmas Card Competition
Challenge



Best House Challenge Launch
Challenge pack



7



Young leader Sip 'n' Share
Virtual



7



Commissioner Evening
Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House



15



**Making sense of subs and sums: How to support
your unit through the 2027 changes**
Virtual



23



Executive committee meeting
Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House

26



Full 1st Response
Long Clawson Village Hall, Melton Mowbray



27



Pick 'n' Mix
Athena



29



Welcome to guiding in Leicestershire
Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House



Girlguiding
Leicestershire county

October 2026



Black History Month

National

3



INTOPS

Topstones



6



Module 1 - 1st Response

Thornton Community Centre



11



International Day of the Girl

National

13



Module 2 - 1st Response

Virtual



19-23

Leics

19-30

Rutland



Half term

23



Christmas Card Competition deadline



27



Module 3 & 4 1st Response

Virtual



31



Commissioner, trustee and management Conference

Kibworth



Don't forget that the Leicester Guiding Essentials equipment store will be opening normal hours during half term.

November 2026



National Year of Reading Leicestershire photo challenge launch

1



Brownies and Guides Learning to Lead

Thurnby Scout and Guide HQ



4



Commissioner Evening

TEAMS



8



Diwali

National

8



Remembrance Sunday

National

14



Water Safety Training

Thurmaston Scout and Guide HQ



14-15



Spotlight

Topstones



23-29



Parliament Week

National

26



Executive committee meeting

Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House

26



Module 1 - 1st Response

Leicestershire Scouts HQ,
Leicester Forest East



29



Full 1st Response

Legion House, Ashby



Girlguiding

Leicestershire county

December 2026

3



Module 2 – 1st Response
Virtual



4



Hanukkah begins

9



Young leader Christmas catch up
TEAMS



10



Leicester Guiding Essentials Equipment Store closes
Closes after business

10



Module 3 & 4 1st Response
Virtual



12



Hanukkah ends

23



County office closes for Christmas

25



Christmas Day

January 2027



Spring Challenge Launch
Challenge Badge



3



Beauty and the Beast Pantomime
De Montfort Hall, Leicester



4



County Office reopens

7



Leicester Guiding Essentials Equipment Store opens

19



Subscription trial invoices available to download from 12pm

25



Commissioner evening
Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House



February 2027

9



Pancake Day

National

11



Executive committee meeting

Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House

15



Changes to trial invoices deadline 7pm

National

15–19



Half term

16



Final subscription invoices payable from 12pm

National

22



World Thinking Day

National

Don't forget that the Leicester Guiding Essentials equipment store will be opening normal hours during half term.

March 2027

9



Eid al-Fitr
National

14



Celebration of International Women's Day
Venue TBC



18



Leicester Guiding Essentials Equipment Store closes
Closes after business

26



All subscription payments must have been received in full by 12pm.

28



Easter Sunday
National

April 2027

3-4

Topstones

Topstones Working Weekend
Topstones



12



Young Leader Qualification Evening
TEAMS



22



Earth Day
National

24



St George's Day Brownie activity day
Topstones



Girlguiding
Leicestershire county

May 2027

14-16



Water Camp

Leicester Outdoor Pursuits Centre



16



Eid al-Adha

National

24-28



Half term

26



Executive committee meeting

Girlguiding Leicestershire
Best House

June 2027

1-7



Volunteers' Week

8



Commissioner evening

Venue TBC



19



Rainbows 40th Birthday Teddy Bear Picnic

Leicester Botanical Gardens



22



International Campfire

Topstones



26-27



Leader Bushcraft training

Topstones



July 2027

3-4



Summer Social
Topstones



Watch the website for

Spring 2027



Women's Basketball takeover

Summer 2027



All section event at Bradgate Park

20-21 Nov 2027



Spotlight 27

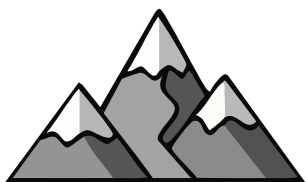
Beyond 2027

5-9 August 28



County Camp - save the date
Blackwell Adventure

2028



Leaders Three Peaks 2028



Girlguiding
Leicestershire county

Event volunteers

Could you help make our events happen?

