

The Trefoil

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 **Trefoil Guild**



Time to spread your wings



Find out where our
next Annual Meeting
will be held



Be inspired by
the TOPAZ Thailand
project team



Discover the unusual
hobbies of one of
our members

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The official journal of the Trefoil Guild

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Hello everyone

Hello everyone, once again I am writing this eagerly looking forward to our Annual Meeting where some 1,200 members will be heading for Scarborough. The office and teams from North East England have been busy putting everything in place. I am so looking forward to listening to Siobhan Daniels' adventures in the afternoon and then relaxing in the evening listening to Nicola Mills and singing along to the Saltburn Smugglers. If you are attending do come and say hello – I would love to meet you.

We have a packed edition of **The Trefoil** with lots of features, regulars and new Trefoil items. You said that you wanted to recognise the service

that so many of you do in your Trefoil roles. We listened and are introducing a new Service bar and certificate to be presented on completion of Trefoil roles. You can read all about it on page 4. You have also asked for more international possibilities which aren't as intensive as a TOPAZ project but aren't as neat as a simple package holiday, so, we are trialling a wonderful opportunity for Trefoil members to experience a trip with a difference to Rajasthan in India. Full details can be found on page 6.

What a lot of hobbies you have! We ran a post on social media earlier this year to see what interesting hobbies that you got involved with and we have been bowled over with so many diverse and interesting ways that you keep yourselves entertained. We have added just a few in this month's magazine and are looking to feature more later this year.

Remember to tell your friends in Girlguiding and your wider community about us – they don't know what they are missing – and they won't unless we tell them.

My best wishes

Jean

Jean
National chair



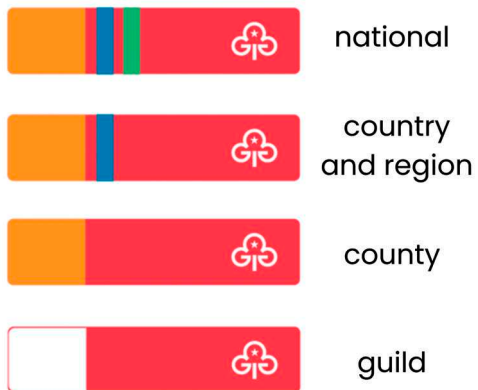


New Service bar

You asked us to recognise Trefoil service, so we are delighted to announce a new Service bar

This new Service bar will be in recognition of members completing a minimum term of office of 3 years. Presented on conclusion of their role, it will be available to all recognised Trefoil post holders as a mark of appreciation. This includes chairs, secretaries, treasurers, advisers, and KEY users, but other roles may be considered at the discretion of the relevant guild, county, country, or region, providing that the role has lasted at least 3 years.

This special Service bar, which will be accompanied by a certificate, is only available to Trefoil members



the service done. The certificate will include the name of the person completing their role and what role they had completed.

The recommendation is that the bar and certificate are presented in a way that will help convey the thanks of Trefoil for the role completed.

To help streamline the process and to

who conclude their term of service after 1 June 2026

The new badges are in production now with the bar-style design reflecting the range of diversity within Trefoil at guild, county, country, region, and national levels. They measure approximately 4cm by 1 cm with a red background and white trefoil displayed on one end. The Trefoil branding colours on the opposite end will reflect the level of award. The enamelled badge includes a brooch fitting on the reverse side for secure attachment.

Of course, a Trefoil member, could hold roles at all levels and are entitled to all these thanks and recognition awards, but only the highest should be worn at any given time.

The bar will be given once only at each level, regardless of how many roles they had at that level. However, they will receive a certificate at the end of each role in recognition of

avoid unnecessary paperwork, the Service bar will be funded and managed locally, ideally with counties, countries and regions holding small stock levels. National guilds and TGIFC guilds will order the bars directly from the national office.

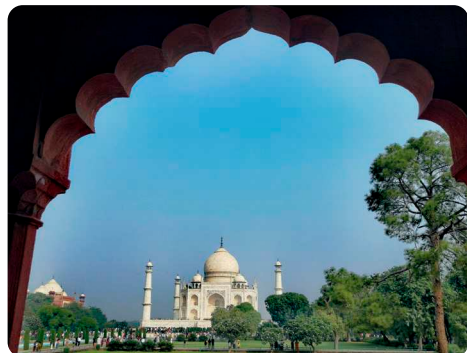
Full information including eligibility criteria will be available on the website and through your country, region, or county chair in June.

Finally, a word of thanks to those who have worked hard to devise this terrific way of showing Trefoil appreciation. The group consisted of the chair of Wales, secretary of Wales, PR advisers from North West England and North East England, and the programme and development advisers from LaSER, Scotland, and Anglia. In addition, Lauren Disley provided support and expertise in the design of the award.



Noticeboard

Bulletins and information for all our members



New Trefoil international opportunity to Rajasthan

Trefoil has been working with a small travel company to facilitate a Trefoil holiday with a difference.

The company has a good track record of organising special journeys for Girlguiding members and adult leader groups.

'While ordinary tour companies focus mainly on the tourist sights, with us, you'll have a more authentic travel experience... you'll have real insights of the places you'll visit, free time to explore and a lot of fun too. Please don't expect a typical regimented tour. Our selection of British tour managers are chosen for their expertise.'

