

The Trefoil

trefoilguild.co.uk | December 2025 | Issue No 279

 **Trefoil Guild**



You've got a friend in me!



Tickets are out now for our Annual Meeting 2026



All you need to know about our new award



Trefoil friendships that reach to Australia



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Hayling Island Trefoil

The official journal of the Trefoil Guild

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Hello everyone

As I write this, I am reflecting on what an amazing year it's been for Trefoil. A highlight of course was the Annual Meeting in Belfast, which so many of you came along to. There wasn't a dry eye in the house when our speaker, Clodagh, gave us a personal insight into locked-in syndrome after her stroke. The evening entertainment by the Solas dancers and the Belfast Operatic Company was such a joy.

I've also had the pleasure in visiting members in Scotland, Wales and many parts of England at their annual meetings – thank you all for making me so welcome.

Have any of you started International at home yet? It would be great to hear about your travels from your front room or Trefoil meeting

place. If you haven't started it yet, all the details were in the September issue of **The Trefoil**, and can also be found on the website.

Over the last couple of months members have enjoyed the national Trefoil Walk based at Ilam Hall Youth Hostel in Derbyshire and I'm sure that we will have a full update in the March edition. We have also had a Trefoil national conference, when 140 members from across all our areas got together to look at what Trefoil's strategic priorities currently are and what we might want to focus on in the future. More of that to come later in 2026.

Do look at the wonderful new Trefoil award on page 30. Can you think of someone who deserves to be thanked for the amazing things they do to support Trefoil – if you can, do nominate them for the new award.

And finally, it won't be long now until the 2026 Annual Meeting in Scarborough takes place with tickets on sale from 1 December. I'm off to dig out my bucket and spade and I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

Best wishes

Jean

Jean
National chair





Welcome to your new roles

We meet 2 members who have taken on important roles and find out a little more about them

Meet our new national treasurer, Anthea Lister – a lifelong Guider from New Quay, bringing her wealth of experience and financial expertise to Trefoil.



I have spent all my adult guiding life in New Quay on the west coast of Wales. I enjoyed running a Guide unit in New Quay and particularly enjoyed outdoor activities, camping, canoeing and hiking. However, the day finally came when I realised that it was time to retire from active guiding. I am fortunate to have an active local Trefoil Guild to maintain my interest in guiding.

My business career has been in finance and accounting, first in public practice, then in industry and now helping with a family business. I'm a numbers person, so definitely Sudoku rather than crosswords!

I have held numerous roles in our county and am currently proud to be the county president for Girlguiding Ceredigion; but it will not come as a surprise to know that I was also county

treasurer. I spent five years as treasurer of Girlguiding Cymru, so I have experience of dealing with Girlguiding charity accounts.

I am also the treasurer of our Local Ministry Area, which comprises 10 small local churches and is also a registered charity.

As treasurer of the Trefoil Guild, I hope to continue with the excellent work of my predecessor, Heather Hern. I will continue to provide financial information to the board of trustees and other users but would like to ensure that such information is as user-friendly as possible, within the requirements of the Charities Act.



From the Scottish Borders to Trefoil adventures, Morna Macdonald brings passion, experience, and a love of adventure to her role as national programme and development adviser.



Hello, you may have guessed from my name that I am Scottish! I live in a wee town in the Scottish Borders with my husband Duncan and we have two grown up sons and four gorgeous grandchildren, two of whom live in New Zealand and we regularly travel to the 'land of the long white cloud'.

I've been a Brownie, Guide, Ranger and a Leader in both Guide and Ranger Units as well as holding posts in Girlguiding Scotland. Life is always

busy and I wouldn't have it any other way! There's always fun to be had at our Trefoil meetings and events. I enjoy music and theatre, Scottish country dancing, walking, exploring and being a 'tourist', reading, knitting, sewing, crafts and more.

It's been great fun being the Scottish programme and development adviser for the last 5 years, and what a 5 years it has been! I hadn't heard of Zoom then but it has become an essential tool for many of us.

I am looking forward to this new role and working with my colleagues in countries and regions, sharing ideas and developing new challenges and activities.



Noticeboard

Bulletins and information for all our members



**WORLD ASSOCIATION
OF GIRL GUIDES
AND GIRL SCOUTS**

Thinking Day 2026

The theme for Thinking Day 2026 is 'Our Friendship', commemorating 100 years of WAGGGS World Thinking Day. This occasion also marks the birthdays of Olave Baden-Powell, the first World Chief Guide, and Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout Movement. Each year, WAGGGS organises a World Thinking Day Fund, which began in 1932 after it was recognised that celebrations often include the exchange of gifts.

Why not do something special in 2026 to celebrate the centenary? If you want to continue the tradition of collecting pennies and coins in support of WAGGGS, I am sure your collection will be welcomed. To learn more about WAGGGS or to donate, go to the WAGGGS website: waggs.org/en/what-we-do/world-thinking-day/world-thinking-day-fund

Are you promoting Trefoil?

In September, it was a joy to pick up a free newspaper to find an article about a local Trefoil and their summer activities, including a visit to Pax Hoh, Girlguiding Derbyshire's camp site. The article went on to encourage new members to join them.

Many local newspapers and magazines welcome good news stories from organisations like Trefoil, so go on, spread the word about Trefoil – what are you waiting for?

If you need help or advice in writing your piece, then contact your county for support in the first instance.



Submissions to The Trefoil and website

We welcome all submitted items using the appropriate pro forma, which can be downloaded from the website. Please state whether you're happy for items to be considered for the website, if there is too little space in **The Trefoil**. Submission date for the March 2026 issue is 19 December 2025.