Our county events simply wouldn't be possible without the time, enthusiasm and support of our amazing volunteers. Behind every event is a team of people helping to bring it together. From the initial ideas and planning through to setting up, running activities, welcoming participants and clearing away afterwards, there are lots of different ways to get involved.

You don't need to commit to organising a whole event. We know everyone has different amounts of time to give, so volunteering could mean helping for a couple of hours on the day, running an activity, supporting behind the scenes or joining a planning team.

You don't need to have done it before either. There will always be people around to support you, and getting involved with county events can be a great way to meet other volunteers, share ideas, learn new skills and experience another side of guiding.

Most importantly, the more volunteers who get involved, the more opportunities we can offer our young members.

If you could lend a hand at an upcoming event, please get in touch by registering your interest here.

Even a small amount of your time can make a big difference.



**[Click here to register
your interest in
volunteering at our
events](#)**





Opening times



Monday
10am - 1pm



Thursday
10am - 2pm



Saturday
10am - 2pm

Closed bank holiday
weekends but open
normal
shop hours during
October and
February half term.

Our Girlguiding Leicester Equipment store carries a wide range of Girlguiding uniform, badges and resources. If we don't have the item you need in stock, we can be order it for you.

Don't forget to order all annual event badges in plenty of time before the events.



Having a district or division event? Then why not get in touch with us about having a 'pop up' shop.



Where?

Unit E Best House
Grange Business
Park
Whetstone
Leicestershire
LE8 6EP



Payment methods

We accept
cash and card
payments.
Invoices
available for
units.



Volunteer shop

Surplus profits from our
sales go into Girlguiding
Leicestershire county
funds, which helps provide
exciting large-scale
activities for all ages.



Try before you buy

Come and
visit us to
view and try
on the new
range.

Need help?



equipstore@leicestershireguides.org



www.girlguidingleicestershire.org



0116 204 4902

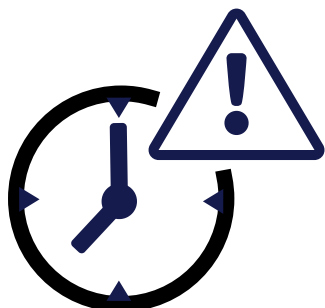
**Click here to check
out the latest
opening hours**



Girlguiding Leicester Equipment Store

equipstore@leicestershireguides.org

Each term, we review upcoming 1st Response expiry dates and locations of these volunteers through GO. This helps us provide training in the areas where it is most needed. As we cannot reliably plan a full year in advance, new dates will be released at the beginning of each term and advertised through our newsletters and website.



Do you know when your trainings expire?

A reminder will be sent via GO if a training is about to expire, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to make sure that they are aware of these dates and book onto a suitable training ahead of expiry.

External 1st Aid qualifications

External (work) qualifications are taking 3+ weeks to be verified.

These need uploading to the Learning Platform for verification and it is the responsibility of the individual volunteer to upload their own certificates and complete any extras required.



Safer guiding

This is a mandatory training for everyone who is volunteering with girls. For those volunteering with no direct contact with girls you will need to complete the safer guiding basic training.

If you fail to complete this training before the deadline your membership will be withdrawn from Girlguiding.

Use this link to check back for new training dates released.



What opportunities are available to me?

Youth Engagement

Queen's Guide Award

This award gives you something that really stands out on your CV – employers and universities know that a Queen's Guide has completed some exciting challenges and that's the kind of person they want. Push yourself to try new things, meet new people and give something back to guiding too.

Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is an awesome adventure where you can try new things, help others, and push yourself to achieve more than you thought you could. It's a fun way to make friends, explore new places, and build skills that look great for your future.

Young Leaders

Join a team of volunteers, help put girls' weird and wonderful ideas into practice, develop your skills, build lifelong friends all whilst having fun and adventures.

Peer Education

Girlguiding Peer Education is all about learning from people your own age – older Guides run fun, relaxed sessions on real-life topics that matter to you. It's a great way to build confidence, share ideas, and make a difference while having loads of fun together.

Inspire

Girlguiding Inspire is a community for young women (18–30) to try new experiences, make friends, and have fun while making a difference. It's all about adventure, confidence, and shaping your own path—whether that's travelling, volunteering, or just doing what you love!



