



Girlguiding Communications and Public Relations Advisor Toolkit

A guide to Girlguiding PR

Welcome!

Congratulations on your new appointment as a Communications and Public Relations Advisor (CPRA) for Girlguiding!

As Scotland's leading charity for girls and young women, we believe in giving girls a voice and make a difference in their communities.

Your role will play a big part making sure that girls' voices are heard loud and clear in the media and beyond. You will create opportunities to show the world the difference guiding makes to girls' lives. You will help to change people's perceptions of our charity and encourage new volunteers and members to join us.

This toolkit contains important information about Girlguiding's Communications and PR approach. It is here to help you promote girls' voices in your local media.

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Your role and responsibilities

What is the purpose of this role?

As a Communications and Public Relations Advisor (CPRA) you will play a vital role in promoting and showcasing the opportunities offered by Girlguiding in your local media.

This includes spotting local media opportunities, writing press releases, building relationships with local journalists and supporting the media at local guiding events.

Positive coverage in your local press reinforces the public's love of guiding and changes any negative perceptions people may have about us. This in turn can lead to more girls, volunteers and supporters joining.

This toolkit will help you identify and make the most of media opportunities in your local area. It will offer guidance on how to write press releases, build relationships with local journalists and deal with potential crises.

Key messages

A vital part of your role is to champion Girlguiding's key messages in all media work.

Key messages mean that people outside of guiding can understand who we are and what we do. They help us challenge negative perceptions across the UK. They mean we can show Girlguiding as a relevant and modern charity that girls want to be a part of.

It's really important that we're all on the same page and are saying the same things to the press. If not, we appear disorganised and our messages are diluted. These key messages apply to everyone from spokespeople and girls to volunteers and staff members.

It's vital that every press release that goes out about us and every interview we do contains key messages. These are more than just 'nice to haves' - they are essential.

In 2018, 76% of all press coverage about Girlguiding contained key messages. This needs to be 100% if we want to change outdated perceptions and encourage more girls and volunteers to join.

Please find our four key messages below:

We are for all girls

We are for all girls and young women, whatever their background and circumstances. We offer them fun, exciting activities and the chance to make lifelong friends. You'll find us in lots of communities, helping to give girls a head start in life. We encourage them to be happy, self-confident and curious about the world they live in and the difference they can make.

For example: Our groups are fully integrated to include girls with disabilities and we offer grants to ensure they and their carers can join us on camps and trips.

We give girls their own space

We give girls a place where they can really be themselves with other girls and share the experience of growing up as a girl in today's world. We provide a safe, non-judgemental environment where girls can explore the issues they care about while having lots of fun, enjoying new experiences and learning vital skills.

For example: Girlguiding research has shown us that being girl-only is one of the key things our young members value most about Girlguiding.

We give girls a voice

We give girls the confidence, skills and information to make informed decisions. We offer a supportive, inclusive and exciting environment where they can reach their own conclusions about the world. We show them how they can speak out and take positive action to improve their lives and the lives of others.

For example: Girlguiding's Advocate panel is made up of members aged 14-25 who discuss issues girls care about and seek change. They talk about body confidence, representation of girls and women in the media, education, teenage mental health, role models for girls... and lots more!

As well as giving girls a voice we make sure we are a girl-led charity. We put girls at the front and centre of PR opportunities whenever it is possible and appropriate. This means including quotes from girls in written press releases and putting girls forward for broadcast and radio interviews.

We change as the lives of girls change

We are relevant to today's girls because we listen to them. Plus, we constantly evolve and adapt what we offer them without losing what makes us uniquely us. We provide support, comfort and friendship in what can often seem a complex world for girls as they grow up.

For example: Our camps, holidays and trips give girls the chance to try new adventures from quad-biking to abseiling, zorbing and zip wiring.

This key message can easily be conveyed by mentioning that the programme of badges and activities was overhauled last year or by including the names of some of the more perception-changing badges, e.g. Entrepreneur, Inventing, Mindfulness, Vlogging and Craftivism.

What is the Girlguiding tone of voice?

We want to make sure all communications from Girlguiding have a similar tone of voice. To do that - and make sure we're communicating the same values to our readers - there are some guidelines all our writers follow.

We want people to think Girlguiding is credible, adventurous and welcoming. To get this across, everything we write should be straight-talking, enthusiastic and in-tune.

Three ways to sound straight talking

1. Use everyday language. We want to sound approachable and to have a certain energy to our words. This means using everyday words instead of formal language and Girlguiding jargon.
2. Get to the point. We don't beat around the bush. Whatever our message, we get right to it - with a healthy dose of empathy for the person at the other end. If it's not adding anything to the message or the tone, delete it.
3. Imagine it's a conversation. Why does what you're writing matter to the other person? How might they feel about it? How would you put it to them if they were sitting right in front of you? Start with this in mind. We ask the occasional question and address people directly with 'you'. We use contractions (such as 'don't' instead of 'do not' or 'we'll' instead of 'we will') in writing, like we do in speech.

