

# Volunteer role information

## County commissioner

### Why Girlguiding?

Join our 80,000+ volunteers and supporters already making a massive difference to girls and young women. Volunteer for us as a county commissioner and you'll become an inspiring role model for our volunteers and young members and help empower the people you work with to be their best.

### Why do we love this role?

The unit meetings that girls go along to are at the heart of guiding. At these they get messy, make new friends and take part in activities and adventures to help them discover their potential. Our commissioners lead Girlguiding in their area, motivating and inspiring other local volunteers to make our meetings happen.

As a county commissioner you'll be the lead volunteer for your county. You'll represent your county at region level and will be a really important part of helping to shape strategy and direction. You'll also support district and/or division commissioners to support local units, making sure girls and young women have fantastic experiences at Girlguiding.

You'll have the chance to empower a dedicated team of volunteers to lead with confidence. You'll use your vision and strategic thinking skills to take Girlguiding forward in your area, providing amazing opportunities for girls.

Being a county commissioner is a unique opportunity to work with teams across your whole county, seeing girls and volunteers develop their confidence and skills, and giving members a voice. You'll meet new people, challenge yourself and have fun.

The role is flexible and collaborative and you'll be able to appoint your own team. As the team leader you'll delegate tasks and work together with other volunteers to get the job done. It's a fantastic chance to spot skills and support others to give something new a try.

### Some of what you'll do:

You'll be encouraged to create a team to help share responsibilities. Each county divides up commissioner responsibilities a bit differently, depending on their skills and size. So the tasks you do might vary, but could include:

### Leading a team

One of the most important parts of being a county commissioner is leading, motivating and celebrating your county team, and volunteers throughout your county.

You'll manage your team to work together effectively. You'll make sure everyone feels supported, valued and appreciated. This will include communicating regularly with them and chairing county meetings. You'll also make sure your team has the right skills and experience to support you in your commissioner role.

Other commissioners and their teams will be able to come to you for support and encouragement. You'll also present awards and go to events to recognise and thank volunteers, showing members how much you value what they do.

## Supporting young members

Giving girls amazing opportunities is at the heart of everything we do. And our county commissioners play a vital role in this.

You'll support other commissioners to make sure girls can enjoy a high quality, varied programme. You'll also support girls to have adventures, go on residential and go abroad, by checking and approving Permission to Plan and REN forms (if county expertise is needed).

You'll support other commissioners to make sure all young members are welcome by building diversity and inclusion into everything you do. Other key parts of the role include sharing best practice across your county on opening new units, supporting existing units to stay open and helping girls to successfully move between sections.

## Welcoming volunteers

Making sure new volunteers get a warm welcome is really important so they stay and thrive with us.

Ensuring the volunteer recruitment process is working well and new volunteers get a warm welcome will be your responsibility. All volunteers in your county should feel an equal sense of belonging. You'll support commissioners and leaders to help them make sure that's the case.

## Overseeing learning and development

Seeing members learn and develop is one of the best things about being a commissioner. You'll make sure members in your county have access to learning and development opportunities. You'll also help new leaders gain their leadership qualification, making sure they have the support they need and celebrating their achievements.

## Managing risk

There's nothing more important than keeping our members safe. Making sure volunteers in your county assess, document and work to minimise risks is an important part of this role. It'll also be your responsibility to have a county emergency plan in place and take the lead in dealing with any accidents or emergencies.

## Ensuring compliance

Most Girlguiding counties are charities, governed by trustees. As a county commissioner you'll become a trustee. You'll need to understand your responsibilities and make sure you and other trustees attend trustee training.

As a trustee you'll represent your county at country/region level and ensure high standards of governance. You'll make sure everyone is following policies and procedures and key changes are effectively communicated. You'll also ensure there's a process in place to do checks on volunteers you're recruiting in your county.

## Managing concerns

You'll be the person other volunteers come to when they need help, support or guidance. You'll deal with concerns about volunteers in your area and safeguarding concerns, taking appropriate action. You'll also support volunteers in your county to deal with complaints. You'll put into practice any improvements needed as a result of a complaint.

