

The Blue sheet



Norfolk's guiding news

March 2026



www.girlguidingnorfolk.org.uk

On the cover:

Norwich division's
Thinking Day event

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Laurel Award . Luminate
100 years of World Thinking Day
Bug-tastic . Awards
Justice service



Hello from the county commissioner

Thank you to all units, districts and divisions for arranging the payments on your subscription invoices by the national deadline. We all know that this term is very busy with finance tasks, subscriptions and unit accounts take up time we would rather use on fun plans, but once completed we can move on to fun activities.

As we head into a busy summer term, don't forget that there are many leaders who take on extra roles as commissioners, advisers and mentors who can offer you and your units extra support. If you don't know who to ask, ask me! Also if you think you are ready to join the growing teams in support roles, please let me know, as there are opportunities for Girlguiding Norfolk to achieve amazing results when we work together.

Enjoy the summer, every sleepover, camp, holiday and outing helps build our members confidence. Every badge earned gets a smile

that shows we make a difference in their lives. Congratulations to the adults featured, lots more awards have been presented but we don't have photos to share – well done to everyone who received acknowledgement of their achievements.

Yvonne



Presentations galore!

Since Christmas there has been a flurry of presentations in Norfolk acknowledging long service and generally recognising the fabulous volunteers in the county.

Carol Dale and Elaine Shields from Thorpe district were recognised for their significant long service at their division Thinking Day event; Carol was celebrated for achieving 50 years of volunteering and Elaine for achieving 40 years – amazing!

ARC volunteer, Ann Ottaway (centre), received her county Good Service Brooch. So well deserved as someone who is a true Norfolk treasure; hard working, generous, thoughtful and knowledgeable... to say nothing of her devotion to the ARC!

Doreen Brookes, who recently stepped down from her assistant county commissioner role, was presented with the gift of a beautiful crystal vase to recognise her dedication during that time.



Linda honoured with prestigious Laurel Award

On International Women's Day, Sunday 8 March, the air was thick with excitement and a very well-kept secret as friends, family, and fellow volunteers gathered to pull off the 'ultimate surprise' for one of our most beloved members: Linda Watkinson.

The celebration was a masterclass in guiding teamwork! The space was filled with beautiful flowers and decorations and guests enjoyed a delicious buffet, shared laughter and undertook a challenge quiz.

In a moment filled with cheers and more than a few happy tears, Linda was presented with the silver Laurel Award leaf brooch and certificate by Pat Pinnington, President of Girlguiding Norfolk. As one of the highest honours within Girlguiding, it is reserved for those rare individuals who go above and beyond, making a lasting impact across districts, divisions and the entire county. Linda's journey has truly been defined by a genuine passion for supporting and nurturing people.

"I'm so delighted that Linda has been awarded the Laurel Award," shared Catherine, district commissioner. "She has inspired girls and fellow leaders alike, creating so many guiding memories and experiences!"

"The room was full of living proof of Linda's impact. I was personally so pleased to be there to witness it; I was one of Linda's original Guides back in 1992, and she eventually inspired me to become a leader myself"
Yo - Snettisham guide leader.



As the afternoon drew to a close, all agreed it was a perfect tribute to a woman who has given so much of herself to others.

Congratulations, Linda! Thank you for being the light that guides so many of us.

Linda started her guiding journey in Surrey as a Brownie before achieving her Queen's Guide in 1972. She became a leader in Gaywood in 1983 and started 1st Gayton Guides in 1992 and 1st Gayton Rangers in 1998. Roles of division commissioner (2006 - 2012) and assistant county commissioner (2015 - 2023) were recognised with the presentation of a County Good Service Award, Anglia Brooch and County Commissioner's Commendation.

Linda said, "I am so proud to have received the Laurel Award. It was a complete surprise and such a lovely event to share with my guiding friends and family. Thank you to our wonderful team here in Gayton and thanks to everyone who has messaged me with congratulations. There were 8 of my former Guides at the presentation who are now all Leaders and that is the best bit of all."

I would like to dedicate it to my Mum, who I lost just before Christmas, and who was always so interested in my Guiding and encouraged me so much".

100 years of World Thinking Day!

On Sunday 22 February, guiding units across the country gathered to mark a monumental milestone: the 100th anniversary of World Thinking Day.

Since 1926, World Thinking Day has been much more than just a birthday party. It is a dedicated day to reflect on our global community and celebrate the 10 million sisters-in-guiding who meet in almost every corner of the world.

To mark the centenary, Freebridge Lynn district hosted a vibrant celebration at Great Massingham Village Hall. From our youngest Rainbows to the lifelong members of the Trefoil Guild, 100 members came together to honour a movement that connects girls across 150 countries.