What's on offer? A comprehensive 16-day tour where you will travel from the capital Delhi to Mandawa, along the Silk Road. On to the desert town of Bikaner, then the fortress city of



Jaisalmer. Next is the medieval 'blue' city of Jodhpur and the pilgrimage town of Pushkar. You will continue by train to the state's capital Jaipur, visit Ranthambore to go on safari, and see the Taj Mahal. Along the way there'll be some fascinating stops to give you a real sense of India, with some free time to explore too. There will also be a chance to do some optional community work.

Why is Trefoil facilitating this holiday? Trefoil members have expressed a desire to travel, wanting something more than an ordinary 'package' type holiday but something not as demanding as a TOPAZ project which requires high commitment both before and during the visit.



Key information

Dates: 23 Oct-7 Nov 2027

The estimated cost per person in a shared room, excluding flights, is £1,550.



Is this opportunity for you? It would suit those who are keen to travel, be prepared to stay in a variety of different types of accommodation, support each other and do something different.

You must be a Trefoil member on booking and at the time of the holiday and have a reasonable level of fitness. You need to be resourceful, able to carry all your own luggage and may need to negotiate different terrains. Travel will be on a variety of vehicles including planes, trains, buses, tuk-tuks or rickshaws. At certain points,

Trefoil- or trip-wear may be needed and Trefoil neckers would be worn throughout the trip.

You would be booking your own flights or liaising with other members in similar locations. Due to the nature of this trip, various types of accommodation and transport used, this holiday may not meet everyone's accessibility needs. Please enquire so that we can work with you. All bookings would be direct with the company, reserved for Trefoil members only.

Meals included are breakfast every day, with a welcome and farewell meal, and full board in Ranthambore reserve. The company can advise on areas to find restaurants at reasonable prices throughout the tour.

Accommodation will enhance your Indian experience and may include heritage hotels and traditional simple guest houses. Please do not expect 5-star modern luxury - accommodation is designed to give you a real flavour of Rajasthan.

If you are interested to learn more about this amazing Trefoil international opportunity, then please contact Sally Hollingham on trefoilinternationaladviser@gmail.com



Your snapshots

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



London calling

In November, a group of 27 members from Cumbria North spent 4 days at Pax Lodge in London. We enjoyed time together in the evenings over food and quizzes and taking part in the pinning ceremony as well as splitting into groups during the days to visit different parts of the capital, using the Pax Lodge challenges round London to provide ideas. New friends were made over the weekend and everyone had a great time. We are now planning our next leisure break together!



Shine a light

1st Eastbourne Trefoil were invited to join Eastbourne Division for their 100-year Thinking Day service on 21 February at All Saints Church, Eastbourne. This was enjoyed by 7 of our members. It was lovely to see all the children and leaders with their Guiding lights going 'round the world'.



Keep dancing!

For one couple from Chelmsford South Trefoil, ballroom dancing has become far more than a hobby – it's a shared passion that has taken them from their first steps together to competition dance floors and trophies.

When Maxine and Bernie Jones first met, they were looking for something fun that they could do together. 'We wanted an activity that would give us time together and maybe teach us something new. We decided to try ballroom dancing and we've never looked back. As our confidence grew, Chloe, our teacher at Dance Chelmsford UK, encouraged us to take dance exams and learn more complex routines. That eventually led us into the world of competitions.

'Entering our first competition was both exciting and a little nerve-wracking! Since then, we have taken part in numerous competitions,



and our collection of trophies has grown so much that we may soon need a new trophy cabinet! For me, ballroom dancing isn't just moving around the dance floor, it's learning new routines, perfecting techniques and lots of practice! Every dance brings something new to master, and that challenge keeps it exciting. Blackpool is a place we always look forward to visiting. Dancing in the magnificent Tower Ballroom is an unforgettable experience.

'Another ballroom that means the world to us is aboard the Queen Victoria cruise ship. It was there that Bernie and I were married at sea and shared our first waltz as a married couple.

'Ballroom dancing has brought us adventure, friendship and so many wonderful memories. Most of all, it's something we love sharing together – step by step, dance by dance, wherever the music takes us.'



Friendships forever

Cherwell Trefoil organised a trip to Pax Lodge in London to celebrate the 100th World Thinking Day. We joined another 130 people for the afternoon session at Pax Lodge, where we took part in many different activities around the building and grounds. 'Our Friendship' was the theme of the 100th World Thinking Day and we all agreed that we have made true friendships throughout Girlguiding and now moving into Trefoil Guild.



Ear we go

Look what Mandy from Kidderminster gave members for Christmas. One each of course, but look so good with 2. Our member Sally is pictured demonstrating how good she looked when placing one on each ear.



Award winner!

In March of 2025, Evie Novak completed her Commonwealth Award with Girlguiding. 'Volunteering with Guides has become a long-time commitment, on top of Rainbows and Brownies! As a Trefoil Guild member, it felt especially meaningful to complete this award, and I am very proud to represent Burton-on-Trent Trefoil Guild in achieving it. Receiving the award at Hixon made all the hard work worthwhile, and I am so grateful for the support and encouragement I received along the way.'



The mane event

In August 2025, members of George Eliot Trefoil visited Lowlands Equestrian Centre, Riding for the Disabled Association, to find out about the work they do, view the outdoor arena built with funds from national Trefoil Guild and have an afternoon tea. The members decided they wanted to raise funds to further support the centre and so in January 2026 they ran a charity race night. The event was a great success with lots of laughter, and raised £585, which was presented to Lowlands Equestrian Centre RDA by one of the Trefoil members, Debbie Farley, who has recently started volunteering at the centre.