## Looking after finances and property

With your team's support, all volunteers in your county will be able to manage their finances effectively. You'll make sure the annual subscription service is well managed, including making sure contact details and banks details are correct on GO. With the support of a management committee, you'll also ensure that county property is properly managed.

## Representing Girlguiding

Being the county commissioner is a great opportunity to act as a representative for your county at region and Association level. This could involve going to events and working with the local media.

## What training and support do you get?

- We'll give you a thorough induction to your role. You'll be able to go to events welcoming county commissioners from all countries and regions.
- You'll be able to join regular Association county commissioner calls on Zoom. These will let you share challenges, questions and stories, and work together to find solutions.
- You'll have lots of training opportunities, including e-learning, face to face training and live online classrooms that you can do from home.
- You'll be part of a great support network with other commissioners, your county team and your country/region team.
- We reimburse agreed expenses (agreed locally, so these may differ across Girlguiding).
- We have a clear complaints procedure and support to help sort out problems or disagreements.
- You'll be able to access support from Girlguiding's assistance programme, which will help you manage your personal wellbeing (for British Girlguiding Overseas, please check with your chief commissioner).

Our website is full of information, tools and resources to help you in your role, including a dedicated [commissioner section](#).

## What qualifications do you need?

You don't need any specific qualifications or previous guiding experience to become a commissioner. We'll give you training as part of your role.

Two or more people can share this role, becoming joint county commissioners. You can also appoint assistant county commissioners to support you. There are plenty of exciting and creative ways to split the role, based on your interests, skills and passions.

## What skills, knowledge and experience do you need?

Being a great commissioner involves lots of different skills, but some of the most essential are:

- ✓ People skills - being supportive, open, approachable and able to manage a variety of people
- ✓ Being able to deal with sensitive and confidential information
- ✓ Communication and listening skills - to problem solve and share ideas
- ✓ Ability to delegate and prioritise tasks - to effectively manage a team, recognising skills and development opportunities
- ✓ Time management skills - getting things done efficiently and planning for the future of your county

## Skills you'll gain:

Being a commissioner is a great opportunity to learn transferable skills that will be useful in other areas of your life and career. These could include:

- Effectively chairing meetings
- Knowledge of systems and data management
- Financial awareness and management
- People management

### A week in the life of...

As county commissioner, I'm responsible for guiding in my county, but it isn't something I do alone. We have a fantastic team of advisers and commissioners who all work together to ensure local volunteers have the skills, knowledge and support they need to deliver guiding for our young members.

My role is to coordinate and oversee the activities provided, I don't need to be involved in the details of most things, just have an overview and overall plan so that we keep moving forward and remain relevant to all of the girls in our area. I also sit on committees to manage the finance and properties owned by the county. This includes making sure we're following relevant guidelines and fulfilling legal responsibilities.

In addition to responsibilities to the county I'm also part of the region team. The county commissioners have a fantastic support network with regular meetings, an annual conference and a WhatsApp group for any questions, ideas or sometimes just for a sanity check!

The best part of being county commissioner is celebrating the successes of our members, whether that is thanking somebody for their continued service or a specific role they have undertaken or presenting an award to a volunteer nominated by their peers. Being able to get out and visit units to make these presentations and organising events to celebrate successes is a highlight. It is a chance to see the real impact that guiding is having and reward our frontline volunteers for all the hard work they put in every week for the girls in their care.

### Quick requirement check

1. Disclosure check: **Enhanced**
2. A Safe Space Level: **1, 2, 3 and 4**
3. Attends meetings: **yes**
4. Length of term: **Five years**
5. **A county commissioner will be appointed by and accountable to the chief commissioner.**

We're keen to hear from volunteers of all backgrounds, abilities, races, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds, and of all faiths and none. We're flexible, and volunteering can be arranged to fit around a busy lifestyle. We're committed to making reasonable adjustments to support disabled volunteers so they have access to the same opportunities and experiences as non-disabled volunteers.

Please note this is a volunteer role and does not form part of any contract of employment.