*Message from commissioners to leaders – explaining process and including suggested messaging to send to parents*

Dear leaders,

I hope you are doing well.

We currently have long waiting lists with girls waiting to join units in our area. So to create more spaces for more girls to join units, I’m looking at trialling a resource to engage parents as new volunteers and to join as potential new leaders.

As a current leader, I need your help to identify potential new leaders. I know setting up a unit can feel like a big undertaking, and there are lots of things that need to be set up properly to make sure we keep guiding great quality. So I’d like to ask you to show how quality guiding should look and to support new leaders coming into Girlguiding.

To make the process of setting up a new unit as straightforward as possible, for both new leaders and for you, we will be trialling a new resource. The new Start-up kit resource is designed to make setting up a new unit straightforward. It’ll give people who are new to guiding the information they need to start a unit in one accessible pack.

**Who is the resource aimed at?**

Anyone looking to set up a new unit, but particularly people new to guiding. And we’d like to use the Start-up kit in our area to engage parents whose daughters are on the waiting list.

This might include:

* areas you know that people have been on the waiting list for a long time
* particular parents who are engaged and passionate about Girlguiding.

**What do you need to do?**

Can you help identify parents of girls currently on our waiting list, who have been particularly engaged or shown interest in getting involved with Girlguiding? Below is a template email that you may like to use to engage waiting list parents, and offer them the chance to get involved by setting up a new unit.

You can personalise this message by adding in the parent’s or girl’s name and any other local information which might help to get parents engaged. Within the email it asks them to contact me as the local commissioner, so I can go through the next stages with them. If any questions come back to you, please direct them onto me and I will get back to them.

Thank you for your support! If you have any questions, please let me know.

Kind regards,

*[insert name]*

*[insert role in guiding]*

Dear parent,

Thank you for registering your interest in your daughter joining Girlguiding – she’s currently on the waiting list to join your chosen unit. We’ll be in touch as soon as we have news on when a place will be available for her.

In the meantime I’d like to offer you an exciting volunteering opportunity to help bring guiding to even more girls. Could you start a new Girlguiding unit?

**Starting a new unit**

Starting a new Girlguiding group is a great way to give more girls, like your daughter, the opportunity to join us and benefit from the experiences we offer. Unfortunately we currently have a lot of girls on our waiting list and the more units we can open, the more places we can offer.

The process of setting up and starting a brand new unit can take time and commitment but we’ll support you every step of the way. We’ll help you understand the process and how to start your journey towards becoming a qualified leader.

As well as giving girls amazing opportunities, being a Girlguiding leader is also a great way to learn new skills, meet new people and have fun.

**What support will you get to start a new unit?**

**Start-up kit** – You’ll get our free unit Start-up kit, a comprehensive pack which explains all the things you need to think about when starting a unit and how you can find further information.

**A buddy** – You’ll be put you in touch with a Girlguiding buddy. Our buddies are qualified and experienced leaders who you can ask questions and whose unit you can visit to see guiding in action!

**Our website** – The Girlguiding website has lots of additional information on how to set up a unit, as well as everything you might need to know about the organisation and what we do.

**Commissioner support** – Your local commissioner (an experienced senior volunteer in your local area) will be your first point of contact and will be able to guide you through everything you need to know. She will also continue to support you after the unit is up and running.

**What else do you need to know?**

Starting a new unit is an exciting challenge, by becoming a Girlguiding unit leader you can help make a real difference to the lives of girls and young women.

More hands make light work! Having a group of volunteers to become a leadership team for a unit is a great way to share responsibilities and give each other support and ideas. If you have friends or family who would like to start the unit with you – get them involved.

**How can you find out more?**

If you’re interested in finding out more please get in touch with your local commissioner who will be able to give you some more information and chat to you about what’s involved:

*[insert commissioner name and email address]*

**Are there other opportunities to volunteer?**

If starting a new unit isn’t for you, we have lots of other volunteering opportunities available that will help us to keep current units running including flexible roles to suit all skills and interests and no matter how much time you’re able to give.

To register your interest please visit [girlguiding.org.uk/interested](http://girlguiding.org.uk/interested)

If you have any questions, please get in touch with our local commissioner.

*[insert commissioner name]*

 *[insert commissioner contact details]*