Seasonal recipes

Sally Hollingham, national international adviser, has prepared a delicious soup that's guaranteed to warm you up

Curried carrot soup

Ingredients

150g/5oz unsalted butter
2 small onions chopped
2 garlic cloves crushed
500g/1lb 2oz carrots peeled and chopped into small pieces
1 tsp cumin seeds or ½ tsp cumin powder
½ tsp madras curry powder
300ml/½ pint of chicken stock
1 bouquet garni
500ml/18fl oz water
Salt



Method

- Melt the butter in a pan, add the onion, garlic and carrots with a pinch of salt and sweat over a low heat until softened.
- If using cumin seeds, toast them by dry frying in a separate pan until fragrant.
- Add cumin seeds or powder and curry powder to the vegetables and cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
- Add the stock, bouquet garni and water. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for a further 30 minutes.
- Remove the bouquet garni and blend the soup until smooth. Pass through a sieve into a clean pan and season with salt and pepper.

Did you try making this soup? Don't forget to send us pictures of your creation! What recipes would you like to see in future editions?



Your letters

Find out what other Trefoil members have on their minds

Delicious drinks

We thought you might like to see a photo taken at our July meeting when we tried out your seasonal mocktail recipes published in the June edition of **The Trefoil**.

We really enjoyed trying the recipes and testing how to make slight changes to them for those who perhaps wanted a sweeter taste.

Jean Tennant, Harrogate Trefoil



Well-travelled

This summer, I was very fortunate to be a leader on a county international trip to India with a group of intrepid Rangers and Young Leaders, staying at Sangam World Guiding Centre and exploring Mumbai, Delhi and Agra. Imagine my surprise to be over 5,000 miles from home and to notice myself in a magazine in the lounge at my accommodation – the March 2025 edition of **The Trefoil**!

Ailyn Garley, Rovings Trefoil

Email your letters to us at trefoilguild@girlguiding.org.uk or write to the contact details on page 2.





Your snapshots

We take a look at what Trefoil members have been up to



Bowled over

3 members of Chesterton Outdoor Bowls Club kindly led this taster bowls session at the club. It was the perfect summer evening for this activity. For most of us, at Cambridge City and Cambridgeshire East Trefoils, it was our first experience of outdoor bowls. We thoroughly enjoyed the evening – and some of us were even quite good at it!



Brighton belles

Henford Trefoil had a great train journey from Hitchin, Herts, to Brighton. A stop at a lovely Italian coffee shop and a tattoo parlour – which we did not go in to! We took in the beautiful historical Pavilion, a walk along the prom for fish and chips, a ride on the i360 viewing platform and even joined a silent Abba disco walk!



High life

To complete our Motivate badge members of Fusion Trefoil climbed the O2. Our guide presented our badges at the top of the dome.



Sunny afternoon

13 members of Harrogate Trefoil enjoyed a lovely outing to Mount Grace Priory House and Gardens near North Allerton in North Yorkshire. Mount Grace Priory was the last of the great Yorkshire monasteries, founded in 1398. 5 centuries later, its ruins were bought by wealthy industrialist Sir Lowthian Bell, enthusiast for the late Victorian Arts and Crafts movement. Bell refurbished a 17th century mansion within the priory buildings and created terraced gardens.



Commons people

A large group of KE Links Trefoil Guild members travelled to London and were able to gather together to visit the Houses of Parliament. We split into 2 groups, so we had 1 wheelchair user in each group. The tour guides were excellent, and we all had a very full, informative, and entertaining visit, which lasted over 90 minutes. This was a very inspirational and tiring adventure, but enjoyed by all those who attended.



Stepping out

When I first joined the Trefoil Guild at 24 years old, I was told that it would be a fantastic way for me to step out of my comfort zone. Now, at 25, I had no idea that 'stepping out of my comfort zone' would involve flying to a different country, which is what members of Ramsey District Trefoil and I did when we attended the Annual Meeting in Belfast! Joining Trefoil gave me the opportunity to do something I never thought I would do, and I can't wait for the next adventure!



VE Day fun

About 60 Derbyshire county Trefoil Guild members gathered for an 'outdoors' day. The theme was 'VE Day 80th Anniversary'. The venue was Pax Hoh, which is a campsite and activity area near Carsington Water in Derbyshire. Delicacies included vegetable stew, griddle scones and dampers. We shared picnic food including corned beef sandwiches, Marmite swirls and jam tarts. Everyone was encouraged to use only ingredients that would have been available during the Second World War. The day ended with campfire singing of wartime songs.



Purls of wisdom

Members of Lancashire West Trefoil put their knitting, crocheting and tea-making skills to good use, creating hearts and bears for the SWAN Suite at Blackpool Victoria Hospital. We were given a talk by 1 of the SWAN team, who explained how the hearts were used and how much they were cherished. There wasn't a dry eye as we heard about the granddad who chose a bear for each of his grandchildren, kissed it and gave it to them to remind them of him. In turn, he asked them to kiss a knitted heart to take on his journey.

Hear ye!

Members of Biddulph Trefoil met our own Town Crier. He gave us some history behind his 30 years as the Town Crier and the competitions he has won. For the first competition he entered, he thought he only had to write 1 'cry', but then he was told he had a second 1 to read, and so he had think it up in 40 minutes – and that won and went viral – it was about his town and its history.