Girlguiding
Leicestershire county

County Brooch

Who is it for?

Any member who has given outstanding service to the county – often in more than one capacity.

How do I nominate someone?

Send details of your nomination to the awards@leicestershireguides.org and it will be passed on to the county commissioner for her consideration. Once completed, the office will process your nomination before the badge is sent out for presentation.



County Appreciation badge

Who is it for?

Anyone! It could be a girl or adult, a member or a supporter.

How do I nominate someone?

Complete the nomination form [here](#) and send it to your division commissioner for her to countersign it. Once completed, email the form to awards@leicestershireguides.org. This will then be processed and the badge is sent out for presentation. There is a small charge for this award.



Hero Award

Who is it for?

Heroes can be of any age. They can be members or friends of Girlguiding. Reasons to give the Girlguiding Hero certificate are as wide as your imagination! Any member of Girlguiding can nominate the person they think is a hero.

How do I nominate someone?

Download and complete the application and email it to awards@leicestershireguides.org for consideration. Once approved and signed, arrangements will be made for a hero certificate and badge to be sent out for presentation.



Click [here](#) for details of [region](#) and [national](#) awards

GAW scheme pathway

1 Core Course Indoor residentials

Qualifies you to run indoor residentials for any number of nights.

What you will learn

- ✓ Planning and admin
- ✓ Health and safety
- ✓ Programme
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Venue management



2 Additional courses

Build your skills to deliver outdoor and more complex residentials

Choose your top up

- ✓ Camping
- ✓ Catering
- ✓ Outdoor cooking



3 Top up course

Lead a different section away with confidence

- ✓ Complete a short online top-up course
- ✓ Ensure at least one adult on your team has experience with that section.



Assessment requirements

Minimum of eight girls (Rainbows, Brownies, Guides) or four girls (Rangers), up to a maximum of 24.



Existing qualifications

Already hold a residential qualification? You're all set! Expand your skills with the targeted digital top-up courses.



Ready to start?

[Download the registration of interest \(ROI\) form.](#)



1 Discover

Talk to your local commissioner

Discuss your residential plans and get guidance. They will help you answer initial questions and point you in the right direction.

2 Enrol

Log onto your learning platform

Complete the registration (ROI) form. Log onto the Girlguiding learning platform and self-enrol on the required course. This will automatically update your GO record to 'in progress'.

3 Plan and do

Run an assessed event

Work with your assigned county mentor. Complete online courses, plan your event and run your residential. An approved visitor will visit to observe you in action.

4 Celebrate

Badge and certificate

Submit your completion form, your GO record will then be updated with your qualification. Your certificate and badge will be sent to your local commissioner for presentation.

For more information please visit our county website [here](#). You will be able to find the registration of interest form along with lots of other helpful downloads to help complete your qualification.

Leader Development Programme



Talk to your commissioner and unit team

Let them know that you would like to become a leader so that they can support you.

Start the LDP on the learning platform

Choose the pathway that best matches your guiding experience.

New to guiding?

Complete 'Getting started with Girlguiding' and 'Growing in Girlguiding'

Already volunteering?

Complete 'Check your Girlguiding knowledge' training

Meet your mentor

A mentor is assigned to guide you, agree an action plan and support your progress.

Work through the three LDP sections

You can work across the sections in any order and at the same time.

Building Foundations

Safety, policies and information

Engaging guiding

Planning, inclusion and youth voice

You and your team

Teamwork, finances and organisation

Your role is updated

Your commissioner adds the leader in training role on GO. Becoming a leader can then be unlocked.

Practice, reflect and check in

Your mentor observes you in your unit. Complete a check-in for each section and upload it for review.

Your LDP is complete!

You are now a qualified leader! Your role will be updated on GO and your certificate and badge will be sent to your local commissioner for presentation.

Complete the final check-in

Once all three sections are complete, finish the final check-in with your mentor.

Topstones

CAMPSITE & ACTIVITY CENTRE

Topstones

Set within 14 acres of beautiful Leicestershire countryside near Tilton, Topstones is the perfect place for camps, residential stays and outdoor adventures.

The site offers four campsites, eight heated camping pods and a fully equipped self-catering chalet.