Three ways to sound enthusiastic

1. Short, focused sentences will give your writing energy and clarity. Aim for no more than 15 to 20 words. Try to stick to one idea per sentence, as this helps keep the meaning crystal clear. Keep your paragraphs snappy, too: around four or five lines max.
2. Use active language (instead of passive) to put people front and centre. In practice, this means thinking about who the 'do-er' is in a sentence and starting with them.
3. Be yourself, and don't be afraid to show an opinion or use humour where it feels right. We want to come across as real people when we communicate - authentic and likeable.

Three ways to sound in tune

1. Acknowledge why things matter → e.g. if we're explaining a change in safety processes, we say how and why this is better for the girls' experience
2. Show, instead of telling → instead of talking about something in the abstract, give examples, tell stories and use the voices of girls and volunteers.
3. Help people find the important stuff → put the essential information at the start of sentences and paragraphs, and in titles, headings, links and lists.

What makes a good media opportunity?

There are lots of opportunities for press coverage in your local area. Think about ways you can demonstrate key messages and show the fun and adventure in guiding.

Some examples of opportunities are:

- Unit trips or visits to exciting places the public may not expect members to go. Eg: Local Guide group go on a zip-wiring adventure
- Visits from someone sharing their skills or teaching members something new. Eg: Local vet visits Guides to talk about career options
- An inspiring, unusual or touching story from a member. Eg: Local Brownie uses first aid badge skills to save grandmother's life
- Social action activities. Eg: Brownies collect shoes to help refugee children
- A local angle on a national story. Eg: Ranger group speak out on why young people should vote
- VIP visits from a local celebrity or dignitary. Eg: Olympic star inspires local Guides
- A good photo

The local media are always looking for stories about local people or organisations so always try and shout out about you're doing. If you don't succeed at first - keep trying!

Making sure your story is perception changing

Our research shows that some members of the public who aren't involved in guiding still have outdated perceptions about us. They don't realise how fun, diverse, modern we are!

Therefore, we need to make this clear in all our media work. We can do this by only sending out stories that will reinforce positive messages or change negative perceptions about who we are and what we do.

The new programme is an ideal way to challenge perceptions about Girlguiding. For example, the badges and activities linked to technology, taking action and mental health show we're preparing girls and young women for life in the 21st century.

Imagine you're a member of the public who isn't involved in Girlguiding. Would the story you've chosen show that we're fun, exciting, diverse and, most importantly, relevant to all girls' lives today?

If yes - that's great! Think about ways you can promote the story (see later section on press releases)

If not - it's better that you focus your efforts on another story that will change negative perceptions.

It is much better to secure one good quality, exciting and perception-changing story than lots of stories that perpetuate outdated stereotypes.

If you're unsure about a story, contact your country or region comms team. In Scotland, you can contact nicoletta@girlguiding-scot.org.uk or call 0131 226 4511.

Writing press releases

Once you've identified a great local story, you need to think about how to promote it in the media.

Sending a press release to local journalists is a fantastic way to get your story out there.

Press releases are often your first point of contact with the media so it's important to be clear and concise, focusing on your key messages.

Sometimes Girlguiding's PR team will provide you with a template for an event. However, sometimes you may want or need to write your own.

The five Ws

When writing a press release make sure you focus on:

Who....is involved/who is the story about?

What....is happening?

Where....is it happening?

When....is it happening?

Why....is it happening?

Sometimes there's also a 'how?' - How do people get involved?

Creating a headline

Your headline needs to be short, sharp and attention grabbing.

Always show journalists that your story is local by using your town/area name in the headline. eg: BOLTON BROWNIES VISIT SPACE CENTRE

Opening paragraph

Your first paragraph is the most important part of the story. This opening paragraph should outline the story in a nutshell and be no longer than two sentences.

If possible, this paragraph should contain the 5 Ws and say what the news is. It shouldn't be a description of the organisation and other surrounding information; this can be covered later in the release.

Main body of the press release

Make your release short and simple. Plus, keep it to 1-2 A4 pages (any longer and you'll most likely lose the journalist's interest!).

Use simple words, short sentences and avoid jargon. Ask friends and family not involved in guiding to read the release and see if they understand the terminology. If they don't, you can be sure the general public won't either. Even words like 'unit' or 'sixer' can be confusing to people with no guiding knowledge.

With each paragraph introduce facts in descending order of importance, putting the most important information first.

Quotes

Don't underestimate the importance of quotes - a news story will rarely be published without a quote.

You should **ALWAYS** include at least one quote in your press release (ideally from a girl or young member as this gives girls a voice, one of our four key messages). When using quotes from girls under 18, always make sure you have their parent/guardian's written permission.

Quotes serve as an opinion, comment or analysis of the story, adding personality and authenticity. As a result they don't need to give factual information.

For example: Claire Smith, age 9, a member of the 1st Anytown Brownies, said:

"We had the best time ever at the water park and even though I was really scared by the big slide I went on it and was really happy I did.

"I really enjoy Brownies and have lots of fun every week. I've met lots of new friends and we always get the chance to decide what we want to do in our meetings!"