Star performers

Every year, Sale Scouts and Guides hold a Gang Show at the Waterside Theatre in Sale. This year was the 60th anniversary and Sale Trefoil was invited to take part. We decided to sing a song called 'A Woman Can'. We practised singing the song at our next 4 meetings. Despite some nerves we not only sang the song but got the audience, with some enthusiasm, to join in with the chorus.

What a view!

11 members from Duddon and 6 members of Kendal Trefoils and 1 guest from Cumbria South enjoyed a day out to The Windermere Children exhibition at Windermere Library, on what was the 80th anniversary of The Windermere Children arriving here. We were given an excellent talk by Nicky from the library and we had a chance to look round some of the photographs and memorabilia.



Cheque us out

Members from Carlisle and Border Trefoil paid a visit to the Great North Air Ambulance headquarters in Cumbria at the beginning of July to present a cheque following fundraising.



Hold your horses

A few members of Banchory Trefoil went to visit Lochside Clydesdales to celebrate 1 of our member's birthday. We saw horses, goats, chickens, coos, dogs and cats. The farmer is 1 of our member's previous Brownies!

Seas the day

When members of Trefoil Guild Scotland discovered they had booked the same cruise, they agreed to pack Trefoil scarves and meet for a photo somewhere in Norway!



A brow weekend

37 members of Trefoil Guild Scotland, ranging from Orkney to the Borders – and 1 from Penrith – enjoyed a weekend at Carronvale House. On Saturday, we all travelled to various locations near Stirling to visit the local notable spots.



Step up

In August, members from Dorset guilds stayed at Interlaken and visited Our Chalet where they were given a tour by 2 volunteers. One of the volunteers was from Nepal.



Feeling Motivated

Sam Lamble of Devon Trefoil completed Motivate whilst out with her guild in Switzerland. "I wanted to really challenge myself, so along with others in my guild, kept the challenge to complete it in Switzerland." Air: swing on the edge of a mountain. Water: paddleboarding on Lake Brienz. Land: Mountain karting in Grindelwald.

Batter believe it!

Hythe Trefoil enjoyed a fish and chip supper overlooking the Solent. The evening also involved outdoor games including croquet.





Crafternoon tea

Members from Bridgemary and Rowner Trefoil enjoyed a great afternoon tea of sandwiches, cakes and scones while learning how to paint pottery. Over a dozen members of our guild learned to decorate pottery and had a lovely afternoon. Eileen Cook, treasurer, and member Margaret Barratt showed just how much fun they had!



Get on board!

Vanessa of Pinoso District Trefoil has created a new board game, based loosely on the principles of Monopoly and was tested at July's meeting. Vanessa used previous street name research carried out by each member and devised a unique and intricate board game involving penalties and rewards. Members divided into 4 teams and each team threw the dice. Each game piece was a famous Spaniard, selected from street names in a previous Trefoil activity.



Community champions

3 members from Clogher Trefoil in County Tyrone, Ulster, all received their gold Voyage awards on Saturday 6 September at the Ulster 2024 Annual Review and fashion show. The 3 members helped their local community by 1 becoming the local leader of the Mothers' Union, another the Women's Institute, while the third set up a seniors club.

If you'd like to see images of your own guild's activities on the pages of **The Trefoil**, please email your photographs to trefoilguild@girlguiding.org.uk for consideration.





Avril Stouse of Hayling Island Trefoil reveals what makes her guild truly special – “and yes, we really are on an island!”

Hayling Island Trefoil is part of Hampshire East county in South West England region. We are close to the border with Sussex West county in LaSER region, so we have the best of both worlds – the seaside and the South Downs. Though on an island, we can be reached easily by bridge from the mainland.

We celebrated our 50th birthday in 2021 and so have been in existence continually for 54 years. We no longer have founder members but several of

us have been Hayling Trefoil members for over 20 years. Of course, we have welcomed new members over the years and have kept steady numbers, averaging about 20.

Most of us have held leadership roles within Girlguiding and some of us still have a Girlguiding role as well as Trefoil membership.

We are fortunate to have the beach and holiday activities on our doorstep, so we often don't have to travel far for an outing. We've enjoyed rides on





our seaside railway, usually partaking of an ice-cream or 2 at the end of the ride – or even fish and chips. We've dabbled at crazy golf, taken walks around the many Second World War sites by the beach, visited the lifeboat station and a local donkey sanctuary, where we sponsored a donkey.

A favourite outing has been a tour of one of our local farms by tractor and trailer, finishing up at the farm tea-rooms. Many visits have been made to the farm barn for talks by the owners on their production of milk, their own brand of ice-cream and more diversification plans.

A few of our members are content to just take part in our Hayling activities, but we have an active county and region and some of us do leave the island for county gatherings and region activities too. Recently, we enjoyed a boat trip from Southampton to Beaulieu, which was great fun. Some of us became 'Travelling Trefoils' and explored

our heritage at various venues in the region, and we were also fortunate to join in with a county residential to Foxlease Park, staying in the Lodge.

When we're not out and about, we can be found in our own Girlguiding hall to enjoy a wide variety of talks by visiting speakers or members themselves. These have included quilting and tapestry-making by a specialist, who happens to be one of our very talented members. She is also part of the Musical Folk Trefoil and we have enjoyed fun afternoons being serenaded on the Northumbrian Pipes by our member and her husband. We've also heard about Nelson's last day in Portsmouth, life as a local radio presenter, whale watching in Portsmouth Harbour and fishing in Grimsby, to name but a few.