The afternoon was anchored in the traditions that have defined guiding for a century. The hall was buzzing with creativity as members crafted friendship bracelets and created a "Guiding Memories" paper chain to decorate the space.

Between high-energy games and global-themed activities, the atmosphere was one of pure joy. The heart of the day, however, was the Renewal of Promises. In a moving ceremony, all 100 members stood together to recommit to our shared values of service, community, and empowerment.

The celebration concluded in the most authentic guiding fashion: a traditional campfire singalong, where voices of all ages echoed through the hall, proving that the spirit of guiding is as loud and proud as ever.



1st Acle Rainbows had great fun completing their Present Maker interest badge.

They each decorated a card and made a bracelet before wrapping their gift in potato painted paper.

During the Covid pandemic the Rainbow group made contact with a Sparks unit in Canada, so decided to send these gifts to them as a way of celebrating World Thinking Day 2026: Our Friendship.



Thinking Day 100 was celebrated by Girlguiding Norwich division with 300 members attending from the youngest Rainbow to leaders who have been in guiding over 50 years.

The Rainbows boogied away in a silent disco, learned some circus skills, threw soft tomahawks, hit the archery targets, played parachute games and made bracelets and colourful elephants.

Brownies participated in Bollywood dance, science, football and created beautiful bottle lights. Guiding history was learned with The Arc and carefully tied friendship knots were swapped.

Guides enjoyed drumming with Norwich Samba Band and yoga. Crafts included candle painting and paracord keyrings. Norfolk Scouts ICE team arrived with their new ambulance and taught vital first aid skills.

During the day, coins were added to the trefoil which raised £111.22 for WAGGGS.

The day finished with renewal of promises led by girls from each section before presentations of Gold awards, long service awards and a Commonwealth Award. Each member received an Anglia Thinking Day badge.



Night at the Museum

How can we make Thinking Day special for girls in the county, using the ARC? Well, it's got to be a sleepover, obviously!

With all those wonderful, trendy ideas included too.... So began the planning by the team that delivered the Night at the Museum for the ARC.

Girls came from lots of units in the county, some in groups, and some by themselves.

This year's Thinking Day was all about Friendship, and friendship bracelets are a must, especially those wonderful woven ones. Then an opportunity to get out what you

would like from the archives to bring it alive!!

Later with glow sticks to guide the way, a wide game to find the clues which led to numbers to break into the treasure box – the game was the highlight of the weekend for many.

Sunday morning the Traitors was the theme, and another game about the history of guiding, along with birthday celebrations. And there was a badge and lots of cake too, of course!

Thank you to everyone who came and well done. It was an excellent weekend led by Izzie

and huge congratulations to her for achieving her Going Away With qualification by running a county event. No mean feat. We are very proud!



Ranger radio stars!

Hautbois Rangers were challenged to achieve the Radio Hour Challenge from the WAGGS 2026 Thinking Day pack to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of World Thinking Day.

They met with Carol Bundock and Chris Bond, professionals in broadcasting, who supported them with suggestions of how to make the recording realistic, lively and fun. The script was produced by Gina, their leader, and in the following weeks the play was recorded, using appropriate props to create realistic sounds.

The girls loved the challenge! Find the link to listen to it on the Girlguiding Norfolk website:

<https://arc.girlguidingnorfolk.org.uk/dust-off-the-old-wireless-listen-in-to-a-100-year-old-guide-meeting/>



Get involved in these events!