That's the Bullseye!

Some of West Lothian afternoon group took to the dartboards to have a go at Arrowheadz in Livingston. A really fun afternoon and no members of the public were harmed.

A taste of Bollywood

Cheshire Border members got into the spirit of Bollywood, learning some vibrant dance moves with the help of a YouTube video.





Mask me anything

Members of Derbyshire county came together for Thinking Day. It began with an introduction by Louise Jarman, county international adviser. She gave a short history of Thinking Day that involved actions by members. Everyone then renewed their promise before the activities, which were based on the continents of the world. Members made dream catchers and God's eyes, Venetian masks and Mandala art. As an alternative to crafts, there were quizzes and matching activities. The very enjoyable day ended with Taps.

Call the fire brigade

Our volunteer firefighters gave Manhood Trefoil a generic talk on the type of incidents they can be called to; how to keep safe at home, and then an in-depth look and explanation of what all the kit on the engine is used for; why they have so many different types of hoses and bits of kit. Mary volunteered to try on the fireman's uniform and she was staggered at the weight of it when fully kitted out. We learnt a lot and are very grateful to them giving up an evening especially as all are retained firefighters – all have full-time local jobs within the small town.



Pass Go

Somerset North county took part in the 100th World Thinking Day event at Pax Lodge. Over the weekend, various groups went to Westminster Abbey, Covent Garden and Camden Lock market, took boat rides on the Thames to Greenwich, rides on the London Eye and IFS Cloud Cable Car, climbed inside Tower Bridge, took part in the Monopoly challenge and the Paddington Trail. A weekend full of fun and friendship.



Sweet success

Janet Tibbit of Ashbourne Trefoil has shared her wonderful hobby. 'I am a Sucrologist, in other words I collect sugar wrappers and packets – the ones that come with your coffee in a cafe. When I started, about 60 years ago, sugar came in cubes, with a wrapper that could easily be removed, and most cafes, shops and attractions had their own designs. Then sugar started to come in packets, and sets were produced. More recently, sugar sticks were introduced which use less paper. I have some lovely sets, both from the UK and the rest of the world, including national costumes, flowers and plants, local scenery and landmarks, famous people and inventions, artists, and many more.'



In stitches



Trefoil members continue to demonstrate remarkable talent, with 2 Trefoils

recently producing knitted blankets. Banstead (below) crafted theirs for premature babies, and Sutherland (top) created blankets for Ethiopian women, a project we highlighted in the September 2025 issue.



Gather round

Gibraltar Trefoil celebrated Thinking Day with Girlguiding Gibraltar and the Scouts Association with a gathering. We marched down our main street which was fully supported by the community. The members had a memorable day.



Leaf it at that

Once again, The Dukeries have been very creative! Our photo shows our forest collages. We used old photo frames donated from the original Nottingham Lace Market and used in years gone to display the lace patterns. We decided these would be ideal for making our display of forest gatherings, collected from the famous Nottingham Forest where The Dukeries Trefoil lives.



Going underground

Members from Buckinghamshire on the London Monopoly Run taking a well-earned tube ride between challenges.

Game for a laugh

Victoria carefully placing a box where she thinks the paper is on the floor, during one of the Derwent Trefoil's meetings – inspired by the Cube game challenges – a brilliant blend of teamwork, trust, and a lot of laughter. These activities were set by one of the Trefoil's own members Ann Bicknell, who had experienced the Cube first-hand in Manchester. Inspired and energised, she brought the fun back to Derwent, giving everyone the chance to test their nerve, coordination, and problem-solving skills in true Trefoil style. A wonderful reminder that adventure doesn't need a big stage – just good company, a creative challenge, and a willingness to give it a go.



Having a ball

On a lovely summer's evening 16 Trefoil members met at West Wittering Croquet Club. We were given demonstrations of how to hold the mallet and the technique for aiming and, hopefully, hitting the ball. Some used the technique of wallop the ball and hope for the best, some did tentative hits and some knelt down to check the sightline of the ball to the hoop. Within the teams it quickly became obvious who was really competitive and who were just happy they had hit the ball in the right direction. It is quite possible that West Wittering Croquet Club may have gained some keen enthusiasts who may become members.



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.



Winging it

Amber Trefoil got stuck into lots of activities to mark 100 years of World Thinking Day at an event in Belper organised by the Derbyshire county team. We were entranced by a belly dance display and learnt that it originated not as dancing performed to men, but from groups of women for women. After the demo, we got the chance to try some moves ourselves and try on coin belts and various other costumes and props used in the dancing, including the beautiful wings seen in the photo.





A day at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

Anne Wainwright recounts Ilford and London Over the Border Trefoils' memorable day — complete with a lovely surprise ending

With the first of the buildings in the New Cultural Quarter open, we decided that now would be a great time to explore the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. I booked a group of around 11 of us on two mobility 'golf' buggy tours, which were brilliant — a great way to see the park. We were chaperoned by the volunteer park champions, who not only enthusiastically told us the inside

story about the park and its buildings but were very happy to stop for our photo shoots. While we were on our buggy tour, Eileen led a dozen or so of our more mobile members on a walk through the park. They started at Endeavour Square and explored as far as the Velodrome before meeting up with the rest of us at Sadler's Wells East for lunch. The Sadler's Wells manager proudly told us that they



have been given a 200-year lease and that the Olympic Legacy Fund has paid for all the construction and fitting costs of their new 550-seat building. I can also confirm that they have a large number of the nicest toilets I have seen in a long time!