Being part of Hayling Trefoil is such fun and we love being part of our wider Trefoil family. There is no better way to get involved, find friendship, give support and keep active.





Away day

Pranksters and promises – discovering Leuven’s legends with Benelux and France Trefoil

Benelux and France Trefoil has members spread across Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg and France, which makes it quite a challenge for us to meet up, so most of our meetings are run online. However, smaller groups who live closer to each other are able to arrange to meet up from time to time for some fun activities.

6 members of our guild who live in the Brussels (Belgium) area, plus one ‘bring-a-friend’, met up in Leuven one Wednesday afternoon in early June. Leuven is home to one of Europe’s oldest universities and the city dates back to the middle ages, so there’s plenty to discover. It had

rained at lunch time, but right on schedule the sun came out and we had a lovely walk around the town centre.

Jane and Julie had put together a walking route to visit various statues dotted around the town. Jane had also done lots of research and was able to share plenty of information and amusing stories as we stopped at each statue. Particular highlights were the story of Paep Thoon, who was an organist in St Peter’s Church (a UNESCO World Heritage site) but also a bit of prankster. After his jokes went too far, he was banished and told he was never allowed to set foot in Leuven again. However, he





returned with a horse and cart and with his shoes covered in mud from another town. When challenged he asserted that he wasn't setting foot on Leuven soil due to the other mud that was on his feet. A judge was called and had to concede that Paep was correct, and he was allowed to return to Leuven.

Another favourite story was about the misfortunes that had befallen the statue 'Dorre, de bakker'. This was a statue in honour of the bakers in Leuven, which we were very lucky to see, as it had only recently been put back in place after its latest misfortune.

It has been knocked off its stand by vehicles multiple times and, one time while it was being repaired, a car grounded itself and became stuck on the mound in the road that it stands on.

In between statues we all had a good chat with each other, so it was a lovely, relaxed afternoon. We also saw various historic buildings during our walk, most notably St Peter's Church, which we had a brief look inside, and the University Library, which has had quite a turbulent history, but on this visit we didn't go up the tower to admire the view from the balcony.

About half way round our route we stopped at a café for a drink and were able to sit outside in the sunshine to enjoy our drinks. We were having such a good chat I think we nearly spent the rest of the afternoon there rather than continuing the walk!

To round off our afternoon, Heather made her promise by the Peace Monument at the end of the walk.





Trefoil Annual Meeting 2026

Our next Annual Meeting is on Saturday 13 June 2026
in Scarborough – order your tickets today!

Scarborough is considered one of the UK's classic seaside destinations, and is a great place to visit because it offers a mix of coastal charm and history. The Annual Meeting will be at the Scarborough Spa. Join us from 11am to 1.30pm to browse stalls and meet up with friends old and new. The meeting itself will start at 2pm.

This year's event will feature a talk from speaker Siobhan Daniels, who gave up all modern comforts to embrace life on the road. 5 years on, she's still living the adventure.

Trefoil Guild North East England will be hosting the evening entertainment, which will also be at the Scarborough Spa, with music from Nicola Mills

and a session from the Saltburn Smugglers sea shanty singers. More details can be found on the Trefoil website. We welcome friends, family, and future Trefoil Guild members to join us in the evening.

For tickets, please book directly on our website: trefoilguild.co.uk. If you're booking tickets for someone who is not a member, then use the form on the next page.

If you or anyone in your booking needs a designated wheelchair space or has a specific access requirement in the auditorium, with or without an additional carer seat, please let us know when you book, with the specific details.



Ticket order form

13 June 2026, Scarborough Spa, Scarborough, Yorkshire.

Your Annual Meeting ticket price includes a badge, which will be posted with your ticket before the event in 2026.

Return to: Trefoil Guild, 17-19 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0PT

Name: _____

Membership number: _____

Guild: _____

Email address:

If there are any health, access, or disability requirements for you or anyone in your booking, provide specific details below. You must tell us if a member in your booking needs a designated wheelchair space in the auditorium, and whether additional carer seats are needed, so that they can be allocated.

If you have booked travel with Greatdays, please book your Annual Meeting tickets directly through Trefoil Guild.

Annual Meeting – Saturday 13 June 2026

I would like _____ non-refundable tickets at £10.

Total: £ _____

Evening entertainment – Saturday 13 June 2026

I would like _____ non-refundable tickets at £18.

Total: £ _____

Postage and packaging for tickets

Please add the amounts shown below to your total payable. Packaging will be provided:

Ordering 1-2 tickets in total
(day and evening) add £1

Ordering 3-20 tickets in total
(day and evening) add £2

Ordering 21 tickets or more in total
(day and evening) add £4

Total amount payable (tickets and p&p):
£ _____

I have made payment by:

Bank transfer: The Trefoil Guild, account number **20344898** sort code **608301**. Please use your membership number followed by AM as a reference when making the payment.

Cheque: Payable to **Trefoil Guild** and sent to: Trefoil Guild, 17-19 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0PT

If you are ordering tickets for more than 1 person, please attach a full list of all members in the group to your form with the following details:

- **membership number**
- **name**
- **Trefoil Guild**
- **email address**



Exploring together in South West England

Heritage, hospitality, and heaps of cake –
the Travelling Trefoils on tour!

The seed sown at the South West England Advisers' Day in 2023 was for members to get together with a purpose and have fun, and where Hilary, former chair of Trefoil Guild South West England, could meet everyone before she handed over the 'chair'. So, Travelling Trefoils, 'Explore our Heritage', came into being. 4 different days were planned and suitable venues selected to ensure something for all.