Facilities include modern toilets and showers, wet-weather shelters, field kitchens and an activity barn with a bouldering wall and activity equipment.



Whether you are planning a unit sleepover, camp, or taking part in a Duke of Edinburgh expedition or activity weekend, Topstones provides plenty of space to explore, learn new skills and enjoy time together in the great outdoors.

Find further information, prices and availability on the Topstones webpage [here](https://www.topstones.org.uk).



Girlguiding Leicestershire works with many local venues who provide approved residential facilities for units.

For details of approved venues please contact your local commissioner or the county office for further information.

Every year, Guides, Rangers and young leaders have the opportunity to travel abroad as part of a Girlguiding Leicestershire county team.

Our recent and upcoming adventures include:

2025 – Two teams took part in a dash from Denmark back to the UK.

2026 – A team raced Rome to Home, exploring Italy, Austria and Switzerland along the way.

2027 – One group will enjoy a winter activities week at Our Chalet, while another will set off on a European adventure starting in Germany.

We're already looking forward to where our next adventures may take us.

INTOPS – International Opportunities

Your international adventure starts with INTOPS, our international opportunities event.

INTOPS is held each October for international opportunities taking place in the next-but-one year. This means that at INTOPS 2026, we'll be looking for young people to join our international adventures in 2028.

INTOPS is open to Guides, Rangers and young leaders, but you will need to be at least 14 years old at the time of travel.

INTOPS is usually a one-day event where you'll have the chance to

Find out about the international adventures we're planning

Meet the international team and other young people interested in travelling

Take part in activities and challenges

Help us discover what kind of adventure would suit you best

You don't need to be an experienced traveller – just enthusiastic, willing to get involved and ready for an adventure!

Applications are made online through our website, with a small charge to cover the cost of the day.

If there are more applicants than places, we will hold a ballot. Successful applicants will then meet their team and begin planning, preparing and fundraising for their adventure.

Fundraising opportunities

We organise a number of county events to help participants raise money towards their international adventures.

These may include:

A campfire at Topstones during the summer term

An Easter raffle

A Christmas raffle

Opportunities to sell cakes and refreshments at county training and Trefoil events

Taking part in an international adventure is about so much more than travelling somewhere new. It's a chance to make new friends, experience different cultures, build confidence and independence, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Where could Girlguiding take you next?





Did you know that you
can do your

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

through Girlguiding?

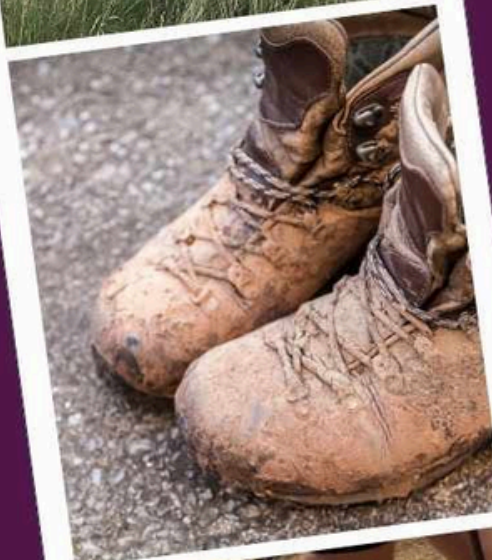
**[Click here to complete
your registration form](#)**

Guides (year 9+) , Rangers, young
leaders, young adults aged up to 25

We offer a supportive environment for you to do your DofE and you can register individually or with a group of friends from your unit. We have small group sizes and expeditions tailored to your needs, with Bronze expeditions every year and Silver expeditions as needed.

Join one of our zoom calls for more information about the DofE and doing it with Girlguiding Leicestershire.

Tuesday 22nd September at 7.30pm
Thursday 1st October at 7.30pm



Fundraising

We know that units may need to obtain additional funds to take part in activities, events and residentials. We have tried to put in one place links to Girlguiding both national and region that offers support as well as other more local sources.

Girlguiding – Girlguiding have lots of information to support units with fundraising. This [link](#) takes you to everything you need to get started with fundraising, and guidance on compliance. It even has a great pack where you'll find lots of advice on organising and publicising your fundraising event or challenge, as well as sponsorship forms and thank you posters which you can print and use for your event. There are details of external grants [here](#).

