Girlguiding
Durham South county

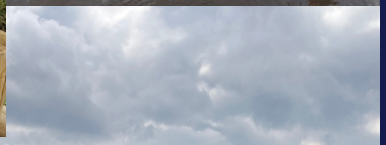
Annual Review 2023

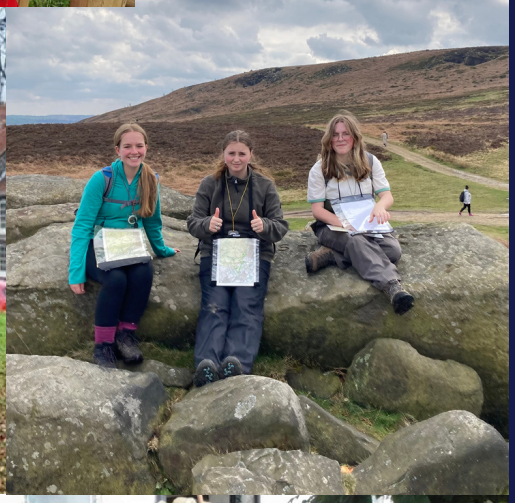

















Message from your County President

" Girl Guiding and Girl scouting can be the magic thread which links the world together" *Juliette Low*



Looking for something the other day, I ended up browsing through old reports. I continue to be amazed at the variety of activities you offer. And it set me wondering – where are all those girls now? How much did guiding help their development? How many lives have we touched, influenced, changed? And no . . . I have no idea what I started out looking for!

I was reminded of the slogans / straplines we've had over the years: Doing Our Best, Girls in the Lead, We Make Things Happen, Girls Can Do Anything, We Give Girls A Voice, We Discover.. We Grow. How lucky we are to have such talented and inspirational leaders in Durham South to make guiding grow.

So 'Thank You' to ALL who every week keep guiding going and growing.

Jean Foulds

Message from your County Commissioner



Jessica Redhead

The start of 2023 saw us say a huge thank you to Di Farrer as she stepped down as our County Commissioner after a number of years, as I stepped into the role. The first year as your County Commissioner has been a whirlwind for me as I have gotten to know so many of you from across the county and learn about the amazing guiding that takes place every week in Durham South.

We have had some brilliant events, but two in particular stood out for me. The team work and effort from across the county to run our county camp at East Shotton, Ethel's Camp was amazing. The camp saw leaders and members from across the county come together for the weekend with a focus on traditional camp skills, and it was clear everyone enjoyed all the activities and were very well fed the chefs team. The other event was our volunteers thank you afternoon tea at Ramside Hall. We had 145 volunteers from the county come along for an afternoon of tasty food and socialising with our guiding friends. I was very proud to be able to stand up and thank all of you for the time and commitment you all make every week, as it doesn't go unnoticed.

Looking back at the photos from this year, its clear that as a county we are very lucky to have so many amazing volunteers leading our units and supporting our young members to realise they can do anything! Thank you for all you commitment in 2023, and I can't wait to see what you all achieve in 2024!

Long Service Awards

5 Year Awards
26 Awarded

10 Year Awards
18 Awarded

20Year Awards
Jane McDermott
Victoria Marshall

30 Year Awards
Anne Bielok
Pauline Crawford
Pamela Lee
Norma Snowdon

40 Year Awards
Jean Foulds
Judy Freeman
Jackie O'Sullivan
Julie Towler

50 Year Awards
Carolyn Pybus
Judith Stirk
Carol Surtees

60 Year Awards
Denise Midwood

Unit and Level Changes

Opened

22nd Darlington Rangers
Carmel District

Closed

22nd Darlington Rangers
1st Wheatley Hill Rainbows
1st Blackhall Rainbows
1st Blackhall Guides
1st Seaham Brownies
1st Witton le Sear Rainbows
1st Easington Village Rainbows
Seaham District











Barnard Castle









2023 was another busy year for Barnard Castle. As the final year for Debby as Division Commissioner she was keen to continue building from the Covid years to bring together the Division and provide opportunities for the girls.

We started the year with 3 brownie packs joining for pack holiday at Camp House in January. In February we held our annual Thinking Day activity day with all units joining for activities at Barnard Castle HQ, culminating in a service at the Parish Church, where Trefoil members also joined us.

In June we took over Richmond cinema to see Little Mermaid and we followed this in December to see Wish. Over 100 members attended each time. Brownies from across Division travelled to Waddow Hall to attend Magic and Mayhem, and they were followed by Guides and Rangers in August at Wellies and Wristbands. We had all sections and most units attending Flamingo Fling in September, some just for the day and some overnight. We also had Brownies and Guides partaking in Ethels camp in July.

We held our annual Brownie Quiz which was won by Staindrop Brownies in October, and this was followed by the Division Disco for all units. There were other events for leaders and girls, and the weekly unit meetings which have provided fun and opportunities to a growing membership.

Thank you to all for the support given during my 6 years as Commissioner.
Debby

Debby Brown, Division Commissioner











Bishop Auckland











2023 has been a busy year for all the units, doing lots of fab activities for the skills builders and unit meeting activities, with individuals gaining bronze, silver and gold awards.