Our travelling began in Lacock, a village famous for its abbey and gardens, the birthplace of photography and its timber-framed houses. It has been the centre for film and television productions like 'Downton Abbey', 'Wolf Hall' and 'Harry Potter'. There were many places of refreshment, as we all know just how much Trefoil members like tea and cake – or even something a little stronger! It was

a fabulous day and so good to get together with others in our region. There was an enormous splash of red around the village and we were definitely seen and noticed!

Sherborne, our next stop, saw us wandering around the picturesque town as we visited the abbey and museum and tried out many eateries and coffee shops – with cake of course! It was hot and definitely ice-cream weather, and a great opportunity to meet and chat with Hilary.





At Cotehele, we toured the Grade I-listed house, explored the grounds and glorious gardens with valley views across the Tamar and the mill on the historic quay. Fortunately, the large trees provided most welcome shade, as it was 1 of the hottest days of the year. The café was where we enjoyed typical Cornish delicacies – jam most certainly on the scones before clotted cream!

Romsey was a scorcher, with temperatures rising to 27 degrees. The pretty medieval streets surrounding Romsey Abbey were explored, and the highlight for some was the fledgling peregrine falcons perching on the abbey turrets. Visits to the abbey, Romsey Signal Box museum, Mottisfont house and gardens and Sir Harold Hillier Gardens were enjoyed, with blue badge walks too. For those choosing to stay out of the heat, there were crafts to try and heritage beetle drives and bingo.

Hilary's dream came to fruition and she was delighted that so many



members in our region were able to meet. We were certainly seen as we travelled around wearing neckers, scarves and red tops. Publicity postcards were given out as we spread the word about our wonderful organisation. We got involved, gave support to each other and the local areas, were active, had a huge amount of fun and, above all, cemented friendships and made new ones.

Travelling Trefoils – can we follow that? Of course – so watch this space!





Nature in winter

Jean Lawrowitsch, chair of Trefoil Guild North West England, highlights simple steps to support wildlife

In winter, with shorter days and plummeting temperatures, native wildlife faces significant challenges. Food becomes scarce, water freezes, and shelter is harder to find.

Your Trefoil could collaborate to build bird feeders, bat boxes, bug hotels or hedgehog houses using recycled materials to keep costs low. These can be placed in community gardens, parks, or even members'

gardens. You could also volunteer for habitat restoration tasks, like planting winter-flowering shrubs, such as holly and ivy, to provide natural food sources, or create a small wildlife garden of your own.

Leave dead plant stems and seed heads standing until spring; they provide hibernation sites for ladybirds, bees, and butterflies. Avoid excessive tidying – piles of sticks or compost



heaps give shelter for frogs and toads. You could also complete some Trefoil challenges, or use your skills to work with a local Girlguiding unit and tell them about Trefoil at the same time.

STARS

Looking at R for Roam, why not invite someone to talk to your guild about trees, birds or wildflowers in your area, or make a trip to a local nature reserve. RHS Bridgewater is near me and there you can try to make a bug hotel and learn which plants make a great garden for pollinators. Or why not do what Stockport Trefoil are doing and visit an RSPB site? They are going to Burton Mere on the Wirral, where they hope to see marsh harriers and kingfishers.

Motivate

Why not take part in the RSPB Garden Birdwatch between 23-25 January and take an hour to record the birds that visit your garden or the local park and send the charity your results. You could attract more birds by making fat balls. They are easy to do – mix oats, cheese crumbs, apple, seeds

and unsalted nuts with beef suet or lard in a ratio of 1 part fat to 2 parts dry ingredients. Avoid turkey or chicken fat that sticks to the birds wings and so can be dangerous.

Or make a bird bath from a circular plant tray or old shallow bowl. The perfect bird bath has sloping sides, is more than 30cm across and no more than 10cm deep. Raise it on bricks and keep in an area clear of overgrown grass to avoid the birds being attacked by predators. Include some pebbles or small rocks so birds can perch and preen themselves. Don't forget to add a small ball to prevent it freezing over.

WOW

If you want to try the WOW Challenge (Wellbeing our Way), which can be found on the Trefoil Guild website, you can go for a walk and spot birds and nature on the way and go home and learn more about them. Each country and region has badges for you to purchase when you do the challenge.

So, let's all get out there and look after local wildlife and our environment.

Book club

Sheila Kerr, chair of Forth Valley East Trefoil, shares the story of their book club – a group that deepens members' connection to Scotland through literature



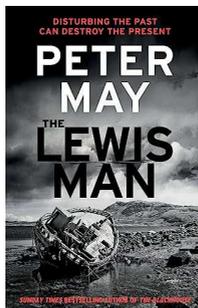
1 of my earliest memories of growing up is my weekly walk through our local park to Elder Park Library in Glasgow to borrow my books for the week. Whether it was 'The Famous Five', 'Anne of Green Gables', 'The Chronicles of Narnia' or even my 'Brownie Annual' I had received at Christmas, I was never far from my books, and this love of literature has continued throughout my life.

I was definitely not the only member of our Trefoil with this passion and when Barbara Fulford, 1 of our members, suggested forming a book club it was immediately agreed to trial the activity. Barbara also offered to take responsibility for planning and leading the group, and so preparations were made.

To add further flexibility in

meetings, and with our traditional monthly meetings being held in the evenings, it was agreed to hold the Book Group monthly in the afternoon. Our first meeting was held in a local garden centre and although we had an enjoyable, interesting time, it was agreed that the venue was not really conducive to discussion and we now meet in the church hall.