The £1.1bn Olympic Legacy Fund is also paying for the other three buildings in the Cultural Quarter: The BBC Music-Recording Studios (not open yet), the London College of Fashion and the V&A East Museum — as well as 600 new homes. The V&A Storehouse, just past the Copper Box, is open until 10pm on Thursdays and Saturdays, and is well worth a visit.

Settling down to our food, we were amazed to see Angela Rippon CBE walk past us. She had come to Sadler's Wells East to have a meeting with the Sadler's Wells management about her Let's Dance! initiative. Let's Dance! is a campaign aiming to ensure as many people as possible feel the benefits

of movement and dance. Angela was delightful. She was not only happy to be in our photo shoot (as can be seen above) but also quickly took over the organisation of how we should stand — sideways on — to get the best photo of us all. She then stayed a while to chat with us. Lesley remembers not only her interest in our organisation but her passion for dancing. Angela told us that it was important that we should keep dancing into later life as it is such a good way to keep moving. As Angela left, she ended with a quick reminder to 'dance every day'. A great finish to a brilliant day!

The Olympic Park is keen to be accessible to all. Park Mobility can provide mobility scooters and wheelchairs. It is based at the Information Point located at 9, Endeavour Square, London E20 1JN. This is only accessible by foot, so if you have mobility problems it is tricky to get there to make arrangements.



Meet a Trefoil

All aboard for laughter, locks and lasting friendships with
Tarina 'Tee' Hutchinson of the Bridgewater Boaters

If you spot a cheerful crew wearing the distinctive purple, red and lime green neckers cruising along a canal, you may have met the Bridgewater Boaters Trefoil. This national level Trefoil brings together people who love narrowboating and the easy friendship that comes with life on the water. Many first tried boating through Girlguiding, helping girls get afloat and discovering that a weekend on a boat offers adventure, friendship and a chance to learn something new. Most came for one reason and stayed for all of them.

Bridgewater Boaters meet throughout the year in lots of different ways. Longer trips take members to new and familiar waterways, from the excitement of the Falkirk Wheel to the sweep of the Llangollen Viaduct. Shorter

weekends and land-based adventures add variety. Past favourites include Monopoly Live in London, several European capitals to play wide-games and a visit to Pax Lodge. In winter, the Trefoil keeps in touch through Zoom meetings, often working on badges such as Motivate, International at home or STARS activities.

Life on board is a warm mix of socialising and gentle adventure. Many members hold boating qualifications such as the Certificate in Community Boat Management or the Girlguiding narrowboat scheme. Several are trainers who help others learn to steer, moor and work locks safely. The Bridgewater Boaters Trefoil has also supported Girlguiding Gold Challenge trips, giving girls and young



women the chance to explore the waterways.

Boats are often moored for local history walks, treasure hunts or geocaching. Evenings bring crafting, quizzes and the occasional murder mystery that has everyone giggling so much they rock the boat with laughter.

Stories are part of the fun. Members remember practising turning the boat until no one could recall which way it started. There was the man overboard drill with a dummy that alarmed a passerby. There have also been real first aid moments, including helping collapsed fishermen.

The Trefoil began with a small group of guiding friends and became a national level Trefoil in 2013. We welcome anyone with an interest in boating. About half the members see

Bridgewater Boaters as their main Trefoil, while others are active locally too.

Trefoil's 4 aims guide the group. Members come to find friendship, give support, get active and get involved. Beginners are paired with experienced boaters to help their confidence.

As a national level Trefoil, the group loves a challenge. A recent favourite is the Paddington Bear bench challenge. There are 23 benches across Britain and Ireland, and the group has already found 21 of them.

The Trefoil also gives plenty of chances to work on the Voyage award. Service might mean helping girls get afloat or supporting community boats. Life aboard naturally supports skills and teamwork, with members cooking, steering, working locks and planning routes together. Exploring the world is almost guaranteed, whether that is discovering hidden corners of the canal network or joining trips further afield.

The Bridgewater Boaters Trefoil is a place to find friendship, give support, get active and get involved. Whether cruising a canal or catching up on a winter Zoom, Bridgewater Boaters Trefoil offers a warm space to explore, share and make memories that last.





Annual Meeting 2027

The 2027 Annual Meeting will be held at De Montfort Hall in Leicester on 12 June. **Elaine Diack**, chair of Trefoil Guild Midlands, tells us more about this fascinating city

Leicester is a city shaped by more than two millennia of history, culture and innovation. Its story stretches back to Roman times, and you can still trace that journey today by following the city's heritage trail. Each stop reveals another layer of Leicester's past, from ancient settlements to modern discoveries.

One of the most charming routes is the New Walk trail, a historic pedestrian pathway first used by Roman soldiers. Today it offers a peaceful stroll leading directly to the museum and art gallery, where visitors can explore collections

spanning art, natural history and archaeology. Another highlight is the medieval Guildhall, one of Leicester's oldest surviving buildings. Rich with stories from the civil war era and even connections to Shakespeare, it offers a fascinating glimpse into city life centuries ago.

Leicester is equally celebrated for its vibrant, multicultural character. Its reputation as the 'curry capital of England' reflects the incredible range of global cuisines found throughout the city. Leicester's Diwali celebrations are among the largest and most spectacular outside India, drawing



thousands of people each year to enjoy the lights, music and festivities that fill the Golden Mile.