Include the quotes after the paragraphs which explain the news element of the story; they should be no more than two to three sentences long.

Rest of the body of the press release

This is the best place to add in additional information about Girlguiding that isn't directly linked to the news story but you think the journalist could include or should know, e.g. a couple of sentences about any relevant badges and activities.

At the end of the press release, include a sentence with basic information about the charity, e.g. 'For further information on Girlguiding Scotland, Scotland's leading charity for girls and young women, visit www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk.

Ends and notes to editor

Don't forget to let journalists know the press release is finished by writing ENDS at the end of the release. After this, conclude with your notes to editor section. This should include contact details and any important background information.

If you have photographs, case studies or spokespeople, make sure to say so here.

You should also include Girlguiding Scotland's boilerplate at the very bottom of your release - here is the one the national team uses:

Notes to editors:

About Girlguiding Scotland

Girlguiding Scotland is the leading charity for girls and young women in Scotland, with around 50,000 young members. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good. We give them a space to have fun. Find out more at www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk

Press release design

Make sure to think about the design of your press release:

- Include your localised Girlguiding logo at the top
- Add the words 'press release' and the date to the top of the release
- If you don't want your story to be published before a certain date or time write 'EMBARGO' and the time and date that you want the story to be published.
- If the date and time of publication is not important write, 'For immediate release' at the top.

You can find an example press release in the Appendix on page 24. Please follow this format when writing your own press releases.

How to send out a press release

Media lists

Before sending out your press release, you'll need to work out who you should send it to. Do some research and find out what local media is out there. Local media can include:

- Local daily newspapers
- Local weekly newspapers
- Free newspapers and free sheets
- Online versions of all newspapers
- Local radio stations
- Regional TV stations
- Community TV channels
- Local magazines (including online versions)
- Newsletters by community groups
- Black and minority ethnic publications and outlets
- Blogs and social media
- Local websites and blogs
- Online community forums

Most publications and news outlets will have contact details on their websites. If you can, try and find out the name of the reporter/correspondent who covers your area/subject and make a list with their telephone number and email address.

If you can't find the name of the specific journalist, you can send your release to the news editor.

If you're a volunteer and need more help getting contact details, ask your country or region office.

When to send your press release

Try and send your press release as soon after the event as possible so it's still newsworthy.

It's also worth trying to find out the deadlines for your local media - this may be provided on their website or you can ring up and ask.

As a rough guide, daily newspapers have a deadline of 4.30pm on the day before. Weekly newspapers are about two days before publication.

Contacting a journalist as they are fast approaching their deadline means they are more likely to miss your message or ignore you as they are very busy!

Sending out your release

Copy and paste your press release into the body of an email (rather than attaching it as a Word document). Use the headline of the release as the subject line in the email.

Journalists receive hundreds of press releases a day so you can help make yours stand out by giving the journalist a quick call before or after sending the release.

Beforehand, it's worth thinking of two or three points you would like to get across about your story on the phone (ideally in about 30 seconds). You might want to prepare a short script (but make sure you don't sound like you're reading from one).

Have friendly confidence when ringing up about your story. Remember journalists are working to very short deadlines so you will need to deal with any requests quickly. This also means they might seem a bit off-hand - don't take this personally!

Plus, don't be disheartened if the journalist doesn't end up covering your story. It may just be a really busy news day or week.

What's important is that you have started to build a relationship with a journalist who you can contact again about a future story or invite to a Girlguiding event.

Images

If you have good quality images to accompany a press release let the journalist know you have these available and can send them over if requested.

Photographs that tell the story are a fantastic publicity tool. An exciting or unusual photograph can help to secure coverage or even become the story itself.

Rather than using a posed photo, an action shot is more likely to get a journalist's attention and portrays guiding as being active, exciting and fun.

95% of photographs sent to journalists can't be used because they are such poor quality. Clear, sharp images and good composition are essential.

Make sure you have photo permissions from all the girls in a photograph and explicit written permission from their parent/guardians for the photos to be used in the press.

Remember to include a short caption to accompany the photograph, setting out what it shows and who's in it.

As a general rule, if there are less than five people in the picture, journalists will often want their full names (left to right). Make sure you have the permission from the girls' parent/guardians to share this information with the press.

Examples of good photos

Below are some examples of great photo:

- They're colourful and vibrant
- They show girls doing something fun and active
- They highlight the friendship and adventure of guiding
- They show that Girlguiding is for all girls
- The girls are smiling and laughing
- They're clear and in focus



Examples of bad photos

Below are some examples of photos you shouldn't be sending to your local media:

- They're blurry and not in focus
- You can't see the girls' faces
- The girls look bored, are fidgeting or have their eyes closed
- They're dark with bad lighting



Videos

It's worth thinking about other media you can provide to help tell your story.

If a website is publishing the article online, they may be interested in sharing a video capturing the story on their webpage or social media channels.

A video summarising an event or interviews with girls and Leaders may make interesting additional content. This can be shot on a good quality camera phone - you don't need to worry about having lots of fancy equipment!

