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## **Integrated communities**

### **About Girlguiding**

1.1 Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK, with over 500,000 members. Thanks to the dedication and support of 100,000 amazing volunteers, we are active in every part of the UK, giving girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good. We give them a space to have fun. We run Rainbows (5-7 years), Brownies (7-10 years), Guides (10-14 years) and The Senior Section (14-25 years). Registered Charity No 306016. [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)

### **Key messages**

- We are for all girls
- We give girls their own space
- We give girls a voice
- We change as the lives of girls change

### **About our evidence**

1.2 Girlguiding's submission focuses on evidence from our annual Girls' Attitudes Survey - the largest survey of girls and young women in the UK - which gathers the views and opinions of over 1,600 girls and young women throughout the country aged 7 to 21, from inside and outside guiding. For more information and data on the latest and previous reports please see [www.girlguiding.org.uk/girlsattitudes](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/girlsattitudes)

## **Building Integrated Communities (question numbers indicate questions answered from the consultation document)**

### **3. Do you have any examples of successful approaches to encourage integration that you wish to highlight, particularly approaches which have been subject to evaluation?**

At Girlguiding, we have engaged girls and young women from different communities in a number of ways:

#### **Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund (UYSAF)**

From 2014-2016 Girlguiding received funding from the Cabinet through the Uniformed Youth Social Action Fund (UYSAF) project. The funding supported our work to bring guiding to new communities and to encourage young people to get involved in social action and make a difference. The project was a great success and as a result we:

- opened 135 new units and supported over 50 units at risk of closing
- recruited over 280 new adult volunteers
- created spaces for almost 3000 girls
- supported almost 4000 young people to take part in 460 social action activities.



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## The Queen's Trust (TQT) Fund

In 2015 The Queen's Trust awarded Girlguiding grant funding to help grow guiding in the Black Country. The Black Country sits within the Girlguiding Midlands County of West Mercia, with work focused on areas with high levels of deprivation.

- Funding has supported ten new groups to buy equipment and uniform and enabled a series of recruitment events to encourage volunteers to join our local groups.
- Over 120 girls have taken part in activities, developed confidence, learnt new skills and made a positive contribution in their community as a direct result of funding

## Delivering diversity

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts partnered with UPS to increase the diversity of our membership by looking at social deprivation and other factors.

## Youth United

Girlguiding received funding from the Youth United Foundation from 2012 to 2016 to support us in reaching new communities and ensuring girls across the UK could enjoy guiding. We used funding to open groups in new communities, working flexibly so girls/volunteers could attend around other commitments. [Read more.](#)

## Education and young people

**7. The Green Paper proposes measures to ensure that all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain and have the opportunity for meaningful social mixing with those from different backgrounds. Do you agree with this approach?**

We agree that young people across society should have opportunities to meet and spend time with each other. Uniformed youth organisations provide young people with the space and opportunities to do this.

At Girlguiding, we change as the lives of girls change and have built on our more than 100 years of supporting and working with girls to continue to bring them opportunities that are relevant to their lives. The opportunities we offer girls and young women from ages 5 to 25 for fun, friendship and adventure help them to come together and learn about themselves and each other, which contribute to building a common sense of identity, belonging and purpose.

This is increasingly important as our 2015 Girls' Attitudes Survey suggests girls feel increasingly insecure about their place in the local community:

- Whereas 30% of girls aged 11 to 21 felt part of their local community in 2010, by 2015 this had dropped to 20%. Just 38% said they felt the UK was a good place to grow up.
- 73% take part in social action/raise awareness of issues.
- 77% say they don't think politicians listen to young people enough, which may partly explain why a significant minority say they don't take social action.



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At Girlguiding we:

- Run Action for Change to train 400 girls to run local social action projects and have agreed a target to get 100% of members doing social action by 2020.
- In the coming months we will build on the social action that girls in guiding have been doing for 100 years by developing our social action strategy and grouping activities into four categories: Fundraising, Peer education, Volunteering, and Using your Voice.

### Places and community

**8. The Green Paper proposes measures to ensure that people, particularly those living in residentially segregated communities, have opportunities to come together with people from different backgrounds and play a part in civic life. Do you agree with this approach?**

We agree that it's important that people have opportunities to come together and play a part in civic life.

At Girlguiding, we've just launched a new project called Delivering diversity, as part of an international project through the Worldwide Association Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) to help us increase and diversify our volunteer membership. It has a particular focus on widening our reach in areas of deprivation and with socially excluded groups. We've been engaging a number of partners to help us reach into underrepresented demographics, break down barriers to volunteering and diversify our volunteer base.

We're updating volunteer recruitment resources and imagery, further developing our welcome, induction and training opportunities, creating more flexible volunteering opportunities as well as identifying specific areas to reach out to and grow with targeted support and funding. We're also building on previous work that saw us grow in areas of deprivation and rural isolation - including the Supporting Inclusion Project, Uniformed Social Action Fund Project, Highlands and Islands project (in Scotland focusing on opening new groups in very isolated communities), Future Journey Fund (in partnership with NCS), Hackney Small grants to grow guiding in Hackney and The Queen's Trust project where we opened new groups in the Black Country as well as more local level volunteer recruitment work such as the Wonderful Women and Girlguiding Slough project run in conjunction with Slough Volunteer Centre which helped us attract volunteers and girls new to guiding. We learnt a lot from these projects and they have shaped how we design and deliver growth projects as well as influencing wider work around volunteer development and social action.