The highlights of the year: St Helens Guides and Rangers going to Wellies and Wristbands and Flamingo Fling. At the Bishop Auckland Youth Awards, Tilly won young volunteer of the year and Rosie won an achievement award.

Shildon Guides enjoyed spending a lot of time outdoors learning lot of new skills, such as cooking together and doing lots of challenges. Shildon and St Helens Brownies enjoyed going to Magic and Mayhem at Waddow and trying activities that they don't normally get a chance to. When they met other units that realised that they are part of a big family of Guiding members.

Tow Law Rainbows had a sleep over with Langley Park, the Brownies took action by collecting food for the food bank and Guides visited Bishop Auckland hospital to experience the life of a Nurse and Doctor. The Division held an activity day at East Shotton for the Brownies, Guides and Rangers and each section completed a skills builder in a day as a large team.

Bishop Auckland Division were very proud to take the lead in planning the County Camp in memory of Ethel and it was fab that so many units took part.

Claire Bissett, Division Commissioner













Chester-le-Street

April saw joint Brownie units enjoying a pack holiday at Adventure House Waddow. The Brownies had an amazing time and took part in a whole range of activities. Sadly, as Waddow has now closed it makes the memories of the pack holiday very poignant.

We were all very proud when Jess, our assistant Division Commissioner was appointed as County Commissioner, taking over the reins from Di. A lovely evening was held at the Glow Centre.

The coronation of HM King Charles III was celebrated with a Division event at our HQ. it was quite a logistical operation to have over 100 Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers come together for the day. We had a photo booth, various coronation themed activities and a finale of toasting marshmallows at a campfire. An unexpected event also took place when we watched a large swarm of bees crawl up the wall of a neighbouring house and in through an air brick. The noise of the bees was quite deafening!

We hired the cinema at the Gala Theatre in Durham for an exclusive viewing of the Little Mermaid. Everyone who attended got a goody bag with sweets, popcorn, a bottle of water and of course the special edition badge, it was great fun.

During the summer joint Guide units held a camp at Moorhouse.

Leaders continue to make guiding fun, with units having adventures, going bowling, swimming, go karting, as well as day trips away. Many units also attended Flamingo Fling 2. Throughout the year we have seen many girls receiving bronze, silver and gold awards.

Units have also continued to welcome a range of visitors to their meetings. One unit had a visit from a guide dog and his owner. The girls were shown a range of gadgets that can support blind people to be able to live independently.

Remembrance Sunday was very well attended with Rainbows marching along with Brownies and Guides and marched very proudly down the Front Street to the market place.

At Christmas many units went to see a pantomime, some went to the Gala theatre Durham and others to Sunderland Empire.

We would like to thank everyone for the time, commitment and opportunities they give to the girls within Chester le Street Division, it is very much appreciated.

Dorothy Hales & Vivien Purdom , Division Commissioners

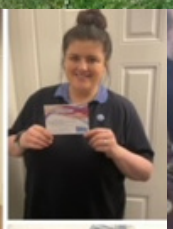


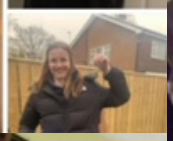














Darlington Lomotion









Girls have taken part in activities both in their units and at Division level. The Division took a double decker bus full of girls to Flamingo Fling and had a great time.

Our Guides, Rangers and older Brownies had a day full of activities at The Hub at Barnard Castle, canoeing, crate stacking and archery. Parties were held for Thinking day, to celebrate the King's Coronation and a hen party for a leader getting married . Sleepovers were held at Barnard Castle as well at Roarsome (soft play centre)-going down the slide in a sleeping bag was definitely a highlight!

Girls had the opportunity to make arm pit fudge, smores, light fires, go bowling, climb, and play games with parachutes. Girls have worked on interest badges and received awards.Funds were raised for Children in Need as well as Parkinsons UK as part of Ethel's camp challenge which some of our guides and adults attended. Units helped decorate Christmas trees as part of the Darlington shops Christmas project. Christmas coffee mornings were held.

Cinema trips have taken place to see The Little Mermaid and Wonka along with pantomime trips which saw Brownies being able to join the cast on the stage. Adults have been presented with long service awards.

Sadly, we have closed a few units but during the year we welcomed St Columba's units into our Division.

Linda Carvey, Ann Doubleday and Emma Nimmo, Division Commissioners











Darlington Stephenson





Rainbows have busy making slime, eating smores, celebrating Chinese New Year, visited the local fire station & Locomotion Railway Museum & fundraised for Children in Need.

Brownies have completed UMA's, Skills Builders & the Heritage Challenge. They've attended Church Parade, carried out a litter pick, celebrated Burns Night & had holidays at Camp House & Ford Castle.

Guides attended Wellies & Wristbands where one girl renewed her Promise with the Assistant Chief Guide. They've been trampolining, bouldering, held picnics & attended Ethel's Camp where they learned traditional camp skills.