Teddy Bear Picnic

Sat 6 and Sun 7 June 2026
10:30am–3:30pm

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE

£18.90 per girl

Open to Rainbows and Brownies

2 exciting activities, a craft and a cosy campfire




BOOK NOW

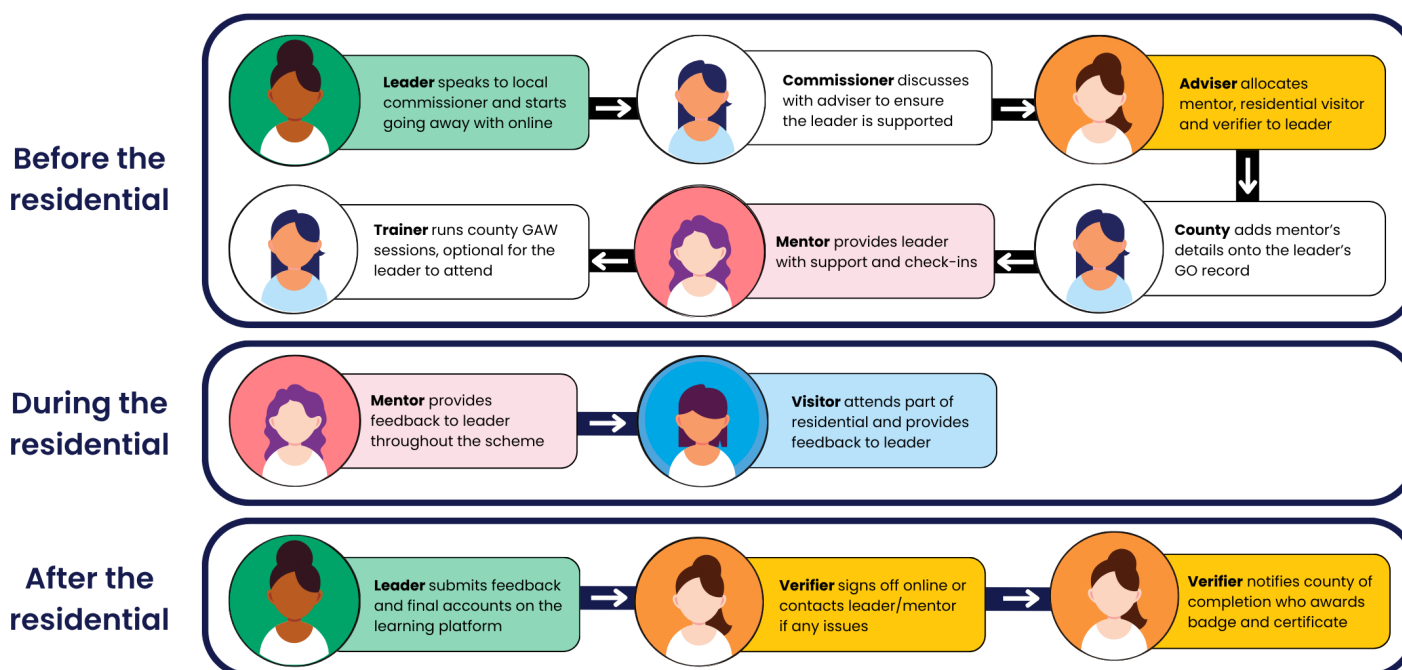


Girlguiding Norwich division will be opening their doors again to their iconic headquarters, Pull's Ferry, for the summer refreshment season between 24 May and mid September.

The building will also be open for Heritage Open Days.

Come and see us for a cuppa and slice of homemade cake in our beautiful riverside location.

Going away with scheme: Supporting you from start to finish



Once a leader self-enrols on the learning platform with the sign up form, the going away with scheme will shortly show on their GO record as 'in progress'.

Once they complete their residential and the verifier signs off their final submission, their GO record will be updated to 'completed'

A 'Bug-tastic' adventure at Lenwade Bug Parc

What do you get when you mix curious Brownies, excited Rainbows, and hundreds of fascinating creepy-crawlies? An absolutely bug-tastic day out at the Lenwade Bug Parc, that's what!

On a bright and buzzing day, Snettisham, Heacham, and Docking Brownies teamed up with the Gayton Rainbows for an unforgettable adventure. A coach bursting with giggles and anticipation set off, ready to dive headfirst into the wonderful world of insects and other amazing creatures.

On arrival the girls were ready to explore. Imagine seeing scorpions that glow in the dark and watching leaf-cutting ants hard at work in their intricate colonies. The indoor exhibits were a whirlwind of discovery, bringing the bug world to life in the coolest way possible.

Upon entering the butterfly house, the girls were transported to a vibrant, tropical environment teeming with life. Colourful butterflies of all sizes fluttered

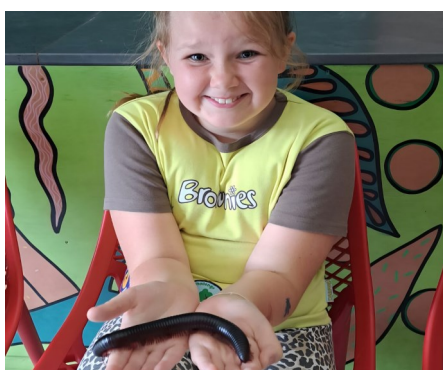
freely around them, creating a magical atmosphere. Children delighted in exploring the lush surroundings, their eyes wide as they observed these delicate creatures up close, some even experiencing the delight of big butterflies landing on them. With squeals of joy and a moment of anticipation, the girls would stand incredibly still, waiting for a butterfly to gently alight on an arm, shoulder, or even a head. These intimate encounters created memorable moments and fostered a deeper appreciation for the beauty and gentleness of these insects.