Girlguiding Midlands Grants – The region offers a number of grants which can be applied for. Details can be found [here](#).

Gift Aid – Discover how Gift Aid could raise more money for your unit – at no cost to your supporters. Full information can be found [here](#).

Easyfundraising – Raise money effortlessly for your unit through online shopping—at no extra cost to anyone. Parents, volunteers and unit leaders can contribute simply by shopping with over 8,000 brands, including Amazon, eBay, John Lewis, and M&S. More information and links can be found [here](#).

Leicestershire Communities – Funding & related support for community organisations. This [link](#) provides a range of support, information and resources related to grants and funding.

Governments grants management function – The government's find a grant service allows you to search government grants.

You can use this service to:

- Access government grant funding
- Search and filter to find a grant that matches your needs
- Find out if you are eligible to apply for a grant
- Find out how to apply for a grant

Rotary or Lions Club – You can find branches across the country. Both are not-for-profit international service organisations dedicated to charitable projects.

[Rotary club main site](#)

[Lions club main site](#)

Fundraising

Supermarket schemes – Your local supermarket can be a great source of support for fundraising projects, combining a grant application with community spirit. Typically, you can apply in-store or online, and you'll usually need to show evidence that you're a not-for-profit or charitable organisation.

Some initial planning is required because you need to have a specific project in mind that fulfils the grant's criteria. Grants from five of Britain's biggest supermarkets cover a considerable range of amounts, timescales and criteria. This [link](#) takes you to a summary of each one with a link to their individual pages.

Community foundations – Across the country, there's a network of community foundations overseen by UK Community Foundations. This charity has been developing community philanthropy since the 1970s. If you're looking to make an impact, reach out to them to explore opportunities for collaboration; use this [link](#).

The National Lottery community fund – Please use this [link](#).

Local councils – Many principal authorities (districts and boroughs) offer grants so make sure you look at their websites or contact them directly.

- [North West Leicestershire District Council](#)
- [Harborough District Council](#)
- [Blaby District Council](#)
- [Charnwood Borough Council](#)
- [Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council](#)
- [Melton Borough Council](#)
- [Rutland County Council](#)
- [Oadby and Wigston](#)

Housebuilders and developers – many house builders also have charitable foundations.

If you need any support or help with any of these then please contact your local commissioner or the county office who will be able to direct you to the most suitable person.

County commissioner team

Hollie Hewson
Assistant county commissioner

Janet Gelsthorpe
County commissioner

Sue Mayhew
Assistant county commissioner

Trustees

Mel Conboy
Ashby

Jenny Crane
Bardon

Ali Dodd
Blaby & Lutterworth

Rachel Sykes
Charnwood

Andrea Bourne &
Emma Dutton
Hinckley

Vicky Toach
Leicester City

Susie Ashcroft
Loughborough

Laura Clarke
Market Harborough

Sharene Hourd
Melton Mowbray

Vacant
Oadby & Wigston

Amanda Hana
Rutland

Vicky Garratt
Watermead

Management team

Sally Illsley
President

Tracey Ball
Adventure team

Lily Piper & Vicky Lee
Youth engagement

Emma Chodynicky
Chair of finance

Vacant
Safer practice team

Abi Salter
Property team

Vacant
Growth/PR team

Gill Gates
Adult Support

County advisers and coordinators

Sue Newman
Inclusion

Sally Illsley
Topstones chair

Vacant
Queen's Guide

Sophia Irving
Young leader

Kirsty Ludlam
Peer education

Lucy Faulds
Duke of Edinburgh

Vacant
Inspire

Eileen Melling
Awards

Mel Weaver
LDP

Sam Harrold
Training

Sandra Andrews
Archery

Sheila Lickess
County GO

Seonaid McPhail
International

Carol Lynch
Venue

Dawn Scott
Walking and Water

Charlotte Jeickles &
Kate Lawson
**Rainbow & Brownie
residential**

Raechel Fairclough
**Guide & Ranger
residential**

Sue Mayhew
**Commissioner
support**

Office team

Louise Mynott
**County office
manager**

Stacey Paling
**Senior county
adminstrator**

Heather Wilkes
**County
administrator**

Helen Campbell
**County
bookkeeper**