The city gained worldwide attention when the remains of King Richard III were discovered beneath a car park in 2012. This remarkable archaeological find led to the creation of the King Richard III Visitor Centre, which tells the story of the king's life, his death at the Battle of Bosworth and the extraordinary process of locating, excavating and identifying his remains. His reinterment in Leicester Cathedral in 2015 marked a historic moment for both the city and the nation.

Leicester is also a modern centre for scientific and technological innovation. In 1984, Sir Alec Jeffreys, at the University of Leicester, invented DNA fingerprinting, a breakthrough that transformed forensic science worldwide. Researchers at the university continue to work on instruments used in space exploration, and remarkably, a Leicester-built device has been present in space continuously since 1967.

For anyone interested in the wonders of the universe, the National Space Centre is an unmissable attraction. With its distinctive Rocket Tower, it houses an impressive collection of spacecraft, satellites and meteorites. Visitors can see a space suit worn by British astronaut Tim Peake and enjoy hands-on exhibits that bring the science of space travel to life.

Of course, Leicester is also a great place for shopping and relaxation. The city centre offers a wide variety of shops, from well-known brands to independent boutiques – plenty to keep even the keenest shoppers busy. And when it's time for a break, there's no shortage of cafés and restaurants. Whether you fancy a coffee and a slice of cake or want to sample cuisine from around the world, Leicester's food scene has something to tempt every taste.

We look forward to welcoming you to our lively and historic corner of the world – where heritage, culture and warm hospitality come together to create a memorable experience for every visitor.



New members welcome

Trefoil Guilds from North West England share some of the creative approaches they have used to recruit and welcome new members

Cheshire Border have been working hard to explore ways to recruit new members to Trefoil, especially those who are also leaders in Girlguiding. They have a strong relationship with guiding in the county and they have been able to promote Trefoil by actively supporting Girlguiding events and activities, from their planning to implementation. There are also great opportunities to get local members of Scouting involved too. As we know guiding and scouting already work well together in many areas.

Flexibility is the key, offering meetings at different times of the day, different days of the week or even an internet guild that meets as and when members can get together. If your guild is running an event, then why not invite local Girlguiding leaders along to enjoy the activity and find out more about Trefoil at the same time?

These are some of the things they have tried so far, with some success:

- Advertising Trefoil using local social media sites by uploading news

of how we are supporting guiding locally and invitations to join us to find out more about our programme

- Bookmarks with QR codes linked to Trefoil, given to all Girlguiding leaders
- Regular articles in Girlguiding county newsletters about what we do and our achievements, such as the Voyage award
- Creating a poster for use in local meeting places and on community notice boards, church and community halls

Another way of broadening the membership is to offer county-wide groups, such as a walking group, book group or theatre group, so that members of Trefoils who may not offer these activities have a greater range of activities available to them.

Secondary guilds need to be used more – you can be in as many Trefoils as you choose to be. This allows you to take advantage of a range of activities, for which you pay locally. You just need to make sure your annual subscription is paid to your primary guild. You can also be a member of a Trefoil in another country or region. We definitely need to share our opportunities to a wider audience and many countries and regions now offer their opportunities out nationally.

Holding a recruitment stall at our local Armed Forces Day event proved popular and a number of men expressed an interest in joining Trefoil. This could be as part of an existing group or starting a group of their

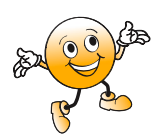


own. The Voyage award and other challenges seemed particularly to appeal to men.

A Trefoil in Stockport held an 'Invite a friend night' and lots of new people came along to eat cake and listen to Edwina Curry (opposite page, a friend of one member) talk about her life. Not everyone has an ex-MP in their list of friends but we can all welcome people at the door, tell them how brilliant Trefoil is, offer them cake and hopefully they will come back again!

We need to tell everyone how great Trefoil is. We need to address myths and misconceptions about what Trefoil has to offer and to make people aware that you can join Trefoil from the age of 18, you don't need to be retired! If each member brought a friend to one event or meeting in the next year, talked positively about Trefoil and showed them what fun we are having, just think what that would do for our membership.

Let's all get recruiting today!



Gardens, parks and picnics

Morna Macdonald, national programme and development adviser, explores the exciting ways your Trefoil can make this summer unforgettable

Long summer days and warm weather mean it's time for our Trefoils to get active outdoors. Does your Trefoil have outdoor space or a park nearby? Perhaps someone has a lovely garden, and you can meet there? Bring out your travel rugs, baskets and glasses and have a picnic. You could play some traditional games such as quoits, skittles, frisbee, boules, giant Jenga, croquet or paddle in a paddling pool, whatever you can source. Or you could have your own posh garden party with summer dresses,

hats, tiny sandwiches and sweet treats, mocktails and fizz!

The UK's temperate maritime climate results in many wonderful botanical gardens and plant collections to explore. Did you know there are over 730 national plant collections in the UK? The National Trust and National Trust for Scotland properties and gardens, local parks, the National Garden Scheme and Scotland's Garden Scheme can all be enjoyed, especially during the summer months. Consult the relevant gardens scheme to see



which gardens will be open and when. These gardens may be private and only open for a day or two during the summer, so it is a real treat.