Social media

Remember to let the journalist know if you have any social media hashtags for your story.

Think about the photos and videos you're sharing and how these will work on social media - will they grab the reader's attention and encourage them to click through to the story? Are they vibrant and colourful?

If a media outlet publishes your story online sharing it on social media is a great way to share it with your networks and gain further traction and interest.

Forward planning notices

A forward planning note (FPN) is a simple tool to invite journalists to an upcoming event. It's much shorter than a press release and includes:

- The event title
- When it is (time and date)
- Where it is (give full location with postcode etc...)
- Who will be there (the number of attendees, any special guests)
- A brief description of what will be happening
- What media opportunities there will be (who is available for interview, photo opportunities)
- Contact details of someone they can get in touch with if they would like to come and contact details for someone who will be at the event and can meet them.
- It may also be useful to include helpful information such as parking information.

You can find an example FPN in the Appendix on page 26.

A journalist is attending an event - what next?

Once a journalist has confirmed they will be coming to an event, there are several things you need to think about and ask in advance.

- Who is available to escort the journalist around the event? **ALWAYS** make sure someone can do this and that you have a chance to brief them in advance.
- Does the journalist want to speak to girls and volunteers at the event? What questions will they ask?
- If they say they want to speak to an adult, would they consider a young member instead? The more journalists speak to young members, the more likely they are to promote girls' voices in their article.
- Will a photographer also be at the event? What kind of pictures do they want? What are the key perception-changing images you'd like featured in an article - and how can you ensure these are the shots the photographer gets? Ensure you have the correct consent of the girls to be photographed.
- How long will they be at the event?

Identifying spokespeople

If the journalist has confirmed they would like to speak to girls and volunteers at the event, you'll need to identify people for them to speak to in advance.

Your country or region comms team can help you identify people who have been spokesperson trained in your area and have spoken to the media before.

If none of these people are available, ask the event organisers for suggestions. The interviewees don't need to have had spokesperson trained (although that's best), they just need to be confident and enthusiastic!

Always try and use young members as spokespeople so that we give the girls a voice. Make sure you get their parent/guardian's full permission beforehand if they are under 18.

Briefing and debriefing spokespeople

Chat to the journalist before the event to find out how they plan to cover it and the questions they want to ask. You can then draw up some briefing notes with these questions and suggested answers in, then have a talk through with the spokespeople beforehand.

It's really important to do 'practice' interviews with spokespeople before the interview, where you take on the role of the journalist. This will give them experience of being asked questions on the spot and will give you an opportunity to see how they answer the questions.

After this practice interview, go over the answers with the spokespeople and offer any constructive feedback or suggestions on how they could make their answers even better.

Make sure all answers are lively and in keeping with the key messages outlined earlier. You can find some frequent questions and suggested answers on page 20.

After the interview, it's really important to check in with the spokesperson to thank them, make sure they're okay, chat over any concerns and discuss how they thought it went. Once the coverage has appeared, thank them again.

Key social media tips

The social media team at SHQ have put together these top tips for Girlguiding social media posts.

1. Keep it short and snappy! You can use 280 characters on Twitter but the quicker you can get your message across, the better.
2. Aim to use a (GDPR compliant) image with every post. Engagement on images and videos is significantly higher than just text.
3. Be accessible. Use a capital letter for each word in a hashtag so people using screen readers can also engage! #ScreenReaderFriendly

Key blogging tips

The digital communications team keep these two pointers in mind when creating blog posts for the Girlguiding website.

1. Write like you're chatting to a friend. Keep it personal, conversational and in your voice.
2. Subheadings are your best friend in a blog. People scan read online so make it easy for your audience by dividing your blog into smaller sections using subheadings. It'll keep people reading for longer.

Key newsletter tips

Your role may involve writing a newsletter for members and their parents - here are the essential things to consider:

- Keep the updates short and punchy. People are busy and used to skimming emails, so your updates need to be clear and concise
- Are you writing in a conversational way? Read our branding and writing guidelines to ensure you're following our house style
- Make it relevant and timely. 'Coming soon' messages without full details can be annoying for readers.
- Is the update for information only or does it require action? Make any calls to action clear and give people time to respond (ideally two weekends).

Case Studies

As well as working with spokespeople who can talk about Girlguiding, you might want to get in touch with some local members who have interesting personal stories.

Journalists are always keen to hear 'human interest' stories. It's worth talking to leaders and girls in your area about why they joined Girlguiding and the experiences they have had through us.

You may hear about a Brownie who is fundraising for a fantastic cause close to her heart or a Guide who has saved someone's life using her first aid badge skills.

These are always really heart-warming stories which can make it into the national media and can encourage girls and volunteers to join Girlguiding.

The SHQ PR team are always on the lookout for personal stories so do get in touch if you hear of anything in your local area - remember to get permission before doing this.

Sometimes personal stories will have sensitive information. Make sure you deal with this appropriately - if you need any support, get in touch with the SHQ PR team.

It's important to fully support case studies and brief them before an interview. This includes encouraging them to practice telling their story out loud - sometimes audibly sharing a story can feel very different to writing it down.