### Recent housing developments

Girlguiding embeds community spaces and helps to create strong, vibrant and cohesive communities e.g. new housing developments such as [Ebbsfleet Garden City](#) - a new garden city under development by various private organisations - where up to 15,000 homes will be built over 15 years. Local guiding growth groups are looking at how they can grow guiding opportunities from scratch in this new community and have already had discussions with various Ebbsfleet stakeholders who have been supportive.



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### **Community asset ownership**

Girlguiding provides community spaces such as buildings, campsites and outdoor spaces which have the benefit of promoting access to being outside and giving volunteers a role in taking care of these spaces.

### **Increasing economic opportunity**

**9. The Green Paper proposes measures to provide tailored support to people, especially those who may not currently be active in the labour market, to build their confidence and skills to take up employment. Do you agree with this approach?**

At Girlguiding, we provide girls and young women with skills, confidence and social mobility opportunities they need now and in the future through our programme. Our new programme, due to be revealed in the summer, will see the biggest ever overhaul of what girls do in Girlguiding, marking the biggest investment in girls' futures outside of the school system in the UK. Hundreds of thousands of girls will benefit from the revised programme that will equip them with all the skills and experiences they will need to thrive, succeed, make change and be happy in the modern world - an opportunity we would like to see all girls have. The new Girlguiding badges and activities will centralise around six themes, Skills for my Future, Have Adventures, Be Well, Know Myself, Express Myself and Take Action, expanding girls' choices and equipping them with more skills and knowledge they can utilise now and in the future. Our new programme continues our history as an organisation that empowers girls, teaches them skills and enables them to make changes in their communities.

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It also helps girls to challenge gender stereotypes and gain the skills and confidence to enter male-dominated sectors:

- We've partnered with Google to help inspire more girls to become computer programmers and engineers. [Read more.](#)
- We're working with Rolls Royce to help girls and young women reach their full potential and to encourage more to consider a career in engineering. [Read more.](#)
- We've partnered with easyJet to engage more girls in aviation. [Read more.](#)

In addition, our biennial Camp CEO event enables young women aged 14-17 to be mentored by inspirational female CEOs. Young women take part in workshops that prepare them for their future careers, such as interview skills, networking and using social media to create their brand. [Read more.](#)

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## **Rights and freedoms**

### **10. The Green Paper proposes measures to encourage integration and resist divisive views or actions. Do you agree with this approach?**

We believe it's important to promote an inclusive society and to challenge divisiveness where it exists. We agree with Youth United that uniformed organisations can play an important role in this. Girlguiding is an inclusive organisation which ensures all girls receive the same great guiding experience. This is achieved by creating a safe environment where all girls feel an equal sense of belonging and receive tailored support to reach their maximum potential. We also give girls a space to explore and express their views and learn about themselves and others.

Our 2016 Girls' Attitudes Survey shows that girls in guiding support diversity and inclusion. 86% aged 11 to 21 agreed that people should not be discriminated against because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (with only 4% disagreeing) and 75% are supportive of public Pride events that celebrate LGBT people. When asked about the most important ways to improve girls' and women's lives, 47% aged 7 to 10 included 'fairness for people from different backgrounds' as a top choice.

### **11. The Green Paper proposes measures to address practices which can impact on the rights of women. Do you agree with this approach?**

It's important girls' and women's rights are protected and supported in line with the Equality Act and that this is done in a way that is non-stigmatising towards individuals and communities. It's also important to note that gender inequality affects girls from all communities.

As the UK's leading organisation for girls and young women, we support efforts to empower women and girls from every community and across society. We agree that it's important to support women and girls to increase their civic and democratic participation and challenge socio-cultural norms which can hold them back. At Girlguiding, our young members have influenced government to make some amazing changes that are improving the lives of young people across the UK by:

- Supporting our units to get girls involved in UK Parliament Week
- Taking girls and young women to the political party conferences so they can talk to politicians about the issues that matter most to them
- Supporting girls to speak at and participate in events at parliament
- Including their views in our responses to consultations from the government and other agencies

In addition, our youth panels have been active in engaging with and influencing national policy making:



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### **Advocate panel**

Our Advocate panel is a group of 18 Girlguiding young members aged 14 to 25 who lead the direction of Girlguiding's advocacy and research. Advocates have met ministers at the political party conferences, spoken at events in Parliament and contributed their views to government calls for evidence on issues like online safety, gender stereotyping and media sexism. Following the incredible work Girlguiding Scotland has done on this issue, our Advocates are also launching a campaign to tackle period poverty and stigma. Check out @Girlguiding on Twitter for updates on how you can support. You can find out more about the panel here: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/social-action-advocacy-and-campaigns/promoting-girls-voices/advocates/>

### **British Youth Council (BYC) delegation**

Our BYC delegation has ten members aged between 14 and 25 from across the UK. Delegates learn how power and politics work and how they can use their voices and connect with other young people to create positive change. Each year, the delegation puts forward motions - ideas for campaigns or issues to support - to the British Youth Council. Key issues our delegates have put forward are tackling sexual harassment in schools, young people's mental health and girls' rights internationally. Find out more here: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/social-action-advocacy-and-campaigns/promoting-girls-voices/british-youth-council-delegates/>