Many Trefoils enjoy exploring their local areas. Trails of many kinds – art, town, heritage, blue plaques, sculpture etc – are all good fun and often take us to new places where we can discover interesting facts about our local environment, culture and people. An online search or a visit to your tourist information centre will give lots of information. Scavenger hunts and photo trails will test your observation skills as you look at close-up photos or cryptic questions – Where is this door, window or roof feature? What are the opening times of this place? – you get the idea! You could get a bus somewhere, have a cuppa and cake then head home again. The charity Cycling Without Age may have a 'chapter' (branch) near you. They operate electric trishaws for two people which are piloted by a volunteer.

These trishaws enable people with limited mobility to comfortably experience an area.

Do you live near the sea or rivers? You could take a river trip, maybe on a barge, or a walk by the water, some pond dipping, paddling, rock pooling, sandcastle building, and so much more. A countryside or coastal ranger may be able to join you to identify what you find or visit your Trefoil. Look out for beach wheelchairs which may operate near you.

If your Trefoil is competitive and you enjoy a challenge, why not have your own mini-Chelsea Flower Show? In groups, make a table-top garden which will be judged and certificates awarded. Beforehand, decide on the garden size and any themes or features you wish to include. Who will design that gold medal garden or win a silver gilt award?

Of course, summer is the perfect time for an ice cream or two. Have a blind tasting to find out your Trefoil's favourite flavours. Do you have a local ice cream parlour or artisan ice cream maker? Try making your own knickerbocker glory or ice cream sundaes.

Whatever you choose to do with your Trefoil, whether it's meeting in your local garden centre or exploring further afield and eating ice cream, be sure to have fun, take lots of photos and enjoy yourselves!





Thai adventure

Celebrating guiding worldwide – **Liz Rix** of Bedford Trefoil shares her inspiring TOPAZ Thailand visit

The Girl Guides Association of Thailand (GGAT) has a shorter history than in the UK; it was founded in 1956 to prepare girls to become leaders. It's a school subject, following the WAGGGS programme and more desk-bound than guiding here. The leaders are teachers, men and women trained in Bangkok at the Girl Guides of Thailand Headquarters. We decided to offer a taste of UK guiding with parachute games, giant bubbles and a competitive team game, all

ways of promoting leadership skills through developing cooperation, communication and teamwork. The sessions were a dream to run – the guides were enthusiastic and disciplined and their enjoyment was obvious. We had a reality check at one venue: this was a Buddhist children's home rather than a school. The children were of mixed ages and both sexes and were much more like a typical gaggle of British children. We worked extra hard that day!



The schools we visited were in Kanchanaburi and Ratchaburi. The rest of our project was based in Bangkok, either at GGAT Headquarters – where we produced displays on the history of Girl Guiding, WAGGGS and Trefoil Guild – or at the disused training centre being redeveloped on the outskirts of Bangkok. We were asked to raise the site's profile by painting the boundary wall with our own design, promoting Girl Guiding and Trefoil. Thanks to the graphic designer nephew of one of our team, we produced a professional-looking design using motifs inspired by traditional English canal art. Local guides and leaders joined us to paint it.

Trefoil Guild in Thailand is very new (established in 2024 with the support of previous TOPAZ teams), with about 30 members nationally. The uniform, which we all bought, features the dove of peace. If you see us wearing it, do say hello! We led a session on Trefoil in the UK, chatting as we worked on crafts like canal-art-painted neckers, sharing our ideas on how to grow. We suggested a Thailand Trefoil trip to the

UK – we would love to see the ladies again and host them here.

Not everything went smoothly: one member of our group broke her arm, curtailing her trip. Road closures stopped us from reaching the planned eco project but a substitute visit was arranged. The dimensions of the training centre wall were not what we expected so a last-minute adaption to the design was necessary but we proved equal to the task. We had been warned to 'expect the unexpected' at our selection weekend!

We enjoyed the tourist experience, visits to historic monuments, traditional workshops and markets. The schools put on dance displays and shared crafts and traditional foods with us. These experiences helped us to understand the context in which we were working, and our hosts were able to share their pride in their history and culture. Their hospitality and kindness were outstanding.

Differences were apparent at first, but we came to see the similarities, the friendships, fun and the worldwide sisterhood that membership of Girlguiding and Trefoil Guild brings.



Country and region reports



Anglia

We have welcomed 4 new Trefoils into the region, 2 in Hertfordshire and one each in Cambridgeshire West and Suffolk. 'Lones' guilds are starting to take shape for members who wish to remain part of the Trefoil family but cannot commit to regular meetings.

Several members attended the Annual Meeting in Belfast. The Anglia boat race was a big hit with members, one of the more competitive being the chief guide, Tracy Foster. Voyage continues to be popular in Anglia with 21 bronze, 5 silver and 9 gold being awarded in 2025.

The activities that members take part in never cease to surprise – camping, canal barging, abseiling, running a marathon, Tai Chi, crazy golf, bushcraft, jewellery making, silk screen printing, pottery and more, plus visits to breweries, churches, museums and theatres.

Karen Batten

London and South East Region

My first year as region chair has been very busy, but such an interesting experience. I have met so many members at varied events.

We had a very successful Annual Review, held at Hastings Centre, with some members staying for the weekend at the Sussex seaside town. The day ended with a sing-along with the Pett Slip Buoys, an independent lifeboat team, singing sea shanties.

Members have joined with TOPAZ adventures plus county and guild holidays and outings. I have had the pleasure of presenting Voyage award certificates at various levels – congratulations to all.