But the real highlight? The bug handling experience! Our brave Brownies and Rainbows got up close and personal with some surprisingly friendly invertebrates, all under the watchful eyes of the awesome Bug Parc staff. Picture holding a giant millipede or feeling the tickly movements of a stick insect – It was a brilliant chance to learn, explore, and maybe even make a tiny new friend (or two!).

After all that indoor excitement, it was time to let loose in the fantastic outdoor play area. The absolute star of the show was undoubtedly the giant bounce pillow – a huge, bouncy cloud of fun where kids (and yes, even some grown-ups!) could literally bounce their energy away! For those with a need for speed, the pedal go-karts were a massive hit, with the girls racing around the track, adding a dash of friendly competition to the day. Plus, there was a big, covered sandpit, swings, and slides, ensuring endless outdoor fun.

This fantastic outing, like all guiding activities, was made possible by the incredible Girlguiding volunteers. Their tireless dedication means girls and young women get to have amazing experiences just like this one!

By the end of the day, our Brownies and Rainbows were buzzing with new knowledge, unforgettable memories, and already dreaming of their next big adventure!



Anglia launch civil engineering challenge

1st Costessey Guides got a sneak peek at Girlguiding Anglia's civil engineering challenge pack and badges and absolutely loved them!

Leader Rebecca said: *"The girls really enjoyed the flour tower activity and it occupied them for way longer than the allocated 15 mins as they wanted to try and beat their previous attempt - who knew you could get an hour of fun from a bag of flour! They can't wait to try the next activity! We're looking forward to the pack (and badges) being launched and will be using some of the ideas at our summer camp."*



The partnership between GGA and ICE is a brilliant way of getting STEM out to girls in a fun and accessible way and opens up conversations about the world around them in a new way. The activity we did has certainly sparked ideas on possible career pathways for some of our younger members who are keen to find out more about civil engineering and the variety of careers within it."

If you and your unit want to get involved and grab your free badges, head to the Anglia website to download the pack to get started.



Lighting up at Sandringham's Luminare

A huge crowd of excited faces from Snettisham and Sandringham guiding groups descended on Luminare for an unforgettable evening adventure of sparkle and fun.

Over 40 warmly-dressed adventurers kicked off the festive season with a dazzling illuminated journey through the royal parkland. The trail featured wow moments at every turn. Twinkling lights, shimmering tunnels, and dancing lasers transformed the woodland into a real-life fairytale, leaving the groups mesmerised.

Midway through the enchanting walk, the aroma of a classic winter treat drew them in: the fire pits! Fortified by a warming hot chocolate, pizza and the sticky goodness of giant toasted marshmallows they headed deeper into the sparkling woods with some of the girls making their promise along the way - a unique moment.

The fun didn't stop once the light trail was over as, waiting in the courtyard, was a charming vintage fairground, complete with helter skelter, swings and tea-cup rides and a ferris wheel giving a birds-eye view of the beautiful Sandringham grounds all lit up for Christmas.



Young leader coordinator – here to help!

Hello, my name is Hannah and I'm the Girlguiding Norfolk young leader coordinator. I've been involved in guiding since I was 14 (over 20yrs now), starting as a Duke of Edinburgh volunteer. I now run a Brownie unit, as well as helping to run a Guide unit and a Ranger unit, and I also have my leadership qualification for Rainbows too!

My role is to support all our young leaders and young external volunteers aged 13-17, and the adult volunteers in their units too. I can do this in various ways including visiting

units, online meetings or responding to emails. We're looking at organising some in person training sessions and online air and shares too.

Another aim is to showcase what our current young leaders are doing, to promote them and share ideas. Each half term, we'd like some words (no more than 250), and photos (correct permissions please), showing off what they have been doing. The deadline will be the end of each half term (before the holidays).

My contact details are:
youngleaders@
girlguidingnorfolk.org.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.



Have you achieved your Queen's Guide award?

We are celebrating 80 years of Queen's Guides on 11 and 12 of July.

The event is by invitation, so please email cc@girlguidingnorfolk.org.uk to be added to the guest list and to find out more details.

RHS Sandringham Flower Show

North West division will be exhibiting a show garden at the RHS Sandringham Flower Show between 22 and 26 July 2026.

The garden is designed as a space for all stages and ages of guiding. It will include bug houses and bee hotels and lead to a tranquil camp area.

Follow the progress on Instagram
[@thegirlguidingjourney](https://www.instagram.com/thegirlguidingjourney)



Thorpe Brownies garden

2nd Thorpe Brownies have transformed a piece of land at Frere Road Community Centre where they meet.

