



Annual Review  
**2015**

*Putting the  
Pieces Together*

# Irish Girl Guides

## Journey Programme in numbers...



**2015** Launch

**2014** Pilot

**2013** Reinvent

**2012** Reflect

**2011** Review

Hundreds of volunteers helped make the Journey Programme what it is. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time over the last five years.



The Journey Programme has three elements in each Branch programme - Compulsory Challenges, Choice Challenges and Interest Badges.

10 new core Journey badges for the Ladybirds, Brownies and Guides



3 overall awards and 18 Specialised Area Pins for Senior Branch

### 8 new publications

26,835 copies of the various publications were printed and distributed or are in stock to be sold via the Distribution Centres.

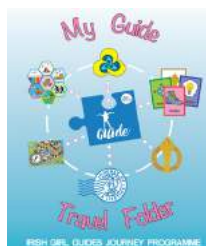
There are **318** Choice Challenges throughout the Journey Programme. 36 for Ladybirds, 48 for Brownies, 84 for Guides and 150 for Senior Branch. With so much choice there's something to suit everyone!



2,256 Ladybird Tickets sold



6,012 Brownie Passports sold



2,354 Guide Travel Folders sold

661 Senior Branch Travel Journals sold



19 new interest badges for Ladybirds



42 new interest badges for Brownies



57 new interest badges for Guides

### Most popular new interest badges September - December 2015:

Brownie Healthy Friendship (722 earned)  
Ladybird Healthy Friendship (464 earned)  
Guide Guiding Traditions (336 earned)



48 Units opted to receive the Journey Programme on a special Journey Programme USB key instead of a hard copy print version.

The role of the Leader is to mentor, support and empower the girls throughout their Journey. You bring the programme to life with your imagination and ideas. Thank You!

Find us online at [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie) or





# Chief's Address

When I look back over 2015, it seems to have been a busy and exciting year. One of the biggest milestones that showed how Irish Girl Guides (IGG) is a responsive and innovative organisation was the new Journey Programme for all Branches, which not only meets the needs of today's girl but is also broad enough to challenge the girls of tomorrow. There was an incredible amount of work done to develop the outcomes, structure, activities, badges, resources and to organise the wonderful launch of the Journey Programme. There are no words to fully express our gratitude to all who contributed so, instead, we hope those involved will take great satisfaction in the knowledge that 12,000 girls and women are enjoying the fruits of your labour every week across Ireland!



## *Journey Programme*

In 2015, IGG continued to evolve as a movement. In the past we have had the skills, the dedication and the commitment of many committee members and staff, but never before in history have we had the resources, technologies and innovation to solve the challenges that we do now. In an effort to solve the ever-increasing paperwork and administrative work of record-keeping and compliance that is required of Leaders, we embraced Online Guide Manager in 2015 for more than just our national census. The staggering fact that 9,000 meetings were planned online by 285 Units in the first year on OGM is hugely encouraging. It shows that providing innovative ways to be more efficient can help us be more effective with our time. IGG was very fortunate to have a very efficient Amanda O'Sullivan leading our OGM development and I thank her for her commitment and dedication to the project.

We are involved in IGG because we believe in the value of Guiding, we believe we are helping to develop responsible citizens, and it is that individual and shared sense of responsibility to help the next generation that is so important. In all the technicalities and formalities that are an inherent part of an organisation our size, our ability to be practical, down-to-earth and never to lose our sense of humour or sense of reality is what keeps us together. This positive atmosphere of togetherness was evident at TWIGG - our Leaders' conference last year. A highlight of the weekend was listening to Nicola Grinstead, the Chair of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) as she spoke with such infectious enthusiasm and passion for growing Guiding around the world. She commented on the wonderful atmosphere we had created and how relevant our trainings on mental health, good governance and future planning were.



Throughout the year, starting at TWIGG, consultations were held with our members and stakeholders about the IGG that is needed in the future. Our 2012-2015 Strategic Plan was evaluated and reviewed and the whole experience was shaped into the next Strategic Plan #IGG2020. I have no doubt that the workload and time commitment of this new outcomes-focused plan will be challenging. However, I believe with collaboration, we can overcome those challenges. With the support of our volunteers and staff working to achieve our common goal, we will be able to succeed and it will be of great benefit to the girls and women of Ireland. Confident girls and women bring value to every community and group in which they are a part. Together, we can continue to make a difference through our membership of IGG.

Yours in the spirit of Guiding,  
Helen Concannon  
Chief Commissioner

## Membership Figures 2015

YEAR	Eastern	Mid West	North East	North West	South East	South West	WCM	Overall Totals
2014	3495	1382	1486	587	650	2491	1272	11363
2015	3450	1393	1515	516	598	2692	1386	11550

# IGG National Volunteers and Staff

National President  
Chief Commissioner  
Assistant Chief Commissioners

National Programme and Training Commissioner  
Assistant Programme and Training Commissioner  
National Treasurer  
Grant Secretary

## Regional Commissioners

North West Region  
North East Region  
West and Central Midlands Region  
Mid West Region  
Eastern Region  
South West Region  
South East Region

## Chairman National Committee

Finance  
International  
Communications  
Ladybirds  
Brownies  
Guides  
Senior Branch  
Adult Training and Outdoors  
Equality Diversity and Inclusion  
Membership  
Constitution  
Trust Corporation  
National Memorial Cottage

## Representatives

National Women's Council of Ireland  
National Youth Council of Ireland  
Irish Trefoil Guild National Council