I am grateful to the county chairs who work hard to share information and to support guild chairs, along with our great team of officers and advisers, also helping to ensure that all the boxes are ticked to keep our members safe and having fun.

Caroline Steer



Midlands

Another busy year as I continued my 'World tour of the region'. I was able to join Northamptonshire on Thinking Day. I was in Shropshire for their Annual Meeting. The speaker was very interesting and told us about dressing Queen Elizabeth II. For the first time I attended the region singing day. Our own region Annual Meeting was a day of various activities as we 'Reached

for the Stars'. I visited Herefordshire for a delicious afternoon tea and learned about the Elephants of Bromyard. West Mercia had their Annual Meeting at Mercia Point with cakes and an excellent talk about the Black Country.

Quite a few members flew to Belfast for the Annual Meeting in a lovely venue with an amazing speaker and enjoyable evening entertainment. Nottinghamshire was my next stop, for afternoon tea and more cake. Region International Day was hosted by Birmingham with a very amusing speaker from ACME Whistles. My last stop was Derbyshire where I shared the winter lunch – a delicious meal.

I have very much enjoyed meeting members all over the region. I thank my team, as they work so hard.

Elaine Diack

North East England

This year has been eventful for many of our members, who have devoted considerable effort to completing the STARS challenge and attaining various levels of the Voyage award.

Members participated in the Annual Meeting in Belfast. During this event, we distributed a quiz focused on North East England, aiming to encourage others to visit our region for the 2026 Annual Meeting in Scarborough.

Over 40 members participated in a 4-day activity event in Skipton, which offered a wide range of options including barging, crafting, walking, tenpin bowling, a Halloween hat competition and many other enjoyable



pursuits. The event was a great success, fostering camaraderie and enriching our members' experiences.

Trefoil Guild North East England continues to thrive and we look forward to the year ahead, with the many events being planned with optimism and enthusiasm.

My thanks to all our members for their dedication and support.

Lesley Haworth





North West England

North West England Trefoil members have been out and about promoting Trefoil around the region. Our new hats and bags have proved very popular. It's a good way to be spotted in a crowd as we discovered on the Challenge trail around Chester.

Our Annual Meeting was held in Manchester with a talk by Brian Topping about his work as a customs officer at the airport. It was a great opportunity for members to catch up and enjoy the self-guided walk and quiz around the city.

We introduced our new region Thanks badge and we have awarded many of these to members who have gone that extra mile for Trefoil in North West England.



The end of the year bought us to Pax Lodge where, over the weekend, we explored sites around London and enjoyed a visit to the light show at Kew gardens.

Another year of fun and friendship in North West England. Thank you to everyone who made it happen.

Jean Lawrowitsch

Scotland

Trefoil is a wonderful organisation. It gives us opportunities to meet up with friends, develop interests and tackle new activities.

We had a very successful Scottish Annual Meeting in Troon in 2025, where we were inspired, and many of us attended the Annual Meeting in Belfast in June 2025.

Our members have taken part in an astonishing variety of challenges including Motivate, and activities from emergency first aid, rambling, indoor curling, beetle drives, crafts, quizzes



and international adventures.

Scottish Trefoil had a very successful trip to Liverpool, and the Scottish rambles continue across the country.

We had a great weekend at

Carronvale, where the participants enjoyed a range of activities, crafts, good food and friendship.

We all know how wonderful Trefoil is and it's time to share that with others, so that they can enjoy the fun and friendship too. Why not take a friend along to your next meeting?

Alison Plummer DL



South West England

Our region Annual Meeting was hosted in Trowbridge by Wiltshire South when Hilary was presented with a Silver Trefoil award, and the first of our South West England Thanks and Recognition awards was made to Avril Stouse. A second was presented in October to Julia Blackmore. These acknowledged all they had done to support and promote South West

England Trefoil. Four locations were chosen for 'Travelling Trefoils', when members explored the region and its heritage and said farewell to Hilary.

Members heard some interesting speakers during the year with topics including the SS Great Britain and The Magic Circle. VE Day was celebrated by many Trefoils, with Dorset choosing to commemorate the occasion with a stay at Foxlease Park.

Many cups of tea were brewed and many cakes were sold and eaten at fundraising events and farmers' markets.

Sadly, the year ended with the death of 2 of our county chairs. I thank them for all they did for the region and their respective counties.

Liz Daniels

Ulster

As I report on my 4th year as Ulster chair, 2025 has been a memorable year. Our main focus and privilege was to host the 2025 Annual Meeting. Every member in Ulster contributed to the meeting in their own way, and we were delighted to have so many Trefoil members join us in Belfast.

All our Trefoils continue to meet, mostly monthly, and our numbers remain stable, but we have seen a drop in the number of Trefoils and our age demographic remains high. Our Ulster Review in September 2025 took the form of an Afternoon Tea hosted by Fermanagh Trefoil.

Trefoils continue to use national programme material for meeting and

are positive about these when asked. A full complement from Ulster attended the conference and came home ready for action. We have since held a planning meeting with several ideas to take us into 2026. So, watch this space!

Karen Cochrane





Wales

Our members have taken part in activities, including attending talks by guest speakers, going on trips and to events, fundraising and supporting their communities. Through these, they have achieved remarkable success individually and as a Trefoil.

Wales maintains an engaged and committed membership and our focus has been on international opportunities. International days were held in both North and South Wales. Additionally, 20 members had the chance to visit Sangam World Centre.

