

## Youth Work Strategy Consultation

1. By 'youth work activity', does this mean activities linked to youths, such as fitness and/or swimming clubs, belonging to youth clubs, uniformed organisations? Some youngsters are not interested in the 'club' thing. They may be more self-contained, not a 'joiner-in', but preferring their own company or that of one or two friends. So, the answer would be 'yes'.
5. Girlguiding is now actively marketing the 12-hour Challenge which is invigorating volunteering, encouraging flexibility in how Guiders run Units and Districts. Volunteering needs to be the new buzz word, be made acceptable, indeed the 'thing to do'. Not everyone wants to work with youth, but there are other opportunities - volunteers to help with accounts, fundraise, produce a website, drive a minibus, etc. Attract by providing a day of outdoor/indoor activities with Guiders, being able to network, explain what our Association is all about, being honest about what is involved. Guiders get involved and discover more about themselves as well as friendships and how to have loads of fun!
8. Funding: as a voluntary organisation it is amazing what some Units can raise to enable them to do extraordinary things - such as international camps, climb Munros with qualified instructors. However, for recruitment of new volunteers, for support to Units who have to pay hall or school charges, training volunteers to a professional standard - extra finance is required.

Training: to keep us compliant with new legislation (also minding cost of this), eg. accounting, food hygiene, first aid, minibus training; to allow us to deliver our programmes safely and legally.

To be recognised by local authorities/councils and included in discussions, and listened to and our comments noted.

New legislation costs money, such as fees to auditors, and unfortunately this does auger well for organisations providing safe, challenging and fantastic voluntary service to young people - pricing itself out of the market.

13. Finding out what young people want, sitting down with them in small groups, perhaps at school but preferably outwith, somewhere where they feel most comfortable - and asking and listening. That's a good start. Girlguiding can equip young people with a good start to their adult life: confidence building from trying something new, such as trying out sailing, pioneering, kayaking; being with leaders who are volunteers and do their volunteering happily and enthusiastically; being able to learn by mistakes and with fellow Guides having a good laugh about it; encouraging each other.
14. Encouraging volunteers to open new Girlguiding Units by offering recruitment days, talking and promoting Girlguiding in local and other areas. For those in very isolated areas there is Lone Girlguiding which links Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Senior Section with others in similar situations - or with those who live in areas where there are no Units.
15. By helping in the community, the young person starts to understand the needs of others, learns more about him/herself, strengths, enthusiasm for doing a particular kind of work, eg. fundraising, helping with gardening, working with children, elderly. So youth work in the community is good for the community as well as the young people. It can also break down barriers - where there is prejudice against young people from the old, against race - but it all takes time and patience to work through. As an example, going to a care home to

entertain can bring back memories being a Brownie or Guide for an elderly person. A smile or a word of thanks between a young and elderly person is special.

One idea is to have a kind of 'National Service' for young people to get involved with their communities (not necessarily youth work), for example, community gardening. This would encourage responsibility in young people, taking pride in their communities, giving them 'something to do', and having good relationships with other members of the community.

21. Making sure jargon is not used, the 'Council speak'.
22. More adult volunteers.

To be recognised locally, regionally, nationally as providing an important service to our communities.

To access appropriate accommodation free or at a reasonable rate and safe.
24. At the core of Girlguiding are the 5 Essentials: working together in small groups; encouraging fair leadership and making their own decisions; having a balanced and varied programme; caring for each other; sharing a commitment to a common standard - our Promise, which also encourages active citizenship, spiritual development and to be of service to the community. If national and local organisations took this on board then young people would grow and develop into caring, confident and independent adults.
28. In Girlguiding, young people are encouraged to complete many qualifications which are recognised nationally, and also by employers: for example, Leadership Qualification, Queen's Guide, camp/holiday permits, Catering, Health and First Aid, Duke of Edinburgh Award, community action, Guiding Overseas Linked with Development, youth forums - all showing commitment, willingness to learn new skills, work in teams, independence.

Not everyone wants to be a Young Leader, Ranger or Senior Section member, but sometimes it is the reluctant young person at the start of their Girlguiding 'career' who ends up getting the most out of what they do. "You only get out what you put in."
31. For the volunteer, commonsense and wanting to work with youth. Skills may be qualifications in sport, running camps or residentials, outdoor activities, creativity, leadership. Qualities: honesty, trust, reliable, helpful, listener, polite, considerate, respectful and a good friend. Support: within Girlguiding there is a great network of support from country to region to county to districts to units. This comprises advisers (camping, outdoor, holiday, walking, safe from harm, disabilities, arts, music, etc), finance experts, commissioners, leadership co-ordinators, Senior Section/Duke of Edinburgh Award advisers, etc.
32. In Girlguiding, we go through a pre-warrant status, learning on the job by completing a leadership qualification before becoming fully warranted to take on the responsibilities of running a Unit. This qualification is nationally recognised and also includes attending trainings on first aid and safe from

harm as well as other issues, such as programme planning, challenging behaviour. After becoming Warranted there are many opportunities to take on more roles, such as an Adviser with a particular expertise, Commissioner who manages volunteers at District, Division or County level. Girlguiding has its own well qualified trainers and there are also mentors who help pre-warrant Guiders on their way to becoming warranted.

34. This is sometimes the case but in Girlguiding we encourage counties to share their expertise. For instance, a holiday adviser in one county could help by providing training or mentoring in another county which does not have a holiday adviser. One example of a specific type of training is Elementary Food Hygiene. This is not a requirement yet, but may be introduced in due course. This particular training would be too expensive for Units to pay the full cost.
36. Need to liaise with Girlguiding at national level.

**Other comments:**

For this consultation to work, our contribution as volunteers working with young people and the community must be taken seriously. To quote a Guider: "I'm very lucky as a Guide Guider as I am able to see the Guides grow in many ways during the time with our Unit, from a young 10 year old child into a confident young woman, well equipped through the skills she has gained in guiding, and ready to take on the challenges of life. I consider it a privilege to share these special years."

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