## Staff

Chief Executive Officer  
Receptionist  
Distribution Centre Manager  
Distribution Centre Assistant  
Support Officer  
Communications Officer  
Publications and Technology Officer  
Accounts Administrator  
Membership Administrator  
Safeguarding Membership Officer  
Eastern Regional Development Officer  
Eastern Regional Development Officer  
North East Regional Development Officer  
North West Regional Development Officer  
Mid West Regional Development Officer  
WCM Regional Development Officer  
South West Regional Development Officer  
South West Regional Development Officer  
South East Regional Development Officer

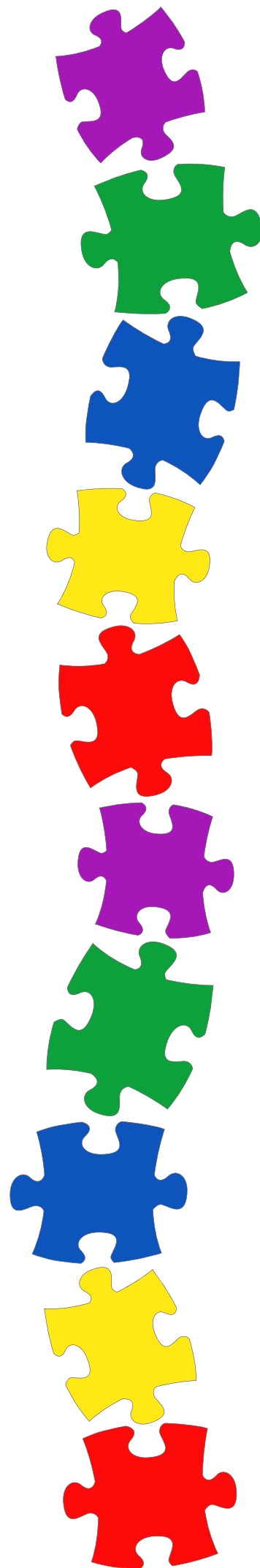
Maureen Dillon  
Helen Concannon  
Amanda O'Sullivan/Jenna Goodwin  
and Claire Colfer  
Evelyn Hayes  
Carina Egan  
Cathy Thewlis/Julie Stephens  
Sylvia Richardson

Geraldine Kiely/Jacqueline Lavelle  
Elizabeth Lynch  
Anne Marie Slevin  
Pauline Kennedy  
Anne McPartland  
Rosemary O'Driscoll/Deirdre Henley  
Adele Mealey

Thérèse Joyce  
Lorna Finnegan  
Jillian Glancy  
Sharon Flynn/Monica McDonnell  
Martina Fox/Margaret O'Connor  
Pat O'Brien/Carol O'Brady  
Jenny Gannon/Clare Sheridan  
Margaret Patterson  
Ruth Hughes  
Sinéad Crilly  
Síle Rooney/Gillian Finan  
Nuala Cooke/Claire Colfer  
Kay Gallagher

Kay Gallagher  
Mary T. Hally  
Hazel Convery

Linda Peters  
Egle Kaloudis  
Mandy Swanwick  
Caitríona Kelly  
Jemma Lee  
Fiona Murdoch  
Katherine Ryan  
Karen Lynch/Naomi Levins  
Vivienne Walsh  
Lisa Challoner  
Mary Clarke  
Gillian Finan/Emer Maher  
Michelle Cahalan  
Karina Dingerkus  
Margaret Corr  
Marie Mulhall  
Deirdre Henley  
Christine Cronin  
Fiona Condon



# Overview of our Strategic Plan

2015 was a very exciting year for IGG - the highlights being the introduction of the Journey Programme and new interest badges for each of the Branches, together with the launch of a new data management system – Online Guide Manager (OGM).

Throughout the year, the focus continued on the six strategic aims in IGG's Strategic Plan.

## To Recruit New Members to IGG

IGG's total membership numbers increased from 11,363 in 2014 to 11,550 in 2015 i.e. an increase of 187 members overall. There was also an increase in the number of IGG Units over the year with 38 new Units opened. It is hoped that IGG's overall membership will increase again next year as a result of this trend combined with the impetus of the Journey Programme.

In conjunction with the Catholic Guides of Ireland and four other European Guide associations, IGG took part in a project on the growth of members. This Growth Project involved expert advice on research from a consultancy firm followed by interviews, roundtables and online surveying between March and September 2015. The results were analysed and the main findings of the Irish online survey and round tables showed that we need to pay attention to four areas i.e. technology, word of mouth sharing, accreditation and support. These findings have been taken into account in IGG's new Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2020 in an effort to recruit new members.

## To retain members and encourage progression within the organisation

The framework of the Journey Programme is such that it encourages an easy progression from Ladybirds through Brownies to Guides and on to Senior Branch. This fact, together with the change in age bands, will encourage members to stay in the organisation longer as they will be taking part in age-appropriate programmes and attending exciting events with their peers throughout their Guiding journey.

The new Senior Branch programme is a varied one with three different pathways designed to suit all members of that age group (14 to 30 years) which will encourage them to stay involved in the organisation and hopefully go on to become active IGG Leaders.

The introduction of OGM has meant that volunteer Leaders have been able to reduce the amount of time and effort that they spend on administration for their weekly Unit meetings. Such initiatives will encourage volunteers to stay involved in an organisation that they initially joined to work with the girls, rather than do paperwork!

Taking part in activities and special events such as the 2015 service project in Sangam, India also helps to retain members' interest and enthusiasm for Guiding.

## To maintain relevance to girls and young women through the programme

Great excitement was generated by the internal launch of the new Journey Programme at IGG's first joint Branch Day/National Conference - TWIGG (Together We're IGG).

Almost 200 IGG Leaders attended this event in March 2015 and were enthused and invigorated by the "big reveal".