It's also important to find out if there's anything they don't want to be asked about. If there is, tell the journalist beforehand that these are off-limits.

After the interview, talk to the case study about how they found it. If there's something they told the journalist that they wish they hadn't shared, ask the journalist not to print that detail.

Below are some links to some great personal stories:

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/fearless-brownie-saves-her-mum-from-a-burning-351696>

<http://enablemagazine.co.uk/volunteering-just-give-it-a-go/>

<http://www.ballymenatimes.com/news/bravehearted-guiding-group-raise-funds-for-heart-disease-charity-1-7314973>

How to give a media interview

General guidelines

Do

- Ask the journalist what the questions are likely to be in advance, and prepare two or three points for each answer, always trying to link back to our key messages.
- Be clear about what you can/are prepared to talk about
- Give short answers - these work better than long rambling ones. Be concise but get your message across.
- Prepare answers to anticipated difficult questions (see the answering journalist questions section for tips on tricky questions and answers)
- Avoid jargon
- Correct inaccuracies
- Be honest if you don't know the answer to a question - it's much better to do this than lie or make something inaccurate up!
- Think before you speak - 'off the record' is an urban myth.
- Make sure you check the wider news agenda for any off-topic questions that might come up. For example if guiding is in the national news that day, a local journalist may ask you about the story.

Don't

- Agree to an interview without adequate preparation
- Get side-tracked by the interviewer
- Say 'no comment' - it will look like you're hiding something

- Repeat negative statements or questions in your response - it will just reinforce a negative angle
- Drop your guard when the interview has finished - you are representing Girlguiding until you leave the studio or the reporter hangs up the phone
- Be afraid to ask questions yourself - what's their angle? Who else have they spoken to?

Preparation for newspaper interviews

- These will often be over the phone. This mean you can have the facts at your fingertips - print the story out and have it in front of you
- Write down the three most important points and focus on getting them across.
- If you don't have the answer to a question, tell the journalist you don't have the information to hand and offer to call them back.
- Phone again if you have more to say - it's okay to ring back if you have additional information
- Bridging is a useful technique. It's basically 'I can't tell you that, but I can tell you this...' - it's not avoiding a question, it's restructuring it and answering the way you want to

Preparation for broadcast (radio and TV) interviews

Assume your news slot is 30 seconds and prepare accordingly. What are the most important things you want the audience to hear/see in that short time? Limit yourself to two or three main points.

Radio or TV interviews can either be live or pre-recorded. Pre-recorded interviews can be edited, but live interviews cannot.

Ask the following questions when you are first contacted. They'll help you feel more in control when you prepare for the interview

- Is the interview live or pre-recorded?
- What's the angle of the story?
- Where will the interview take place and what time?
- Who is the interviewer?
- When will it be broadcast (if pre-recorded)?
- Who else has the media outlet spoken to and what have they said?

Tips for radio interviews

- These will either be on the phone or in the studio - if you can't make it to the studio, ask if you can do a phone interview.
- For phone interviews, access to a landline is best. They may do the interview on a mobile if it's arranged at the last minute.
- You can have a crib sheet of key points and questions in front of you during the interview
- Try your best to use your voice in a varied way rather than in monotone

- Ask the journalist what the first question is they'll ask, to help you feel confident as the interview starts

Tips for TV interviews

- Always let the Girlguiding press team know about any TV appearances in advance (pressoffice@girlguiding.org.uk) so they can offer any necessary support
- TV interviews either take place in the studio, or on location at an event or an agreed meeting place
- Look at the interviewer not the camera
- Look the part - dress appropriately for the occasion. Avoid wary fussy patterns and too many bright colours as these can be distracting. Above all, wear clothes that you feel comfortable and confident in.
- If you're wearing guiding uniform, try and make sure you're in the most up-to-date version. Avoid wearing too many badges or a necker on TV as these can be distracting and can divert the viewers' attention away from the important things you're saying.
- Think about your jewellery - don't wear bangles that will jingle or make noise as you move.
- Remember to smile and not fidget - your body language is really important.

Finally...

- Remember to relax!
- You can always call or email the national Girlguiding press team for support, advice and help in preparing for interviews (020 7592 1733 and pressoffice@girlguiding.org.uk)

What to do when a journalist calls

Local journalists may call you for lots of different reasons. They might be responding to a press release or forward planning note you've sent out. Or, they may be calling you about a story they want a Girlguiding spokesperson to comment on, or about a potential crisis situation.

If someone from the local or national media calls you, make sure you do the following:

Remember to take your time

It's easy to feel pressured when a journalist puts you on the spot, but remember you never have an obligation to speak with the media - it's always your choice.

No matter how urgent the issue seems, or how rushed the journalist may be, give yourself time to think it through.

Take notes

Ask for a journalist's name, the publication, phone number and email address. Ask for a clear outline of the story they would like to cover, exactly what they would like from you - (maybe a comment, information, photos or a visit to a local unit) and what deadline they're working to.

It is a crisis?

