

Group Guide leader's report 2020

It's fair to say that 2019-2020 has not been an ordinary year for Girlguiding in Eastcombe Scout and Guide Group.

I would firstly like to introduce myself as the Group Guide Leader. I'm Lottie and took on the role in September when I also took on the role of District Commissioner for Bisley District, supporting all the units in the group and Bussage Brownies. I would like to thank my predecessor Jill, for all her hard work with the group. I firmly believe that both my roles are to ensure that the leaders and young members of Girlguiding have all the support they need to challenge themselves and have fun. This year has certainly provided challenges and fun.

To start with the challenges, unfortunately we have lost one unit this year. Due to falling numbers, the decision was taken to merge France Lynch Brownies with Bussage Brownies at Christmas. This allowed the District to have one successful full unit. It is hoped that in the future we can reopen France Lynch Brownies. I look forward to working with Dave and the Scouts to boost the group membership of young people.

We have also sadly said goodbye to a number of leaders. Of course, as a volunteer organisation, this is inevitable and we thank those who have left us for the time and hard work they have put into their units. Bisley Rainbows has been hardest hit, losing its main leader. The Rainbows are incredibly fortunate that Mary has offered to foster the unit whilst the search continues for a new leader. If you know of anyone who would be interested in the role then please do contact me.

Now onto the fun our units have had. All our units have been impacted by the shut down imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic which is sweeping the world. With a ban on face to face meetings units have taken the time to reflect and look for new ways to engage in guiding. Two units have taken on the challenge of holding meetings virtually, no mean feat with the variable internet signal which exists in the local area. These meetings have been a great success with games, crafts and even a pet evening, allowing members to continue to be engaged in Guiding. We look forward to meeting again face to face now that GHQ are allowing outside meetings to take place.

In non-pandemic times our units have certainly had a wealth of exciting opportunities. Most of our units have been working towards the new Bronze, Silver and Gold awards available for each section, trying out new unit activities and badges such as creating blogs and attempting to collect rain water using traditional survival techniques. Units have also attended a number of camps, including Deer Park 50, a celebration of Girlguiding Gloucestershire's Cowley activity centre's 50th birthday.

I was honoured to be able to present the District's first Gold Awards to 7 Guides who have worked hard completing badges at home and in the unit. It's safe to say that taking Guides and Rangers to a pancake shop and letting them pick their own topping will lead to an excitable evening for all.

I look forward to next year, which hopefully will not contain a global pandemic as a challenge and allow an extra dose of fun.