The Journey Programme is a cohesive one with a common framework for all four IGG Branches. It is designed to help IGG Leaders understand and support the girls' developmental stages. Fifteen National Outcomes are seamlessly integrated into the Journey Programme so that girls taking part will gain specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and values, thereby achieving IGG's mission "to enable girls and young women to develop to their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world".

A range of new resources for both girls and Leaders was produced, all based on the Journey theme. Age-appropriate resources were produced for the girls in each of the four Branches – a Ticket for Ladybirds, Passport for Brownies, Travel Folder for Guides and Travel Journal for Senior Branch members. Leaders were provided with an overall Travel Planner outlining the Programme across all the Branches together with a Branch-specific Leader Journey Planner containing suggested activities for each of the challenges in their Branch programme. Resources were made available in both printed and soft copy versions so that they are as user-friendly as possible for the volunteer Leader.



A new focus was placed on interest badges so that they are now central to, and complement, the core Journey programme. Much work was done on the syllabus for each of these interest badges for all the age groups to make them streamlined and more practical and relevant to today's girls. Exciting, colourful new designs and shapes for these badges make them very appealing for the girls. An "I am a Badge Diva" badge has even been introduced at Senior Branch level, allowing them to complete any and all interest badges from the other Branches, including Ladybirds, thereby appealing to their inner child!

It was decided that, since the outcomes of Gaisce – the President's Award complement the outcomes of IGG's Journey Programme, a partnership between the two organisations should be developed to ensure a streamlined, efficient process for young women completing both sets of awards. The three levels of awards within the Gaisce Award system – Bronze, Silver and Gold – were officially recognised as linking directly with IGG's Senior Branch Awards - Bronze Star, Silver Moon and Golden Sun. As a result, once a Senior Branch member has completed a Senior Branch Award, she will also have completed the corresponding Gaisce Award.





### To empower female leaders to gain relevant qualifications

Sessions were held at various levels throughout the country to ensure that Leaders were trained on the requisite requirements and learned the skills/information necessary to gain qualifications. As a result of Leaders gaining the various qualifications necessary to take girls on overnight trips (indoors, outdoors and overseas), many members of IGG were able to gain from the experience of trips away with their peers.

A Senior Branch Leader training was held in June 2015 to introduce the new Senior Branch Journey programme and to explore different ways of running a Senior Branch Unit. The Trainers' Conference held in November 2015 was attended by both experienced Trainers and Trainee-Trainers who were encouraged to gain the qualification necessary to become a fully-fledged Trainer with IGG and provided with a mentor to support them in becoming a trainer of adult Leaders.

### To improve consultation and communication throughout IGG and with its stakeholders

The introduction of OGM has ensured an improvement in communication throughout IGG. For instance, Leaders can communicate with the parents of girls in their Units very easily via email so that the parents are kept up to date about forthcoming events or their daughter's progress through the Journey Programme. Plans are also in place to use OGM to enable Leaders to register for events, thereby saving much volunteer and staff time on administration.

In 2015 work was done on the development of IGG's new Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2020. This included much consultation with IGG's various stakeholders. IGG Leaders were consulted at TWIGG in March 2015; 200 Brownies and Guides were consulted via a pyramid ranking exercise they took part in at their Regional camps and events; while 50 parents, 4 ETBs and the National Youth Council of Ireland completed a SWOT analysis. The results of all this consultation, together with findings from the WAGGGS Growth project, were subsequently fed back into the new Strategic Plan.

As a result of the above-mentioned work to align IGG's Senior Branch programme with Gaisce – the President's Award, a partnership between the two organisations has been drawn up and a joint Memorandum of Understanding signed. At the end of the year work was ongoing to form a similar partnership with Mountaineering Ireland. Both of these partnerships will broaden IGG's scope.

In order to demonstrate transparency, accountability and good governance, compliance with the new Charities Regulatory Authority requirements commenced. Work to comply with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisation continued throughout the year.



### To develop external PR and to showcase IGG as an advocate for girls and young women in Ireland

Much work was done throughout the year to showcase and promote the organisation. The external launch of the Journey Programme took place in Limerick in September 2015 when Jan O'Sullivan, Minister for Education and Skills, endorsed the programme while recollecting how she had enjoyed being an IGG member herself.

IGG's involvement in WAGGGS' Free Being Me self-esteem programme was advertised widely to the public



when the article and photographs published in the IrishTimesHealth Supplement was used on Luas billboards in Dublin city. Emer Foley, who represented Ireland in basketball and was the face of Simply Be for 2015, promoted the WAGGGS

Free Being Me programme widely throughout IGG. She enthused IGG Leaders attending TWIGG and participants at the General Council meeting and encouraged them to use the Free Being Me programme with their girls.

IGG liaised with World Vision to show a special screening of the "Girl Rising" film in the IFI cinema on International Day of the Girl on 11 October and gained wide publicity as a result.

Members of IGG's Media Panel received a training at Near FM radio studios in March 2015 when they took turns at being both interviewer and interviewee and learned how to record using their smartphones. Such training ensured that they were given the skills and confidence to promote Guiding and advocate on behalf of the organisation throughout the year.

# Recruitment

During 2015 IGG members were often to be seen out and about in their communities taking part in events like litter-picks and bulb-planting. Many girls also took part in St Patrick's Day parades and IGG's National Skipathon and fundraised for various charities by organising cake sales, undertaking sponsored walks/hikes or by carol-singing.

Members of all ages marked A-wear-ness Day on 22 February by wearing their IGG uniforms to school/college/work and thereby instigating conversations about Guiding with their classmates or colleagues. Every time a member wears her uniform in public, she is raising the profile of the organisation and prompting members of the public to ask questions and find out more about Guiding. By taking part in a healthy activity, like the Skipathon or a hike, she is showing how IGG is a health-promoting organisation and, by taking part in litter-picks etc., she demonstrates how IGG fosters a community spirit and a social conscience in its members.

