

GIRLGUIDING BUCKINGHAMSHIRE'S DIVISIONS

Burnham Beeches Division

Girlguiding Burnham Beeches takes its name from the ancient woodland at its heart. The division is situated at the southern tip of Buckinghamshire and Anglia Region and borders both London and South East and South West of England Regions. It nestles between the Grand Union Canal and the Thames, the main rail and road arteries from London to the West and the Midlands, and underneath the flight paths for Heathrow. Despite being so close to transport links the division is full of historic villages, many of them immortalised in films produced at Pinewood Studios. The area embraced Guiding from its infancy and all four districts have units with over 100 years continuous service. In the late 1940's and early 1950's a number of jamborees, including a world jamboree were held on the estate of Lady Burnham, a former Chief Guide Commissioner. Today's Guiding membership reflects the population - some girls come from families that, like the villages, have been here since before the Domesday Book. Others have moved into the area from all corners of the United Kingdom to be near the capital, and from countries all around the world. When thinking about an international activity it's not unusual to have a parent from that nation able to add personal insight. Guiding provides a vital link in the community joining girls from different cultures and backgrounds and forging friendships across social divides.

Chepping and High Wycombe Division

Chepping & High Wycombe Division - is an active division, currently virtually and in more normal times in person! On an annual basis for many years now we have offered all girls in the Division a trip to see the pantomime in Aylesbury - sadly cancelled last year but already booked again for this year - fingers crossed! We also have a regular division-wide Guide and Ranger challenge when the units all get together outdoors at Ellesborough and are challenged to cook a meal outdoors using a set of (previously unknown) ingredients - just like the TV programme Ready Steady Cook! We have a shield which gets engraved with the winning unit's name and is then held by that unit until the challenge takes place again. Similarly, we have another challenge across all Brownie units in the Division. The theme this time differs each time it is held; sometimes it is craft based, sometimes outdoors, sometimes activity based. Once again there is a shield which gets engraved with the winning unit's name! We also try to hold a Division swimming competition every couple of years or so with races for Brownies, Guides, Rangers and adults! This is usually a very popular event with lots of parents and family members cheering all the girls on! We also do our best to encourage our units to offer the girls exciting trips away - especially encouraging Brownies to visit and stay at Pax Lodge, Guides to visit Our Chalet and, before the pandemic, we were working towards offering a trip to Our Cabana to our Rangers. For the Girlguiding Centenary (admittedly a few years ago now!) we organised a Division trip to Switzerland to visit Our Chalet. It was a tremendous success with the oldest participant a Trefoil member in her 80s and the youngest a Brownie of 8! Currently our units are holding lots of virtual meetings and events including virtual sleepovers but we look forward to when we can resume our "normal" Guiding!

Chesham Vale Division

Chesham is a market town, in the Chilterns at the end of the metropolitan line from London, with a population of about 24k, it has the river Chess running through it and is surrounded by lush meadows, wooded hills and abundant wildlife. Chesham Vale division includes 10 units, Rainbow, Brownie, Guide and Ranger in the town and the surrounding villages of Chartridge and Ley Hill, as well as an active Trefoil Guild. In 1926 we were fortunate to be given the land for a meeting place by Squire Lowndes and a wooden Guide Hut, which was supposed to last 10 years, was built. By 1985 it really needed a lot of work so we fundraised and built our new Headquarters which was opened in 1993. As well as following the Guiding programme all the units get involved in the community taking part the Chesham Remembrance Day parade and the Schools of Chesham carnival. We have raised money for various charities and made Christmas cakes for people who live on their own. As a division we hold events for all the girls including camps, a virtual one in 2020, craft days, and singing in the town for Thinking Day. We attend County events such as the Banner Service, Competition Hike and camps as well as national events such as the Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey.

Kingswood Division

The Kingswood Division was established in 1972. We are in the south of the County and comprises of High Wycombe North, Penn and Tylers Green, Holmer Green and Loudwater Districts. Our Division has a wealth of experience in guiding, where around 1/3 of our members have over 20 years' service - right up to 60 years' service - that's an amazing 870 years! We even have our own MBE!

Of course we mustn't forget our other amazing leaders who bring fresh ideas to our young members. Kingswood are working hard to become a stronger and successful Division and we have a very committed Division of volunteers who are wanting to make this happen.

Milton Keynes Division

Ask people what they know about Milton Keynes, and most of them will reply that we have a lot of roundabouts... we've heard all the jokes! But did you know that Milton Keynes has more green space per person than anywhere else in Britain? In fact, no matter where in MK you are, you are never more than half a mile from a park. That perfectly sums up what MK is all about - although we're a built up and busy city we're incredibly lucky to have such diverse open spaces. And just like our spaces, our Guiding family across MK is the picture of diversity. We have families living in top income brackets across the road from families living in poverty. But, bring them together at a weekly meeting and I defy you to spot the difference. That's because we have a fantastic network of leaders across MK with a mix ages and backgrounds who are highly skilled in levelling the playing field and making Guiding accessible to all, especially in the current pandemic. We have units from all sections meeting on every night of the week (and making use of those brilliant green spaces outdoors as we adapt to new ways of meeting), a commitment to continual flexibility in Guiding following on from COVID, a purpose-built Guiding centre at Heron's Lodge where we've gathered from far and wide for meetings, events and residential and even a fully stocked Guiding shop run by volunteers from across the Division. Most importantly, we're a really close-knit Guiding family in MK, always willing to brave the drive round more than a few roundabouts to lend a hand to each other!

Ouse Valley Division

Is the furthest point north in Buckinghamshire County. We are made up of 4 Districts Olney, Newport Pagnell, Stantonbury and Wolverton and stretch over 11 miles from Stony Stratford in the west to Olney in the north.

We have a fantastic team of volunteers spread across 29 units which consists of a combination of Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers. Our biggest District is Newport Pagnell in the middle of the Division which has 10 units.

We are a well-run Division and very much a guiding family, with all members looking out for each other.

One activity which is unique to our Division is our Night at the Museum event which happens every 4 years. This is a sleepover at our local Milton Keynes museum where the girls takeover the museum for the weekend and enjoy sleeping in amongst the exhibits. The last one being virtual in 2020.

Thames Division

Thames Division is characterised by the River Thames which winds its way through Marlow and Bourne End districts and close by to Flackwell Heath and Marlow Bottom so we are all close to the river. Being a largely rural Division, our area is known for the cherry orchards in Flackwell Heath, plus more industrial activities of paper mills in Bourne End. Marlow Bottom is home to five times Olympic Gold medal winner Steve Redgrave, and known for being in a valley with muntjac deer. Marlow is known for author Mary Shelley, author of Dr Frankenstein, and now the home to three popular eateries owned by chef Tom Kerridge. Guiding had been present in Thames Division for over 100years.