Rangers enjoyed tie dying, board games, water activities and an escape room.

Generally units celebrated the King's Coronation, Mothering Sunday & Parliament Week. They've completed Skills Builders & UMA's working towards, bronze, silver & gold awards. Ethel's Challenge Badge was popular as was Woodlands District Christmas craft day & a Division trip to Vue cinema to watch Disney's Matilda. They've attended STEPPS Panto, Darlington Carnival workshops & Flamingo Fling.

Fiona Ellwood was surprised with a hen do organised by her Guide unit before her wedding in September, where they formed a Guard of Honour & Sophie Finch (12th Brownies) gained her Leadership Qualification. Many congratulations to you both!

Julie Ross, Division Commissioner









Durham



I could say that last year we did normal guiding things in normal guiding ways, and that would be true in a way, but also really undersells the amount of effort and creativity the people have put in and how much girls and leaders alike have got out of it. Unit meetings, as ever the backbone, have involved well over 500 girls in a mind boggling range of activities including a story-telling workshop, sign language, parliament week, Ethel's challenge, games, escape rooms, Remembrance activities, first aid, lots of fun, and many, many badges.

Outside the meeting place there have been several sleepovers, holidays and camps, covering all sections. Again, these are in some ways 'Guiding as normal' but each of these events has been unique and the product of so much hard work that they are anything but 'normal'.

There have been trips to flamingo fling, the pantomime, Beamish and the cinema among others. We held a dog show to raise money, and our main Division event in the summer was a beautifully sunny and well organised coronation event.

I'm very grateful to all our volunteers, whether they've just started this year or have given 50 years of service.

Joanna Buckingham, Division Commissioner







East Durham

Here at East Durham we've had an eventful year, with the loss of some units following the sudden passing of one our longest serving leaders along with retirements, but also new volunteers emerging to support existing units.

Girls have been welcomed into units and continue to enjoy the activities and challenges of the Guiding programme. Many girls have gained their level awards and gained interest badges; along with celebrating the seasons, festivals, held parties and completed the Trefoil Guild 80th challenge badge.

The division have used our Peterlee headquarters to come together for events - for Thinking Day and a Kings coronation event in May where they made crowns, banners, cooked dampers on an open fire, played pin the tail on the corgi and finished with a campfire.

Our autumn term saw the girls enjoy a division disco, and take part in remembrance day services in their communities.
We are looking forward to more activities planned as a division in 2024 !

Tracey Cammock and Katherine Hardman, Division Commissioners







Newton Aycliffe







Newton Aycliffe Division has had a busy year. It was a year that saw the death of the Queen and the coronation of King Charles 3rd – a change to the wording of our promise and the chance to party were just two ways we marked this historic occasion! The whole division worked together to give the girls a great day to remember the coronation.

Two of our units ended the summer term with a bouncy castle evening which the girls enjoyed. Guides and Rangers from the division attended Flamingo Fling which was a great event organised by NEE. The division took part in the local Remembrance Parade which Becci and Sean organised for us – a big thank you to them both.

One of the highlights of the year for some Rainbows and Brownies was the bauble painting at Christmas. A company came in and helped the girls choose paint colours then they decorated the bauble however they wanted to. They then took them away and they were fired in the kiln, When the children collected them the following week there were looks of surprise on everyone's faces. The baubles were transformed from a child's painted bauble to a real keepsake. They really were stunning!

Five Brownies from 1st Newton Aycliffe Brownies were given the opportunity to attend a Brownie Holiday with a unit from Darlington. They enjoyed every minute of the experience and are now nagging Tawny Owl to take us away as a unit. Hopefully you can read about that in next year's report!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the division for all their hard work over the last year.

Sara Layfield-Carroll & Nicola Robinson, Division Commissioners













Sedgefield









2nd Sedgefield rangers made chocolates at La Chocolatrice, joined the Seeds2Trees programme and had outings to ice skating and the aquapark. They've enjoyed residential trips, including Flamingo Fling. They met the mayor for a 'Prime Minister question time'. Three of the rangers have completed their Gold DofE, one, silver and one bronze.

Bishop Middleham Brownies did a traditional maypole dance as part of the coronation celebrations, they spent weeks practicing and performed it beautifully on the day even though they were all very nervous. They all had a lovely day and taught other members of the community how to do the dance afterwards.

2nd Sedgefield Brownies enjoyed a Roald Dahl themed pack holiday, summer picnic and ten pin bowling. They served the community too – planting the village, collecting donations for Feeding Families and learning first aid.

1st Sedgefield Guides enjoyed Ethels Camp and Brownie units from across the division joined in for the day, all really enjoyed the activities. The 1st Sedgefield units had a summer party at the beach and developed teamwork at a science night, with fun experiments and engineering challenges

3rd Spennymoor Brownies attended the JamBrownee2023 at Pax Lodge and celebrated the coronation at Camp House

Jen Maddison, Division Commissioner






POLICE
Rainbows






Rainbows










flamingo
LAND
























She's Having the BEST DAY!
Barbie
In Cinemas July 21
#BarbieTheMovie