A group of IGG members once again took part in the Women's Mini Marathon in Dublin in June and, for the first time, we also took a stand at the Women's World Show in the RDS in the three days running up to it. This gave staff and volunteers the opportunity to talk to hundreds of potential members (girls and Leaders) and parents. We invited those we talked with to contribute a positive message to our Free Being Me wall, which was a great way for us to talk about how girls gain confidence through their involvement in Guiding.

During the year members were encouraged to post promotional material in their local community centres, parish halls, libraries etc. and to send photos and press releases to their local media in an effort to raise the profile of IGG and to encourage new girls and volunteer leaders to join. We also received good coverage in national and local media during the course of 2015, which we hope will have played a role in attracting new members – both girls and volunteer Leaders.

Our membership figures greatly increased in 2015 and it was a busy year for all Regions as we welcomed 38 new Units. We saw a particular increase in Senior Branch Units due to the age band changes and the new Senior Branch programme. In Eastern Region, we extend a warm welcome to Whitechurch Brownies, Tir na nÓg Guides and Senior Branch Units in Ballyroan, Greystones and Rathfarnham. Mid West Region welcomed seven new Units including Ladybirds, Brownies and Guides in Slievebloom, Guides and Senior Branch in Camcor and another two new Senior Branch Units in Cashel and Moyne Templetuohy. In North East Region, we welcome Cuchulainn Brownies, Marymount Brownies and Culmullen Brownies alongside Tullyallen Guides and two new Senior Branch Units in Loughcrew and Monasterboice. In North West Region, new Senior Branch Units were opened in Ballina and Molaise. In South East Region, Ladybird, Brownie and Guide Units were opened in Kilrush, Ladybird and Guide Units in Enniscorthy and a new Senior Branch Unit in Waterford city. South West Region had a total of seven new Units including Ardmore Ladybirds, Allin Brownies, Carrigtwohill Guides and Ardmore Guides and three new Senior Branch Units in Arbutus, Kilbeheny and Schull. West and Central Midlands are delighted to announce the opening of Westcourt Ladybirds, Northgate Brownies, Carrick on Shannon Guides, Saoirse Senior Branch and Rosmote Senior Branch. Welcome to all of IGG's new members.

**38 New  
Units in  
2015**

## Retention and Progression

Our new age bands came into effect in September 2015 and we thank all the Leaders at local, District, Area and Regional level who worked to make this transition as smooth as possible. Particularly those who opened new Units to facilitate girls moving up through the Branches. We hope in years to come that these new age bands will help us retain members and increase membership overall.

In 2014 the Membership and EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) committees were merged to better serve the needs of our members and ensure that EDI is a central element in all our membership innovations going forward. That joint committee continued its mission in 2015 helping IGG to grow and diversify so that more and more girls and young women get the chance to join in Guiding. The committee recruited lots of new members through adverts in Trefoil News and especially via appeals at TWIGG. The inclusion workshops at TWIGG were also well received and LGBT issues were explored.

This year we were also particularly pleased that, for the first time ever, a girl from the Travelling community won a Gold Award, Guide Branch's highest award. Her aunt, Denise McDonnell, who is also her Guide Leader, gave an interview on LMFM Radio in which she said IGG was the only organisation in which she had experienced no prejudice. She hopes to see more Travellers – children and adult volunteers - join the organisation. "Without exception, I find Guiding to be the most open organisation," she said. "It is the only place I have never seen any discrimination. Guiding is all about the children, whether they are Polish, Indian or Travellers, and that's the way it should be – a space for girls to grow in confidence."





# Programme

In 2015, following almost 5 years of development, IGG launched the Journey Programme. The Irish Girl Guides' Journey Programme enables each girl to embark on a journey of development in Guiding full of fun, adventure and challenge.

On the morning of 21 March 2015, in a packed room in Swords, 200 Leaders eagerly awaited the unveiling of the "new programme". The atmosphere was electric. Would the Journey Programme be worth the wait? The response was overwhelmingly positive and it was clear that the Leaders were energised and empowered. They spent the rest of the day learning and exploring the Journey Programme to 'Be Prepared' to roll it out to their girls in September.

The Journey Programme builds each girl's knowledge, resilience, emotional well-being and leadership skills. Each girl will be helped to develop her own identity. She will be encouraged to take part in physical, team-building and problem-solving activities, encouraged to speak out on issues that concern her, and to inspire others to take action too.

The Journey Programme is designed to be progressive so that each girl continues to learn and develop along the way. The Programme has 15 National Outcomes which are seamlessly integrated into the programme.

Since a girl can become a member of the Irish Girl Guides at any time, the programme is designed to meet the needs of both the girls who start at a young age as well as those who jump on board later.

- Ladybirds (age 5 to 7): As a Ladybird completes each part of the three stages of her Journey (Discover, Grow and Fly) she is a Superhero gaining powers. These powers are reflected through her collection of Journey Badges, which are used to develop her rainbow coloured superhero cape.
- Brownies (age 7 to 10): As a Brownie completes each part of the three stages of her Journey (Detect, Investigate and Explore) she is a Detective collecting gadgets. Her Journey Badges will show some of the gadgets she has collected along the way.
- Guides (age 10 to 14): As a Guide completes each part of the four stages of her Journey (Pathfinder, Voyager, Innovator and Trail Blazer) she is an Explorer collecting treasures.
- Senior Branch (age 14 to 30): The Senior Branch Journey Programme opens up and allows each member to be an Inventor of her own programme. There are three pathways to choose from and the girl/young woman can gain Awards, Pins and Badges as she progresses.
- The role of the Leader is to mentor, support and empower the girls throughout their journey.

