

Essex West News Fest



QUARTERLY UPDATES FROM AROUND THE COUNTY

AUTUMN 2025

Rosemary writes...

It's certainly been a busy summer!

I know some girls like getting muddy - the hundreds of girls that were at the mud run certainly confirmed that. I can't believe how long it took to get the shower area even vaguely clean and let's not mention peeling some girls out of their welly boots that were full of water! Many thanks to the centre staff and our P&A team for organising such a fun filled day.

I was really upset to miss the next P&A event - this time for adults only with a trip to the theatre to see Joseph but I've heard how popular it was, I'm not going to miss the next one! Chris is already taking names so don't miss out.

We held our County INTOPs (international opportunities) day at The Pines at the end of June with girls from across the county attending. It was really difficult to select only a handful to go forward. We are sure those girls chosen will enjoy a memorable trip with others from across the Region.

Over 80 volunteers attended our county cream tea at the end of July and heard a wonderful talk from a previous Brentwood leader who told us all about her trips across the world and how Guiding had influenced her life.

I do hope that you enjoyed your break during the summer holidays. Members of P&A were busy planning County Capers for Guides and Rangers and the Big Brownie Adventure which was worthwhile with many girls having fun and adventures - although we did not do too well planning the afternoon weather at Skreens Park....

Winter wonders training on 4th October was a real buzz as leaders discussed neurodiversity, gift aid and best type of doughnuts along with programme planning and first response.

As I write this report the forms are out to nominate my successor - do give it some thought and put forward ideas to move our County on

Programme & Adventure

Thinking Day 2026

As this will be the celebration of 100 years of Thinking Day we are planning a County event for all Sections on Saturday 21st February 2026. This will take the form of 10 Decades of Guiding (including Inspiring Women, International and Friendship) Times and Venue to be confirmed.

Other ideas in the planning stage from Programme & Adventure include:

- A wellbeing day for Leaders
- A Training/Fun day for Young Leaders
- Badge Days for all Sections at Chigwell and The Pines
- City Escape for Rangers
- Guide Adventure Day
- White Water Rafting for Guides/Rangers

We are looking for people to join Task & Finish groups for all of the above. Further details to follow when planning is complete.



WE NEED YOU

In readiness for Anglia 27 event at Hautbois, we are on the look out for a county champion who will become our county representative.

You will be the main point of contact between region and those units who attend from our county. Ideally this should be someone who plans on attending the event themselves in order to ensure smooth communication and accurate information is passed to and from the region.

If you are interested please contact the county office who will put you in contact with the right team

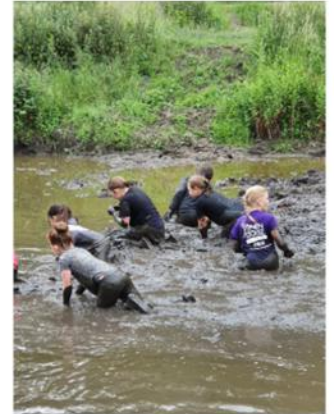
Mud Run



On Saturday 7th June we held our County Mud Run at Nuclear Wild Forest, Kelvedon, Brentwood

We had in the region of 150 Brownies in the morning and 100 Guides/Rangers in the afternoon.

All the girls taking part had an amazing time. One Guide even got to make her promise at the top of the death slide - the Centre Manager said that this had been a first for her and she felt privileged to be part of it.



PR Opportunity



On the 6th of September Leaders from Thurrock East and West joined together to run a stall at The Orsett Show.

We were busy all day with people enjoying the one minute challenge activities that came from region such as building a tower of polo mints, threading Cheerios onto a pipe cleaner, sorting skittles into colour groups or getting marbles into a hole in a flower pot!



While the young people were busy enjoying the challenges we were able to talk to parents about guiding and we gave out lots of joining leaflets to potential new girls and adults.

We had lots of girls who were already in Guiding keen to share with us about badges they had earned and lots of reminiscing from adults who had been involved with Guiding when they were younger.

We gave out lots of stickers, badges, pens and pencils that we had received from region and county. The branded gazebo really caught peoples attention too so is well worth using if you can.

Thank you to Gaynor Bray, Jill Osborne and Sarah Collins for supporting this event.

Dates for Diaries

22nd November - [Pines Quiz Night](#)
21st February - Thinking Day 100
June 2026 - Barnum trip
Date TBC - [Disneyland Paris](#)

Photos Wanted

Girlguiding Essex West are always on the lookout for photographs to show what our young people have been up to. Please email your photos to:

comms.ggew@gmail.com

REMEMBER, YOU MUST HAVE PHOTO CONSENT FOR SHARING THESE PHOTOS

Brownie Day



In the region of 280 Brownies plus their Leaders and Young Leaders all came together in September, at Skreens Park, Chelmsford for a day of fun and adventure.

Activities included Archery, Tomahawk Throwing, Cave Bus, Parachute Jump, Cricket, Marshmallow Toasting, Pedal Karts, Crate Stacking, Sumo, Low Ropes and lots more.

The weather wasn't completely on our side, but despite 2 heavy downpours, the rainbow shone brightly and the girls didn't let it spoil their day.



Joseph Theatre Trip

50 Leaders from across the County came together at the Cliffs Pavilion (Southend-on-Sea) in June, to watch Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat.

A great evening was had by all.

Due to the success of this event, we are now booking tickets to see Barnum in June 2026.



Essex West hut at Chigwell

The renovations are going well and we hope to have the hut back on the pillars early October. Shortly we will be asking for volunteers to come and paint, but we just need to get the hut stable and waterproofed before that. Then we can get the equipment back in there and finish off the little bits and pieces.