At Barbara's suggestion, and with everyone's agreement, it was agreed that rather than everyone reading a specific book, we would instead choose a genre for each month and discussion would be based around books read in that genre. We have explored crime fiction, Scottish themes, Christmas, family stories, humorous and new beginnings.





Connecting across the continents

Debbie Trafford, of Ramsey District Trefoil, shares the remarkable tale linking Trefoil members

Life is full of coincidences, and this is a story of friendship and a coincidence that reaches all the way to Australia.

When Cambs West Trefoil members and lifelong friends Elaine H and Elaine E planned the holiday of a lifetime, they hoped they might be able to establish contact with Trefoil members in other countries.

Their holiday took in Singapore, New Zealand and Dubai, but it was in Australia that they met the amazing Vivienne Stone. "Vivienne has been

everywhere, done everything and led a remarkable life," said Elaine E.

Originally from the UK, where her husband served with the RAF in Lincs, Vivienne has lived in Australia for nearly 50 years. The friends arranged to meet up with Vivienne in Australia, and a firm friendship formed. In fact, they arranged to meet again when Vivienne next came to the UK.

And now we come to the other part of the coincidence. Many years ago, St Ives Trefoil Guild, also in the Cambs



West county but many miles from the two Elaines, was twinned with a guild in Australia: the Nepean Valley Guild. Gifts were exchanged as part of this twinning, including a tea towel from their campsite, Tara, just outside Sydney. Remember this tea towel – it has significance later!

Over the years the St Ives and Nepean Valley Guilds lost touch. Last year St Ives' then chair, Janet, tried to reform the connection; unfortunately all emails, including one to Girlguiding Australia, went unanswered. Then out of the blue came a message from Vivienne Stone, Girlguiding international advisor for New South Wales. The same Vivienne Stone in the first part of our tale.

Vivienne mentioned St Ives Guild to the two Elaines, and realisation dawned that Janet and the two Elaines all knew each other and Vivienne was the common link in

a wonderful international friendship.

A plan was hatched for Elaine, Elaine and Janet, along with other members of their guilds (Peterborough, Whittlesey and St Ives), to meet up with Vivienne at Pax Lodge in London. Remember that tea towel I mentioned earlier? Janet took it along to the meeting where she discovered that Vivienne, many years before, had designed it herself. Vivienne was staggered to see it and has signed it as a souvenir of this visit and the series of coincidences that led to it.

Vivienne said, "I have realised just how similar Trefoil is on the other side of the world."

The day in London involved a tour of Pax Lodge, a badge ceremony and a chance to share experiences and memories. Gifts were exchanged and new friendships formed. In the words of Elaine E, "That's what Girlguiding and Trefoil Guild is all about."



Trefoil launches a new award

Celebrating dedication, honouring contribution
– The Trefoil Guild introduces The Trefoil award

A small group led by Lesley Mathews, chair of Wales, has been looking at growing ways that we can say a special ‘thank you’ to our members. Currently, Trefoil have a Thanks and Recognition badge and certificate, which requires no nominations and can be readily purchased from the Trefoil website shop or Girlguiding depots, and the prestigious Silver Trefoil award, formerly known as the Silver brooch. The Silver Trefoil award requires a nomination and at least 3 references in support of the badge.

The Trefoil award

The Trefoil Guild is now delighted to announce that a new award is to be launched on 1 January 2026 called The Trefoil award. An award which sits between the Thanks and Recognition badge and the Silver Trefoil award. Unlike the other awards this award is

only available to current members. The award, which is currently being produced by our suppliers, will be the size of a 50p in a hexagonal design which proudly shows the Trefoil logo, surrounded our branding colours and edged in gilt.

Unlike the Silver Trefoil award, where nominations go to a national panel, this award is managed at country and region level.

The Trefoil award recognises members for their dedication to Trefoil and appreciates those who have contributed significantly within their guilds, counties, countries, regions or at

national level who meet 2 or more of the following criteria:

- Demonstrate initiative and leadership qualities within the Trefoil Guild.
- Show a significant level of commitment and support within Trefoil and continues to do so.





■ Reflect the spirit and ethos of the Trefoil Guild through the key messages of:

- Find friendship
- Get active
- Get involved
- Give support

This award is not intended to recognise long service.

Any Trefoil member is eligible to nominate another member by downloading and completing the nomination template form from the Trefoil website or by asking their county chair for a copy. Each nomination must be accompanied by 2 further supporting documents.

Nominations need to be sent to your country or region for consideration, however if the nomination relates to a TGIFC member, or if it's for a country or region chair, then nominations should be submitted to the Trefoil office. For those in a national guild

send nominations to the member's closest country or region.

This award is open to any Trefoil member. Please allow plenty of time for the nomination to be considered and remember to keep it confidential.

Full details of the criteria, nomination process and forms to use can be found on the Trefoil website under the Info and resources section.

What next?

Lesley's group isn't stopping just yet and they are continuing their work on awards, looking particularly at how we can thank those wonderful Trefoil volunteers who have completed a term of service in Trefoil. Hopefully more to report in the next issue of **The Trefoil**.

Now you have this lovely new award we hope that you will nominate members who really do deserve a big thank you.

The Silver brooch renamed

The Trefoil Silver brooch has been renamed the Silver Trefoil award. It is the highest award available in the Trefoil Guild and is a very special way of showing gratitude and recognition. This prestigious award can be given to any member of the Trefoil Guild, any adult member of Girlguiding, or to a non-member who fulfils the criteria.