The Brownies wanted to tidy up the outside area and, with the help of the Community Centre Committee, the group applied to Norwich City Council for a grant to fund the transformation. Approval was given and the adventure started! Brownie dad, Damien, cleared the land and dug it over. B&Q donated a set of gardening gloves for each girl and with other equipment purchased each six planted window boxes with autumn bulbs.

The next project was to plant tubs with miniature trees and rose bushes before moving on to the main part of the garden. A large planter was constructed from old orange boxes and the girls planted lots of different shrubs and plants for the spring. They learned a lot about plants and how to look after them as well as being obsessed with the amount of worms found!



King's Lynn Guides & Rangers at the Justice Service

On Sunday 1 March 2026, the historic King's Lynn Minster served as the backdrop for a significant civic event: The Justice Service for the County of Norfolk. Hosted by the High Sheriff of Norfolk, Mr. Patrick Lines, the service brought together the legal, civic, and religious pillars of the community.

Standing proudly alongside these officials were the young women of the 9th King's Lynn Guides, the King's Lynn division Rangers, and representatives from North West Norfolk division who formed a respectful guard of honour at the Minster's door.

The participation of the King's Lynn and North West Norfolk units highlight the enduring role of guiding in the region. By attending such a high-profile service these young women are given a front-row seat to the workings of the British legal and civic systems, fostering a sense of duty and pride in their local heritage.

Following the service, the group joined dignitaries for refreshments, further bridging the gap between the county's current leaders and the leaders of tomorrow. The day was not just a celebration of law and order, but a testament to the active role that youth organisations play in the heart of Norfolk's community life.

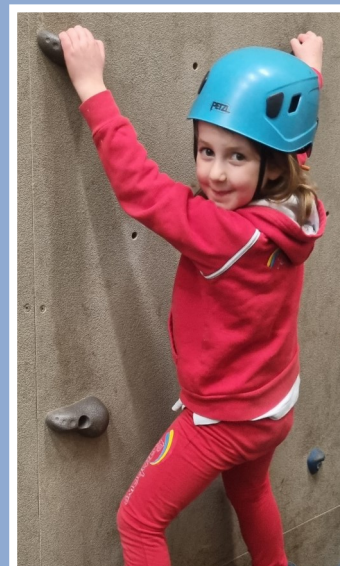


'0' birthdays for Earlham units

2026 sees Earlham district celebrate 3 significant birthdays for the 4th Norwich units; Brownies are 20, Rainbows are 30 and Guides are an impressive 90 years old!

To start off our year of celebrations, we took over Eaton Vale for a sleepover in January with over 60 members attending. The girls took part in activities including climbing for the Rainbows, archery for Brownies and air rifles for Guides. Craft tables were full of glitter and sparkle as creations were carefully constructed including hama bead cupcakes, balloon bookmarks, shrinky keyrings and friendship bracelets. The fun continued around the campfire to make s'mores.

After little sleep, the girls enjoyed a birthday disco with party games and, of course, some cake before receiving their special exclusive event birthday badge.



In memory of Di Stagg

We said good-bye to Di Stagg, who sadly passed away before Christmas, at a memorial service in Ludham last month. Di was a former county Vice-President.

The service captured many of Di's amazing characteristics and there was many a smile and tear throughout the service, where Girlguiding was strongly represented. The ARC was delighted to exhibit a sample of Di's guiding memorabilia which people found fascinating.



Tippety-tap!

During the spring term, 4th Norwich Rainbows have been working towards their Communicate skills builder badge completing a number of activities involving story telling and making your own decisions – not just following your friends!

One of the UMAs chosen by the girls was Tippety-tap. One of our unit helpers, an enthusiastic tap dancer herself, rose to the challenge of teaching the Rainbows some simple steps. Following an instruction video the Rainbows tapped away for the rest of the evening – it was an incredibly loud, but fun, session!



Keswick Campsite snowdrop morning

On an unusually sunny day in February (it normally rains!), Keswick Campsite welcomed visitors for its annual snowdrop morning.

Everyone remarked on the lovely display of snowdrops. Cringleford guide leader Claire and her husband had been working hard to clear the nettles from the little wood on site which generated the best year yet for snowdrops – beautiful! The event raised just over £300. Thank you to all who supported it.



Share your guiding news with Norfolk!

If you write a piece for a local newspaper or simply upload some photos to your guiding Facebook page, please also send them to bluesheet@girlguidingnorfolk.org.uk

Make sure to check photo permission and please send high quality images!