The top National Award a Guide can achieve is the National Guide Award. This is the essence of Guiding as it is all about the girl reaching her full potential. Senior Branch members can reach the "sun, moon and stars" as their top awards are Bronze Star, Silver Moon and Golden Sun.

On 7 September 2015, in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, the Minister for Education and Skills Jan O'Sullivan TD and Ireland Women's Rugby captain Niamh Briggs officially launched the Journey Programme. Jan O'Sullivan TD, who was once a Brownie said "There is no doubt that this kind of informal education, which takes place in a non-competitive atmosphere, complements the formal education these girls and women from age 5-30 receive at school and at third-level. The programme, which is based on 15 national outcomes, will allow each girl to achieve her best and to develop to her full potential."

Niamh Briggs, Captain of the Ireland Women's Rugby Team and a former member of St Augustine's Guide Unit in Dungarvan: "I had many enjoyable years as a Girl Guide. Being a part of the Guiding movement gave me huge self-esteem: it helped me to make friends and to take part in so many different activities and provided me with an outlet to express myself while learning so many life skills. My time in the Guides was hugely enjoyable and it's one that I would recommend to any young girl."

Throughout autumn 2015, each of the seven Regional Conferences held their own launch and trainings to ensure all Leaders had the opportunity to learn and experience first-hand the opportunities and richness of the programme.

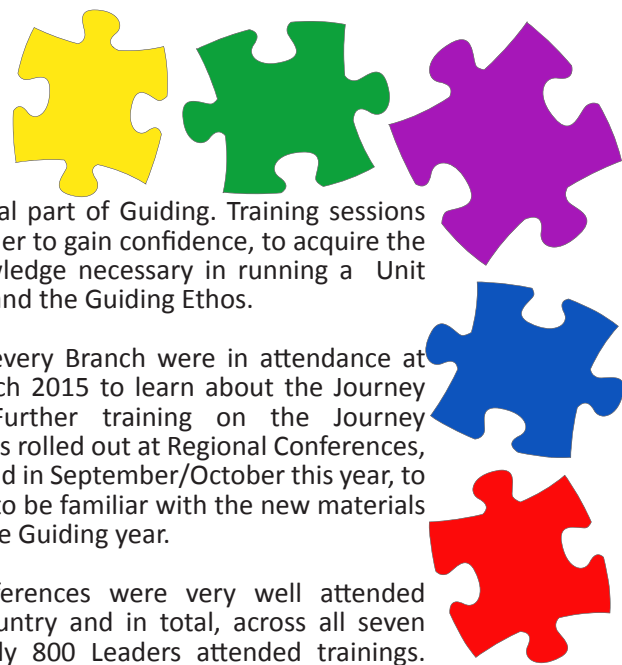
A core team of 11 volunteer Leaders spearheaded the development of the Journey Programme. Their work was supported by volunteers working on 'task and finish' teams to develop activities and programme ideas. A second team of 8 volunteers reimagined all of the interest badges available for the girls to achieve. Volunteer committees at all levels were consulted and helped by 'rolling up their sleeves'. All in all, 100s of volunteers were active in bringing the Journey Programme to life. Our staff team in National Office provided advice and vital support. To each of you a MASSIVE "Thank you, Thank you, Thank you very much."

The IGG tagline is 'Giving Girls Confidence'. The progressive Journey Programme ensures the girls will gain specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and values throughout their time in Guiding.





# Empowering Leaders



Training is a vital part of Guiding. Training sessions enable the Leader to gain confidence, to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary in running a Unit and to understand the Guiding Ethos.

Leaders from every Branch were in attendance at TWIGG in March 2015 to learn about the Journey Programme. Further training on the Journey Programme was rolled out at Regional Conferences, which were held in September/October this year, to allow Leaders to be familiar with the new materials earlier on in the Guiding year.

Regional Conferences were very well attended across the country and in total, across all seven Regions, nearly 800 Leaders attended trainings. We hope each Leader came away from Regional Conference having learned something new and feeling empowered to go back and do something great with their girls.

In November in Athlone, 14 Trainee Trainers attended the Trainers' Conference and completed their mandatory training sessions. For some, it was the first step on the journey to becoming an IGG Trainer, for others, a step closer to completion. We wish them all well.

Trainers and Outdoor Advisors at the Trainers' Conference also received training in ICT, especially the use of OGM and how to upload programme material to this new system. This will help them in the work of developing and delivering the Journey Programme.

In addition to this, Training Camps for Leaders were held in South West and Eastern Regions to help to develop outdoor skills. Christine Cronin (South West) and Joanna Pearman (West and Central Midlands) were awarded their Trainer Bar, and Anne McPartland (Eastern) gained her Outdoor Advisor (OA) qualification.

Elizabeth Lynch attended a WAGGGS training on the Leadership Development Programme in Brussels in June and IGG will be consulting with Trainers on how best to develop this in the organisation.



## Online Guide Manager

For the first time Irish Girl Guides completed the annual census process online through the use of OGM. It involved each Unit entering their youth member details. This was a big task for the Leaders and was completed by 100% of Units.

The first Unit to complete the census process was Moycullen Ladybirds, Galway and the first Unit to complete and pay their census was St Bridget's Brownies, Limerick.