Full details of the criteria and the application process can be found on the Trefoil Guild website, or ask your country, country or region chair for details.



Hilary Crane receiving her Silver brooch



Subscriptions in 2026

Here's our easy-to-follow guide to paying your Trefoil Guild subscriptions for next year

As we approach the end of the year, it is time to think about subscriptions. To continue your membership in 2026, you must pay subscriptions in 1 of the ways detailed here. We are grateful for guilds who pay early, but new members who join before 22 February must also pay subscriptions, so let's all make sure we all know how to pay.

To continue your membership for 2026, you must pay your subscription fees by 22 February 2026. Online payments (option 1) can be made right up until 22 February but any guilds paying by the cheque and form method (option 2) must send both before the deadline. Subscription fees are due for all members, including new members who join before 22 February, to ensure they continue to receive their copies of **The Trefoil** and all the other Trefoil benefits, such as access to our programme materials and events in 2026.

How to pay

Your guild must pick 1 of the following methods with all members in the guild paying the same way. We would ask that if you are able to pay online as a guild, please use option 1 where possible.

Option 1: Pay online using our secure Trefoil website.

Remember that all members in the guild should pay the same way:

- either each member logs into their Trefoil website account and pays individually

- or one member (such as the guild treasurer) collects the subscriptions for all members and then logs into their account and pays for all the members in the guild

Payment is straightforward and stress-free. Simply add the membership(s) to your virtual basket and go through an online checkout where you can pay securely. Your membership will be instantly renewed, and a receipt is emailed to you.

Option 2: If you are unable to pay online, you can still pay by cheque but this must:

- be for the whole guild

- be the full amount for all members who are renewing

- accompany the 2026 version of the subscription payment form for guilds paying by cheque

Cheques filled out incorrectly incur bank charges and generate high administration costs so please take care when writing it out.

Please note that payment should not be made by bank transfer, as this increases the workload of



2026 Subscriptions payment timeline

November	3 January	22 February	May
			
<p>Guild treasurers receive an email with a membership list, rates and information.</p>	<p>Payment window opens. Members pick 1 way to pay: online (as a guild or individually) or by cheque and form in the post.</p>	<p>Payment window closes. All members must pay by this time.</p>	<p>Guild treasurers receive follow up email confirming who has paid. Check this list carefully.</p>

matching payments and making members active.

In November your guild treasurer (or relevant guild contact) received an email that included the following:

- the national rate for the 2026 annual subscription fees, which is £21
- your country or region and county levy information
- a list of existing members due to renew and their membership numbers ready for the payment window – remember to add any new members when paying
- the 2026 version of the subscription payment form for guilds paying by cheque

If you are a treasurer and have not received this email, contact the office via trefoilguild@girlguiding.org.uk to request a replacement email.

If in doubt about how your guild is paying subscriptions for 2026, please check with your treasurer, chair, or secretary, and if you need step-by-step instructions, these are available at trefoilguild.co.uk/subscriptions

We know there are membership changes over the year. You can keep us up to date with transfers or deceased members by emailing trefoilguild@girlguiding.org.uk

You can update your own contact details by signing into the Trefoil Guild website or you can call the dedicated membership helpline on 0151 668 0493 to update your contact details or obtain your membership number.

We will be publishing reminders on our website and on our social media, so make sure you keep an eye out for these.



Comfort and joy

We look at ways to explore the dark winter nights – do them on your own, with friends, or with your guild

Why not try doing an A-Z challenge? There are lots to choose from. What about setting yourself a target to read a book

starting with each letter of the alphabet, or making a list of foods or plants that start with the letters A-Z. If you want an active challenge, try the one by Cambs West, which encourages you to complete 26 different activities each starting with a different letter of the alphabet. You will need to be imaginative and think of what activities you can do to fit each letter! You can get more details of the Cambs West challenge from girlguidingcambswest.co.uk/trefoil-guild-a-z-challenge. You can even order one of their badges.

If you'd rather be creative, try painting snowflakes on your windows, or perhaps knit a cosy scarf for a friend or squares in your Trefoil to make a blanket for charity. Make some seasonal cards rather than buying them, and decorations or wreaths to brighten your home or give away as gifts.



We all like some cupboard love, so dust off those cookbooks and make yourself a lovely treat – or better still, bake a batch of biscuits or a cake to take along to share with your Trefoil.

What could be better than a good book in front of the fire with a steaming cup of hot chocolate? Perhaps it can only be beaten by sharing that book with Trefoil friends in a local café. If you want to start your own book club, why not read about Forth Valley East Trefoil's book club on page 26, or read Chepping Wycombe's story of how they started one in the June 2025 edition.



Get active by wrapping up warmly and visit a winter market with stalls filled with homemade crafts and winter treats, or why not take a friend and stroll around your local area to



view the seasonal light displays. If walking isn't your thing, then appoint a driver to drive you all around then finish up with a hot drink and some campfire songs.

Puzzling delights. Whether it's a jigsaw puzzle, a crossword, Sudoku, or a board game night with Trefoil friends, it's a great way to while away those dark nights.

Give support and think of others. There is nothing better to give you that nice warm feeling than to give or make something for your neighbour, your community or a charity. Have a clear out of your cupboards and take those unused items to the

charity shop, collect cans for your local foodbank, or raise some money for a good cause.

Hobbies are a great way to lower your stress and get a sense of achievement. You can do them on your own, with a friend or with your Trefoil. Why not get everyone to take their hobby to Trefoil?