If you believe the journalist's story could in any way harm the reputation of Girlguiding, your individual unit, a volunteer or a member, we consider it a 'media crisis'. In a crisis you must contact the Girlguiding Scotland comms team immediately.

Put girls first

Girls and young women are the voice of Girlguiding. Whenever possible, they represent us as spokeswomen and share their thoughts and experiences. Whenever an opportunity comes up, see if there's a way you could support a young member to speak out in the media.

Building relationships with local journalists

Building relationships with local journalists is really valuable and will make it easier for you to get great coverage.

When you start as a CPRA, get in touch with local journalists to introduce yourself and explain what your role involves, either by email or phone.

Sometimes the journalist may be interested in meeting with you over a cup of coffee. This is a good opportunity to build rapport, promote Girlguiding and let the journalist know about any fantastic events you have coming up.

By introducing yourself, journalists will know to come to you if they want to write stories about Girlguiding in the future. Having a named contact and a sense of rapport with a journalist also makes it easier for you when contacting a news outlet about a story you'd like them to cover.

It's also worth chatting to journalists about the types of stories they're interested in. Are they interested in attending events? Do they want stories about new groups that have opened? Are they looking for stories about the amazing things Girlguiding members have done? Knowing this will give you an idea of the kind of stories that are most likely to be covered.

Answering journalists' questions

Below are some common questions that journalists ask about Girlguiding and some easy answers.

Journalists may ask you these questions when you contact them about a press release or an event. Or, they may ask spokespeople these questions in interviews (so remember to go over these questions and answers when briefing spokespeople ahead of interviews).

Journalists won't necessarily know the basics about guiding - it's worth familiarising yourself with these answers so you explain the organisation to them quickly and simply. It's also worth including these questions in briefings you give to spokespeople.

What do Girlguiding members do?

- At Girlguiding we give girls a voice and provide them with a space where they and be themselves and grow in confidence.
- Our members enjoy a wide variety of activities, including outdoor adventure, learning skills for the future and community action.

How does Girlguiding stay relevant to girls?

- In July 2018 Girlguiding revealed its new activities and badges. Girls in guiding helped develop these from the start.
- Girls said they wanted activities that equipped them to be leaders in the modern world, challenges that really stretched them and a programme which included more adventure, social action and technical skills.
- We offer a hugely varied programme - we have something for every girl.
- New badges include Mixology, Saver, Craftivism, Digital Design, Mindfulness and Speaking Out.

How are members involved in Girlguiding?

- We run Rainbows (five to seven years old), Brownies (seven to 10 years old), Guides (10 to 14 years old) and Rangers (14 to 18 years old).
- We give all girls and young women the chance to develop their potential.

How many members does Girlguiding have?

- Girlguiding Scotland is the leading charity for girls and young women in Scotland, with around 50,000 young members
- Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK with almost half a million members.

Why doesn't Girlguiding accept boys?

- We are proud to offer a space where all girls, including trans girls, are welcome and we are committed to balancing the needs of all our member so everyone can enjoy their guiding experience

Is Girlguiding a feminist organisation?

- Regardless of how you classify yourself, there's no denying that Girlguiding does fantastic work with girls and young women, helping them to challenge themselves and grow in confidence.

Girlguiding's received a lot of attention in relation to the transgender debate. What can you tell me about that? Can anyone who identifies as a girl join?

- Girlguiding is for all girls. We are proud to be an inclusive organisation that reflects the world we all live in.

How is Girlguiding funded?

- Our volunteers give their time for free.
- We are a charity that is funded through membership subscriptions, our trading services and other supporters such as generous individuals, as well as gifts from trusts and partners.

Are you linked to Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in other countries?

- Girlguiding is a founding member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, a worldwide movement of approximately 10 million girls and young women in 150 countries.

Dealing with a crisis

In the event of a crisis, **don't** respond to any media enquiries - take the caller's details, say someone will call them back and ring the Girlguiding SHQ where someone will support you.

In a crisis situation, after notifying the out-of-hours press team, please use the following response to manage any media enquiries you may receive. It is not your responsibility to deal with enquiries - but the below will assist you with sending the media to the Girlguiding Scotland comms team. You could use it on the phone or over email:

"If you have any questions, please contact the Girlguiding Scotland press team on 0131 226 4511, or 07852 554 779 for out-of-hours press enquiries. Alternatively, send an email to marketing@girlguiding-scot.org.uk."

Please do not say that you have no comment - simply say their call will be returned.

During office hours, ring the SHQ on 0131 226 4511 and ask for Nicoletta or Carolyn (it's a good idea to save this number to your phone in case of emergency).

During out-of-office hours please call 07852 554 779. If there is no answer please leave a message stating your name, phone number and a brief description of your enquiry and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

When speaking to the SHQ comms team make sure you have the following information if possible:

- The names of the people involved
- Details of what happened
- Steps taken, if any
- Your position/perspective on the situation

It is vitally important that as a CPRA you inform the Girlguiding SHQ PR team of anything that could generate negative or major publicity for the organisation.