During the year

- 504 Units made changes to details in the Unit
- 20 Units paid for My.Guide which allows parents to access the system.
- 9,000 meetings were planned by 285 Units
- 632 emails were sent to 8,500 people
- 285 events were planned by 122 Units
- 915 activities were linked to IGG badges/Units

*9,000 meetings  
planned  
in 285 Units*

Trainings at local level were presented during the year as well as a webinar for Commissioners to train them on their access to the system.

User Guideline leaflets were produced with training information on different aspects of using the system and they were distributed through Trefoil News. An instruction leaflet specifically for Commissioners, Trainers and Committee Chairmen was also produced.

The system is not just a system for the local Unit but also allows the sharing of information re Units and Leaders with Commissioners and National Office staff. When information is updated e.g. a new email address is added, or the application process is completed, then this is available to all users who have the appropriate access.

However, the individual information on the girls in Ladybird, Brownie and Guide Units is only available to Leaders in the Unit and only aggregated information is available to Commissioners.

# Consultation and Communication

The weekly email newsletter was sent out to IGG Leaders and Senior Branch members during the year to keep them up-to-date and to encourage them to keep in touch with IGG by sending photos and updates about their activities either by email or through social media.

The IGG website, which was regularly updated with news, photos and relevant information, received more than 78,000 hits during 2015, an increase of 9,000 from the previous year.

We continued to use social media to engage with Leaders and youth members and to encourage them to share their IGG activities and accomplishments with their friends. The number of 'likes' on the IGG Facebook page increased from 2,480 at the start of the year to 3,050 by the end of December 2015. The number of Twitter followers also grew, increasing from 1,489 in January to 1,987 by the end of the year.

We trended on Twitter with our tagline 'givinggirlsconfidence' on Monday 7 September - the day of the Journey Programme launch. This was a real achievement and the first time we had ever trended.

We uploaded 11 videos to YouTube during 2015, which received a total of 3,503 views. These included several about the new Journey Programme as well as two videos that went on to win awards!

An anti-smoking film called The Smoking Dead secured top prize for St Bridget's Guides, Clonmel, in the Junior Category of the Irish Cancer Society's 2015 X-HALE Awards. Later in the year, a film in which IGG mini-figs demonstrate how Irish Girl Guides are helping to make the world a better place, saw Naomi Keays of Raspberry Senior Branch, Limerick, win not only Young Film Maker of the Year in the Better Together Awards but also the People's Choice Award.

The IGG blog saw lots of activity during 2015. A total of 28 blog posts written by a wide range of IGG members over the course of the year received a total of 3,412 views. Topics covered ranged from Leaders' experiences of TWIGG and the Journey Programme to Senior Branchers' adventures on tall ships voyages and at the Women in the World Summit in London to Guides' experiences of camps and achieving their Gold Awards and Dunshaughlin Brownies' visit to Áras an Uachtaráin.

We ran several photo competitions during the year to encourage youth members and Leaders to take photos to share on social media and submit to local papers. The IGG mini-figs on tour Facebook photo competition was particularly popular.

Template press releases were attached to the weekly email newsletter several times during the year to make it easier for Leaders to contact local media and to send photos to local papers e.g. coming up to World Thinking Day/A-wear-ness Day. It was hoped in this way to encourage and empower Leaders to do their own PR. They were also encouraged to send photos and news items to local media at other times during the year, especially when they were doing an activity or event of particular interest.

The Media Panel, which is made up of 35 IGG members who look for ways to promote IGG, received two trainings in 2015. The spring training took place in the studios of Near FM in north Dublin where members took turns in being interviewer and interviewee as well as taking part in a panel discussion. At their autumn training they learnt how to make recordings on a smartphone using Wavepad and then how to edit these on a computer using Wavepad Editor. Using the free Wavepad app, it is possible to record interviews that are of broadcast quality and, subsequent to the training, IGG members sent a number of 3-4 minute packages that were broadcast

on a number of local radio stations. These included an interview recorded with Nicola Grinstead, Chair of the WAGGGS, during her time at TWIGG in March and another with Senator, and former IGG Chief Commissioner, Jillian van Turnhout about the Journey Programme, which was launched in September.





# PR and Advocacy

IGG received coverage in national media 12 times during 2015, with WAGGGS-Dove's body confidence programme Free Being Me attracting most publicity – two television features (News2Day and Two Tube) and three interviews on national radio (two on RTE, one on Newstalk). We were thrilled that former Ireland basketball player and former Girl Guide, Emer Foley, was such an enthusiastic ambassador for the programme and was willing to go on air and speak positively about the programme whenever the opportunity arose. Having struggled with her own body image as a teenager, she said she wished there had been such a programme available when she was a Guide. The Irish Times included coverage of Free Being Me several times during the year, including a double-page spread in their Health and Living supplement.

WAGGGS Chair Nicola Grinstead's praise for IGG Leaders, during her talk at TWIGG, resulted in coverage in the Irish Daily Mirror as well as in a number of local papers, which reported on her describing IGG Leaders as 'an inspiration to the next generation'.

There was also good coverage in papers and on radio for the new Journey Programme, which was launched by two former IGG members - Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan, and Ireland Women's Rugby Captain, Niamh Briggs - at a special event in Limerick in September. Minister O'Sullivan said the 12,000 members of IGG were set to become the 'trailblazers' of tomorrow, no matter what path in life they chose to pursue.

Chief Commissioner Helen Concannon, Senator and former Chief Commissioner Jillian van Turnhout and Newbridge Leader Aoife Leamy were subsequently invited onto RTE's Marian Finucane Show to talk about the new programme and all that it has to offer girls and young women.