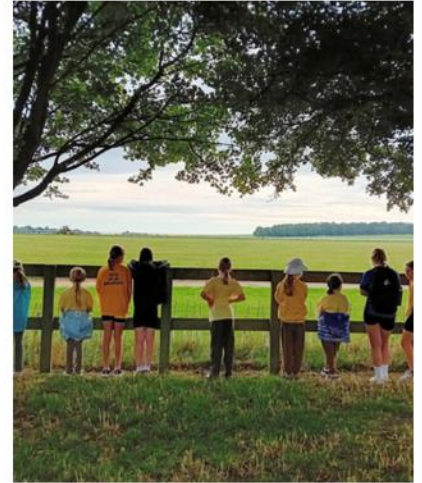
What have you been up to?

4th Epping (St John's) Brownies enjoyed their Summer 2025 Pack Holiday in Newmarket.

18 girls, 6 adults, a Ranger (young leader in training) & a Guide helper, all set off for 5 days & 4 nights at The Jarman Centre. The setting was perfect. We took part in archery sessions, got up early to have breakfast at The Gallops – watching the horses in training. People stopped us & asked for a sing song!

We made hobby horses & set up our own race course. We crafted fascinators for our Ascot Ladies Day party. One morning, we trooped off in the pouring rain for a visit to The National Horse Racing Museum. Nobody complained for the 1.6 miles, not even the one who walked in bin bags because 'Alexa' had not forecast rain for the week!

A great time was had by all & of course we are already thinking about next year.



I had the pleasure of awarding Sheila Healey a Good Service Award in July. Sheila has 60 plus years of Guiding and is our current Division Treasurer. She was very surprised when Tracy Kerby and I surprised her with flowers, cakes and the award.

Kim Messenger
Brentwood Division Commissioner

1st Church Langley Brownies Guides and Rangers had a fantastic day at Hertfordshire Zoo - even a short shower didn't dampen their spirits and meeting the dinosaurs was fun too.



Winter Wonders Training

The trainings were well received. First Response, Neurodiversity, gift aid, planning the programme and Getting out of the box were the topics this time. Leaders went home with a whole term planned and other activities, the confidence to get gift aid and an better understanding of Neurodiversity children. It was a good day.

Here is some feedback from the recent training held at the beginning of October, if you have not attended a training for a while, why no think about joining the next one. You may just get a new idea, or 2, to take back to your unit

"I thought the day went well. From the booking process to the day itself, I had great communication from the team organising and making payment was super easy. I thought the trainers were good. What I benefited from most was just being around other leaders, who had a ton of experience & knowledge to share" - Debs

"How easy to forget in post-COVID times, what you can gain from meeting face-to-face every now and then! The Girlguiding training was helpful from a practical perspective (how do I consider girls with additional requirements, what might these look like, what can I do?) But also useful and enriching from a personal perspective. Meeting other women invested in supporting young girls, who can also tap into their own sense of fun and adventure is a pleasant reminder that volunteering Girlguiding can be win-win!"

County Capers

At the beginning of September, around 50 Guides and Rangers came together at Hargreaves campsite for a 24 hour camp.

The girls were fully catered for, so began to set up their tents and then have fun – we had a wide game involving all the girls, a campfire and various craft activities.

There was not as many girls as we have had in the past, but those that attended had a great time with the weather very much being on our side.



Staying in contact

Did you know that you can contact the county office at any time in the following ways:



01708 373 746



office@girlguidingsexwest.org.uk

Congratulations

Its so nice to see leaders achieving. Please make sure you share with us when awards are being given



Chloe Whitelegg
Leadership Certificate



Lauren Skinner
Leadership Certificate



Kim Kemp
30 years



Sue Copsey
30 years



Claire Bennett
40 years



Carol Nunn
50 years



Vicky Barrett
Essex Good Guiding Award



Caroline Paters
Good Service Award

Jack Petchey

In July the county came together to celebrate the achievements of our young people at the Queens Theatre, Hornchurch for our annual Jack Petchey Award evening.



Brentwood



Epping Forest South



Epping Forest North



Harlow



North West



Romford



Thurrock East



Thurrock West



Hornchurch



Upminster



Leaders

County Financial Help

Did you know that county offer grants and other financial help to units that are struggling. Read on to find out how a recent grant and loan have enabled a guide unit to continue running. For any help and support please reach out to the office who will put you in touch with the right team

County provided 1st Epping Guides with a grant and an interest-free loan and we are so grateful. In the summer of 2024, with some wonderful leaders retiring after decades of service to Girlguiding, and numbers of girls vastly reduced due to the essential closure of waiting lists in COVID, 1st Epping Guides looked dangerously close to closing. However, during that summer, Julie Taylor and Shanne Woodhouse spear-headed a Herculean recruitment drive! Six women from the local community stepped up, joined the team and they are still going strong today! Early on, it didn't look possible to pay our rent costs, and it was tricky to manage finances to pay for our new amazing adult volunteers. But, luckily County stepped in and enabled us to move forwards to form a strong financial position. We are now a thriving unit with 30 girls, 2 almost newly qualified leaders, and ran our first solo camp this summer! Thank you County, you have enabled 1st Epping Guides to keep providing these wonderful opportunities to our local girls.



Website

Keep your eye on the news and events pages as they are updated regularly.

There is a compliments page, please publicise this to parents, and add your compliments!

<https://www.girlguidingsexwest.org.uk>

Are you part of the Leaders Facebook group?

You will find important updates and event information in here, Leaders Community. You will need to answer a few questions to join.

Have you seen the public page? The Facebook page can be shared across your own profile to help with publicity too!