Don't be drawn into acting as a spokesperson for Girlguiding on issues of internal or external policy - this is the role of the SHQ comms team.

Your prompt action will allow the SHQ PR team to prepare a position statement (or a holding statement if the incident/issue has not reached the media's attention). It will also give us the opportunity to agree a common strategy involving the relevant local commissioners and advisors.

You should call the PR team whenever you need support - but especially if there has been:

- A sudden death or a serious accident
- Any kind of discrimination (including perceived age discrimination) or abuse
- An alleged criminal act
- Fraud
- A policy investigation
- A serious complaint
- Any other situation you believe may bring Girlguiding into disrepute

How HQ and Countries/Regions work together

Each country/region has a dedicated press officer who works alongside the other teams at HQ to offer support. This includes:

- Regular telephone calls between HQ staff members and the C/R comms team
- Instant Messenger groups between HQ and C/R comms team
- Press Officer support at events, with drafting press releases, drawing up press plans, crisis comms
- Key message and engaging with the media training - if this is something you are interested in please let your C/R office know.

If you are a C/R level CPRA you will be invited to these meetings and can feed into the agendas.

If you are a county, district or division level CPRA, and would like to feed into these meetings or have any questions about the partnership agreements or plans for the year, please contact your C/R level CPRA or C/R comms staff member.

Thank you!

Finally, we would like to say a massive thank you for all your hard work shouting out about Girlguiding and giving girls a voice in the media.

Working with local media is a critical part of Girlguiding's communications work. We wouldn't be able to do it without your fantastic commitment and support.

If you would like to discuss anything in this guide or would like any further information about Girlguiding's work in the media, please don't hesitate to contact the Girlguiding SHQ comms team.

Contacts

Name	Role	Email
Carolyn Fox McKay	Marketing and Communications Manager	Carolyn@girlguiding-scot.org.uk
Nicoletta Primo	PR and Policy Officer	Nicoletta@girlguiding-scot.org.uk
Katy Spry	Digital Marketing Officer	Katy@girlguiding-scot.org.uk

Appendix one - example press release

Please note: Some examples are from Girlguiding UK and include different notes to editors and contact details. A Scottish example is also included.

Please follow this format when writing your own press releases.



Girlguiding
Press Release
February 2019

CALLING ALL GIRLS! YOUNG WOMEN URGED TO CHECK OUT LOCAL DULWICH GROUP

A local Dulwich Guides group is inviting more girls to join them on a journey of fun, friendship and adventure.

New Girlguiding members can look forward to an exciting and varied programme of activities, events and trips where they will make lifelong friends in a safe girl-only environment.

In July 2018, the charity overhauled its iconic badges and activities to reflect the world that girls live in today. The badges and activities give girls the chance to build their skills and confidence.

The new badges on offer to Guides, which is open to all girls aged 10 to 14 years old, include Craftivism, Meditation, Vlogging, Mixology and Conscious Consumer.

Sonam, 12, who is a member of the North Dulwich group said: “I love being a Guide and having fun every week with my friends. I’ve made lots of new friends and love trying new things with them. I recently got the Upcycling badge and it has made me more aware of how much we throw away when we don’t need to.”

The group currently has 12 girls and has an action-packed programme of activities planned, including a trip to Crystal Palace Park Farm and a visit from local MP Helen Hayes.

The visit follows a recent trip the young members took to the Houses of Parliament, where they were given a tour of the grounds and visited the statues of Emmeline Pankhurst and Millicent Fawcett.

Lottie, 11, said: “Getting to look around the Houses of Parliament was so interesting - I really enjoyed getting to see where all the important decisions about the country are made. I’ve always wanted to be a writer but now I think now I’d like to make laws.”

The 5th North Dulwich Guides meet on Monday evenings at 7:30pm at a venue in Dulwich. On March 5 the group will be holding a taster session which is open to any girls interested in joining, with activities linked to mixology planned.

Rachel, the group's leader, said "This is a fantastic opportunity for even more local girls to meet new friends and have amazing experiences while growing in confidence and self-belief.

"We're a friendly bunch and we're always really excited to meet new members. Girlguiding is open to all girls whatever their background or circumstances so please don't hesitate to get in touch if you're interested in joining."

If your daughter would like to join the 5th North Dulwich Brownies, please contact Rachel Bernard at rachelbernard@gmail.com.

Girlguiding, the UK's leading charity for girls and young women, offers a varied programme of activities and adventures for all girls and young women aged 5 to 18. As well as earning badges, girls can travel, speak out about issues they care about and make a difference in their communities.

In April 2019, Girlguiding launched Future Girl, its major new manifesto for girl-led change. 76,000 girls and young women in Girlguiding shared their vision for the future, on topics including bullying, gender stereotypes, appearance pressures, and the environment. Girlguiding is now working with girls all over the UK to make this future a reality, and to help girls to create the change they want.

In September 2019, almost half a million Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and volunteers across the UK came together to tackle plastic pollution, as part of the first Future Girl week of action. Girls made a #PlasticPromise to reduce their single-use plastic, wrote to MPs about their concerns, and created sculptures of animals they want to protect out of plastic waste.