Nearly 500 articles and photos relating to IGG appeared in local papers throughout the country during 2015. These included coverage of World Thinking Day, A-wear-ness Day, St Patrick's Day, An Taisce litter picks, the IGG Skipathon, service projects at home and abroad, fundraisers, enrolments, fun days, camps, Gold Awards and IGG's attendance at the Gaiety pantomime. There was also good coverage of various Senior Branchers' expeditions, including a number of tall ships voyages, Explorer Belt and Catherine Swanwick and Dara Daly's participation in the Women in the World Summit in London. Also, Naomi Keays' successful summit of three Alpine peaks.

Other events that received good coverage included the official opening of the Portmarnock Guide/Scout Den by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs James Reilly, assisted by Senator Jillian van Turnhout, the launch of our new partnership with Gaisce and our partnership with Women's Aid in launching their 2in2u healthy dating relationship campaign.

A Girl Rising event was held with World Vision to celebrate girls' education on International Day of the Girl (11 October) when Young Scientist winner and IGG volunteer, 17-year-old Emer Hickey from Kinsale, told audience members how she hoped that her prize-winning research might one day help eradicate famine in developing countries. Acknowledging that tens of millions of girls in developing countries did not have the same kind of educational opportunities that girls have in Ireland, she said: "Education can help girls in developing countries because it opens new opportunities to girls in areas in which they didn't previously have access to, such as science. New knowledge can be applied to their daily lives as they help not only themselves but their families too."



IGG members took part in 37 interviews across 20 local radio stations during the year – an increase from 24 interviews in 2014. As well as Free Being Me and the Journey Programme, subjects covered included World Thinking Day, Explorer Belt and more general interviews about the benefits of Guiding, which gave our members a chance to talk about how girls and young women develop confidence and a range of life-skills through their involvement in Guiding.

IGG members continued to advocate on a number of issues, including raising our Voices Against Violence along with WAGGGS 10 million other members and joined with other women's organisations in promoting 16 Days of Action Against Gender-related Violence.

We believe that, as a result of the leadership skills and confidence they develop through Guiding from the age of five upwards, Irish Girl Guide members are set to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Irish Girl Guides is a signatory to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages. This means that, in our use of images and messages, we aim to respect the dignity of people and that we recognise the need to promote fairness, solidarity and justice. We avoid images and messages that potentially stereotype, sensationalise or discriminate against people, situations or places and we strive to conform to the highest standards in relation to human rights and the protection of vulnerable people.

# Around the Branches

*The mission of the Irish Girl Guides is to enable girls and young women to develop to their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world.*

*Our vision is that every member of the Irish Girl Guides has a sense of ownership in, and feels proud to belong to, a modern, growing and inclusive organisation that empowers and gives confidence to girls and young women through a fun, educational programme.*

*To achieve our mission and vision, we encourage all girls of every age to do their best. This year these are just some of the interesting things that our various age groups were involved in.*



**Ladybirds** are aged from 5-7 years. They follow a programme full of fun which helps them to:

- become more independent
- learn to care and share
- discover the world around them
- learn about the family of Guiding to which they belong
- take part in activities, including songs and games

We started the Guiding year with great excitement for the launch of the Journey Programme. This was the culmination of many years of work and Ladybird Branch is delighted to have so many new and exciting interest badges for our girls to do.

Ladybird Branch wanted to help Leaders ease the transition between old and new programmes with a number of stand-alone packs and one-off fun events.

In April 2015, the committee provided every Unit with a special pack which included ideas for baking Gingerbread Men as part of World Baking Day and various activities on the theme of the Gingerbread Man including a treasure hunt. It was a great PR opportunity with lots of lovely photographs taken.

In May 2015, the committee supported Leaders in educating the girls about the Special Olympics World Games in America. Ladybirds had a special Unit sports day and it was a great health promoting activity.

In October 2015, we held our National Ladybird Collage Competition. Ladybirds learnt to work as a team and used their imagination to come up with ideas for their picture that could be made from recyclable material.

Ladybird Branch Committee extend a huge thank you and well done to each and every Leader for their work with their Ladybirds over the last year.



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Ladybird Chairman Sharon Flynn and welcome our new Chairman Monica McDonnell.

**Brownies** are aged from 7-10 years. They follow a programme of interest, fun and variety which:

- encourages self-development and thoughtfulness towards others
- introduces the girls to the international family of Guiding
- teaches respect for cultures and religions different from their own
- develops team work and sharing



January 2015 saw the end of our 2014 centenary celebrations with the issue of a calendar to each and every Brownie and Leader in the country. The calendar had many pictures of our celebrations and the winning photograph from our centenary photography competition.

In March many of our Leaders attended TWIGG which introduced our new programme to the delight of all. Our Brownie Leaders were looking forward to the programme's full rollout in September 2015 and getting into action.



Our new badges were welcomed as was the sash placement for them, encouraging girls to attempt badges they had not tried before.

An International Meeting Pack was issued to all Units in early March which was greeted with enthusiasm with many Units joining with other Units to work on an International themed day out

Brownie Branch finished the Guiding year with many changes in the committee bringing new ideas and forward thinking into our new century. Well done and thank you to those who left and welcome and congratulations to those who have joined.

September finally arrived and saw us all working hard on the new programme. Our 'detectives' look forward to detecting, investigating and exploring in the way that only Brownies can.

Our Leaders have made the transition such an exciting one and we look forward to working with them in 2016 to develop and enhance the Brownie experience.





**Guides** are aged from 10-14 years. They follow a programme of challenges which equips them to:

- have fun through adventure
- offer voluntary service to Guiding and the community
- enjoy the out-of-doors
- learn practical skills
- participate in the international aspect of Guiding
- develop their own spirituality and respect other cultures and religions

This year saw the launch of the Journey Programme with lots of new programme ideas for Leaders and girls. It's bright, colourful and more user friendly for both the girls and the Leaders. There are 57 new interest badges for the Guides to complete.