If you're stuck for ideas, what about some of these: journaling, doodling, crafts, yoga, gardening, chess, genealogy, learning languages, singing, or joining a club? Take part in Trefoil challenges such as STARS, Motivate, TOPAZ, Voyage Award, or the International at home.



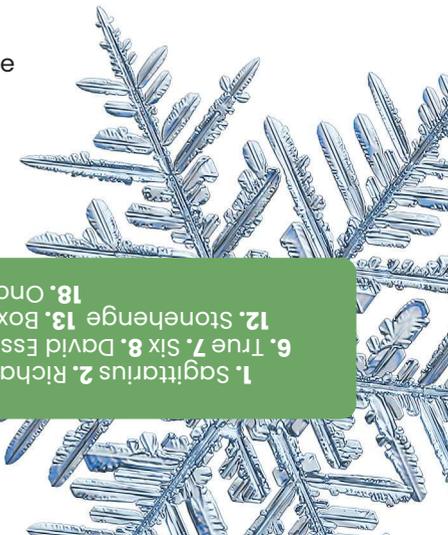
Winter quiz

See how many you can get right in our seasonal test of knowledge

- 1** Which sign of the Zodiac goes from 22 November to 21 December?
- 2** "Now is the winter of our discontent" is the opening line from which Shakespeare play?
- 3** The Winter Palace can be visited in which city?
- 4** Which country has won the most medals throughout winter Olympic history?
- 5** In fiction, where is the land of mythical creatures that a White Witch has ruled for 100 years?
- 6** True or false: The Earth is closer to the Sun in our winter than in our summer?
- 7** How many sides do all snowflakes have?
- 8** 'A Winter's Tale' is a song that reached number 2 in the charts in 1983 for which singer?
- 9** Which fruit has a variety called Winter Banana?
- 10** What bird changes its feathers to white in the winter?
- 11** What is the scientific term for animals sleeping through the winter?
- 12** Which ancient monument is aligned with the sunrise on the winter solstice?
- 13** What is the name of the day after Christmas Day?
- 14** Which country is home to the ICEHOTEL, a hotel built entirely of snow and ice each winter?
- 15** The Abominable Snowman is another name for which creature of folklore?
- 16** What colour are the berries on a holly bush?
- 17** In the film 'Home Alone', where are Kevin's family flying to?
- 18** How many times a year does the sun set and rise in the Arctic?
- 19** What traditional Christmas drink is made from eggs, milk and nutmeg?
- 20** What famous London location hosts an annual Winter Wonderland?



1. Sagittarius 2. Richard III 3. St. Petersburg 4. Norway 5. Narnia
 6. True 7. Six 8. David Essex 9. Apple 10. The ptarmigan 11. Hibernation
 12. Stonehenge 13. Boxing Day 14. Sweden 15. Yeti 16. Red 17. Paris
 18. Once 19. Eggnog 20. Hyde Park





WHERE NEXT?

Venture Abroad has organised Trefoil Guild Set Departure trips to **Vienna** in 2019, **Iceland** in 2022, the **Azores** in 2025, **Adelboden** in 2025, and sold-out **Malta** in 2026! Stay tuned to find out where the next **Trefoil Guild Set Departure** will be!

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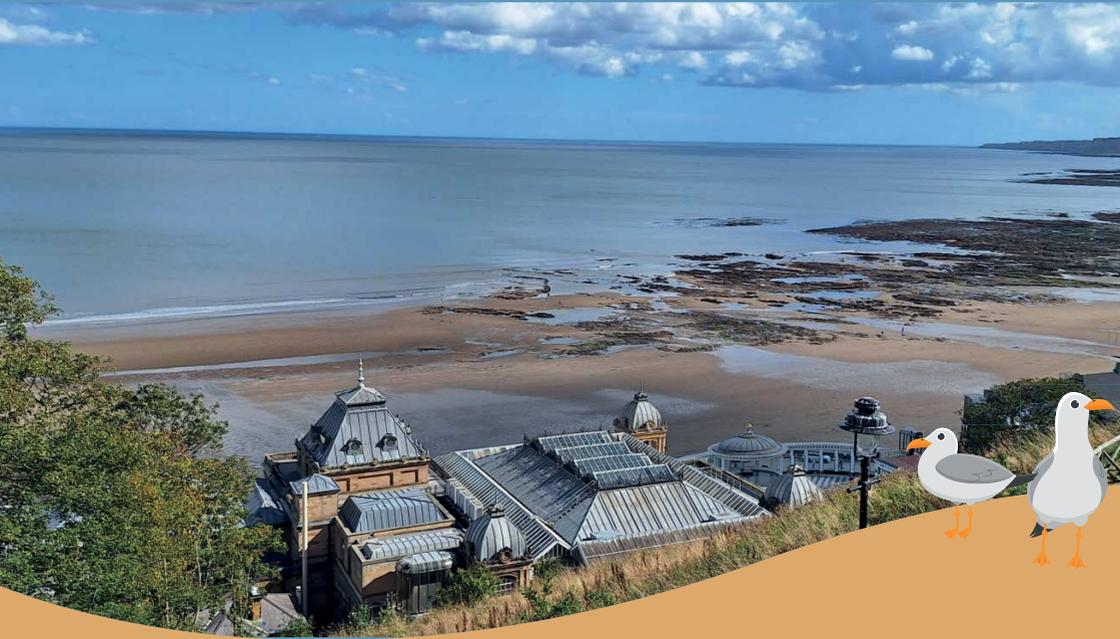
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