On the business front, county chairs and advisers have focused on the integration of recruitment and social media into our growth strategy, including initiatives to 'Grow your Guild'. They also reviewed forthcoming events and addressed potential challenges facing Trefoil Cymru in 2026.

Lesley Mathews



Trefoil Guild in Foreign Countries

Members of Trefoil Guild in Foreign Countries (TGIFC) have enjoyed another fun year. Our 9 Trefoils span Asia, Benelux and France, Pinoso in Spain, Malta, Gibraltar, St Helena, Cyprus and Bermuda, alongside International Lones Trefoil members.

Many Trefoils meet online and have embraced Zoom with enthusiasm, sharing quizzes, crafts, speakers and even sing-alongs. Those who meet in person have enjoyed social events, craft fairs and charity fundraising activities. Memorable events include afternoon tea with alpacas enjoyed by our Pinoso guild and the Annual Meeting weekend in Belfast which was attended by members of Gibraltar and Benelux and France Trefoils.

TGIFC also continued its tradition of meeting 3 times a year on Zoom, giving members the chance to chat, laugh and strengthen friendships.

Jo Greaney

Taking fitness to new heights

Rebecca Scattergood of Elton Trefoil decided to try something new by joining a beginners' pole class on her own



I didn't have the motivation for going to the gym, so was looking for something else for my fitness and saw an advert for a 6-week beginner's pole class. I thought it sounded fun, but my friends could either not make the date or didn't fancy it, so I was brave and decided to go along on my own. I needn't have worried as there were others in the same boat.

For the first few lessons, we were all saying we didn't have enough strength or co-ordination to manage it, but our teacher was really motivating and celebrated any small improvements we had.

Everyone is very supportive, cheering when someone manages a move they've been working on for ages. We all have a good laugh when someone does what we've named a 'flop dismount' where you just land in a heap!

One of the other ladies in my class was telling me about aerial hoop, so when the next beginner's course started, I signed up for that too.

I've been doing both for a year now and sometimes still can't believe the moves I'm managing to do. There's a big difference in my strength, which is obviously good for bones in menopause.

I used these classes for my Voyage award and completed my silver in October but am going

to keep going, as it's such fun. Much better than plodding on a treadmill!

I've made some good friends in the class, so the takeaway is to be brave and try something new – even if it's a scary thought!



Spring into summer

Elaine Diack, chair of Trefoil Guild Midlands, explores fresh ideas for enjoying the summer months



Things to look forward to:

- Pick-your-own strawberries and raspberries
- Wimbledon
- School holidays and spending time with children and grandchildren
- Warm evenings sitting out in the garden

As we approach the summer months, we can look forward to more daylight hours and warmer days with – hopefully – less rain.

It's time to spend more time out of

doors. Perhaps your Trefoil could have a picnic in the park or take a packed lunch on a day trip or outing? Maybe have fish and chips at the seaside, or a lovely ice cream on the prom. Spending time at the beach, enjoying a paddle in the sea and listening to the waves – what better way to appreciate the warmer summer days?

Why not try a Trefoil camp? Or if that's not for you then visit your local campsite. Have a 'Camp in a Day' with various activities associated with camp. Soak up all that vitamin D. This



could help with the STARS challenge or an item on the Voyage award.

A stroll on a summer evening is another easy thing to do and doesn't cost anything. This is also the perfect season for a bus pass ramble, as the days are longer.

But as the sun strengthens and we spend more time outside, let's not forget to take care of our skin. Remember to use an SPF sunscreen, at least factor 30. Re-apply every few hours and after swimming. Wear a hat, sunglasses and a T-shirt. Try to stay in the shade between 11am and 3pm.

A summer BBQ is also very popular. As well as the usual burgers and sausages, why not try this recipe for marinated chicken?



You will need

1kg/2lb of chicken breast

For the marinade, mix together:

80ml/2.8oz extra virgin olive oil

3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

3 teaspoons soy sauce

1 teaspoon Worcester sauce

1 teaspoon pepper

1 teaspoon salt

Half teaspoon of garlic salt

50g/1.7oz brown sugar

Pierce the chicken with a fork and place in a bag. Add the marinade and put in the fridge for at least 30 minutes, preferably 4-5 hours. Discard the marinade and cook the chicken, making sure it is cooked all the way through.

Wordsearch

Find all the listed items to do with wildlife on the grid. Words may be listed vertically, horizontally, backwards or on the diagonal, but must always be in a straight unbroken line.

R	D	R	I	B	K	C	A	L	B	B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y	T
Q	A	N	G	Y	N	E	S	H	B	H	E	O	E	R	A	P	I	G	E
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- beetle
blackbird
bumblebee
butterfly
- cranefly
cricket
earwig
greenfly
- hedgehog
hornet
ladybird
millipede
- mosquito
moth
mouse
pigeon
- rabbit
robin
slug
snail
- spider
thrip
wasp
woodlouse

Turn to page 38 for the answers

Belvoir Castle



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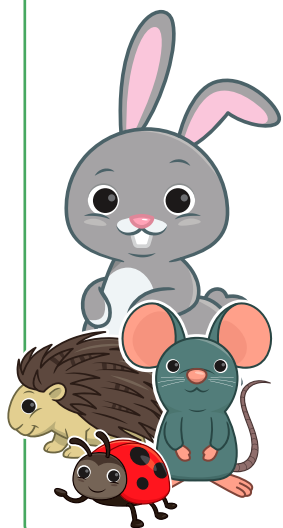
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