For further information about Girlguiding and how to get involved, call 0800 169 5901 or visit www.girlguiding.org.uk

-ENDS-

Pictures attached show members of the 5th North Dulwich Brownie unit standing outside the Houses of Parliament. The girls, left to right, are Sonam Mandeep, Kate Jessop, Mira Cotson, Lottie Travers and Caroline Brent.

For further information, please contact Rachel Bernard at rachelbernard@gmail.com.

Notes to editors:

About Girlguiding

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK, with over half a million members. Thanks to the dedication and support of 100,000 amazing volunteers, we are active in every part of the UK, giving girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good. We

give them a space to have fun. We run Rainbows (5-7 years (4-7 in Ulster)), Brownies (7-10 years), Guides (10-14 years) and Rangers (14-18 years). Registered Charity No 306016.

www.girlguiding.org.uk

Example press release - Scotland



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALLING ON GIRLS AND VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN THE FUN & ADVENTURE OF GIRLGUIDING IN EDINBURGH

A new guiding unit in Edinburgh is inviting more girls to join them on a journey of fun, friendship and adventure.

The 2nd Forth Rangers are offering girls aged 14-18 a space to be themselves and take part in new experiences. New members can look forward to an exciting and varied programme of activities, events and trips where they will make lifelong friends and a space to have fun.

The group have taken part in an action-packed programme of activities including camping and caving at Girlguiding Scotland's outdoor activity centre at Netherurd, watching Lewis Capaldi live at Tartan Gig - Girlguiding Scotland's exclusive concert for its members, as well as a raft building competition.

The 2nd Forth Rangers meet on Monday evenings at a venue in the Granton area. The group is funded by the CashBack for Communities Programme which has funded nearly 2 million activities and opportunities for young people.

Hannah the group's leader, said: "This new unit means even more girls can enjoy all that guiding has to offer. We've been away on trips, watched Lewis Capaldi live and the girls have made new friends. I've seen them grow in confidence and try new things. We're always really happy to welcome new members so come along and give us a try! Girlguiding Scotland is open to all girls whatever their background or circumstances so please don't hesitate to get in touch if you're interested in joining."

Chelsea, age 15, who is a member of the 2nd Forth Rangers said: "Being part of Rangers means I can learn new skills like teambuilding. We also got to go to Tartan Gig which was amazing. My favourite band were the Vamps!"

Hannah, age 14, added: “I like coming to Rangers because it’s an escape from everyday life.”

To find out more about registering your daughter to join the fun and adventure of Girlguiding Scotland or to volunteer call 0131 226 4511 or visit www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk/get-involved/

ENDS

Note to editors:

To arrange interviews with our members please contact Nicoletta Primo, Girlguiding Scotland Press Office on 0131 226 4511 / 07852 554 779 /nicoletta@girlguiding-scot.org.uk.

About Girlguiding Scotland

Girlguiding Scotland is the leading charity for girls and young women in Scotland, with around 50,000 young members. We build girls’ confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good. We give them a space to have fun. Find out more at www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk

Appendix two - example FPN



OPERATIONAL NOTE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 17 MARCH 2019

NORTH WEST BROWNIES BREAK WORLD RECORD FOR LARGEST SLEEPOVER

Girls to return to Chester Zoo to celebrate their latest achievement

Next week, Brownies from across the North West of England will flock to the UK’s number one wildlife attraction to celebrate one of their biggest achievements yet - breaking the record for the world’s largest sleepover.

Guinness World Records have officially announced that Girlguiding North West England broke the record for the world’s largest sleepover at Chester Zoo on 10 March 2018 with 2,004 participants.

The Brownies - all aged seven to 10 - held a massive girl-only sleepover at Chester Zoo last March. A year on, the girls have yet more cause for celebrations after receiving their momentous news.

Last year's Wild Encounters @ Chester Zoo saw the intrepid Brownies explore the zoo after hours before spending the night in a giant marquee in the middle of the zoo grounds.

The record-breaking Brownies will return to Chester Zoo, home to 12,500 animals, to mark their achievement.

When: 16 March 2019

Press time: Girls will arrive at the zoo at 9am for a 9:30am photo shoot and press opportunity

There will also be time afterwards to accompany the Brownies on a visit around the zoo, including the *Islands* attraction.

To attend, please contact

Ellie Muffitt: 020 7834 6242 Extension 2130

ellie.muffitt@girlguiding.org.uk

Venue: Chester Zoo, Upton-by-Chester, Chester CH2 1LHE

Photo and filming opportunities:

- A group of record-breaking Brownies from all over the North West that participated in the Wild Encounters @ Chester Zoo event last March. The Brownies will visit the animal enclosures with their Guinness World Record certificate, before exploring the *Islands* attraction.

Interview opportunities:

- Interviews with Brownies and volunteers on their world record achievement and what it was like to take part in the unique Wild Encounters @ Chester Zoo event.

- ENDS -

Notes to editors:

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www.girlguiding.org.uk