We hope that the Guides will enjoy their new core badges and will become Pathfinders, Innovators, Voyagers and Trailblazers.

Trainings were provided to Leaders, plus programme activities, games and crafts were printed in Trefoil News to encourage moving onto the new programme.



This year the Gold Award, Guide Branch's highest honour, was awarded for the last time. It will be replaced in 2016 with the National Guide Award. A record number of girls – 140 – were presented with their Gold Award by IGG

President Maureen Dillon and Dublin Lord Mayor Cllr Criona Ni Dhálaigh. It is hoped many of these girls will go forward to Senior Branch. There was a lot of national and local coverage of Gold Awards both in newspapers and radio.

Planning is already underway for 2016/2017 and all the fun things that Guide Branch have in store. We would like to thank all the Guide Branch reps, past and present, who have worked hard on projects that benefit the Guides. We'd especially like to thank the outgoing Chairman, Pat O'Brien and her Assistant Chairman, Rachel McKeivitt for their outstanding contribution over the years.

**Senior Branch** members are aged from 14-30 years. The programme for the girls' self development is based on:

- fun and adventure
- service to the community
- outdoor activities
- international opportunities
- spirituality
- craftwork



The Journey Programme was launched at TWIGG in March. Leaders received introductory training on the programme and were excited to see the variety in the Senior Branch programme. We subsequently ran a June Training Weekend specifically for Senior Branch Leaders and those

thinking of becoming Leaders to introduce them to the new programme, explain how to run a successful Unit, and explore the needs of the age group. This training weekend offered support for new Leaders and provided them with a network of experienced Leaders for them to call on in the future.

We consulted with and now have a partnership with Gaisce – The President's Award – which will benefit our members greatly. The partnership between Gaisce and IGG has raised our profile with all youth organisations. It is a worthwhile partnership, and will contribute hugely to the development of our members into



responsible citizens of the world. The overall awards of the Senior Branch programme, Bronze Star, Silver Moon and Golden Sun are aligned to their equivalent Gaisce Award.

Having the Senior Branch programme on OGM for all Branches to access makes it easier for everyone to support their Senior Branch members and also to become familiar with the programme.

In addition to all the exciting programme developments, Senior Branch committee still provided lots of national events for the girls. We celebrated another Senior Branch 18th Birthday Party in Dublin Zoo. This event is designed to aid the transition from child to adult in our organisation.

The Lightweight Weekend in April was once again a successful hands-on learning experience for all the participants who took to the hills around Wicklow. They learnt about packing the appropriate gear; how to cook out of doors; how to read a map and how to identify ways that they can ensure their safety on the hills.

The Explorer Belt was run in Germany this year, with 2 teams (Jemma Lee/Katherine Ryan and Grace Cronin/Emma Harvey) taking part and successfully earning their Explorer Belt. This event encourages our older Senior Branch members to stay involved and is a great challenge for them. Many thanks to Lorna Finnegan for organising and co-ordinating it.

The November Weekend saw girls learning more about their new programme. They also discussed their membership, how they will progress through the organisation and the support that will be needed. The committee hopes to provide this support and is thrilled to see the number of new Senior Branch Units opening around the country to aid in the delivery of the Journey Programme.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Jenny Gannon, outgoing Chairman and Aine Divilly, Assistant Chairman for their work on the committee over the years, especially on the new programme.

# Around the Region



## Eastern Region

We were busy in 2015 recruiting girls and Leaders throughout the year. Lots of new volunteers have come to us through Volunteer.ie over the past year, it was great to have new Leaders joining IGG who were not parents to the girls.

## North East Region

This year the Region was so keen to start work on the Journey Programme that we launched it at our Annual Spring Training in Navan on 17 May which saw 70 Leaders trained in this exciting new programme.

Further Leaders were trained in October at our Regional Conference which was held in a wonderful new venue City North Hotel, Gormanstown. We were delighted to welcome Mary Robb from the Dept of Children and Youth Affairs to our conference and even more delighted with her report and positive comments regarding the achievement of NQSF targets. Our annual Regional Conference also provided an opportunity for Leaders to have their say in the strategic plan for the Region.

In addition to this, we provided our Commissioners with a training to assist them in working with the adults in their Districts and Areas.

Throughout the year, Units also took part in many other events including Timpeall an Domhain National Final, which was won by Mullagh Guides. Brownie Units went on lots of Pack Holidays and many Units got involved in various fundraising activities which was much appreciated.

During the summer Monasterboice Area held a party to celebrate thirty years of Guiding and to honour volunteers past and present.

A Senior Branch event was held in the Region in October. The event was organised by Senior Branch members with some support from adult Leaders. This was very well attended and, as well as providing lots of fun, the girls were encouraged and challenged.

Several camps were held allowing several hundred girls to benefit from our outdoor programme. The Regional Camp held under the historic Loughcrew Hills was themed Camp Celtic Myths and included Guiding visitors from USA. Many outdoor qualifications were gained including two COs, six QMs, and four MOs.



In September our Regional Conference focused on familiarising the Leaders with the exciting, innovative new programme and everyone went back to their Units eager to share and go on this Journey with their members.

A Coffee morning fundraiser was held at the Regional Conference to raise money for the Irish Hospice Foundation and Leaders generously donated over €400 on the day.

Trainings were ongoing throughout the year. Eastern Region have developed a new Assistant Leader training for new members. This has proved very successful and was rolled out four times during 2015. The Assistant Leader training is used to explain Guiding terminology and what qualifications are available along with going through the Assistant Leader requirements for new Leaders.

Our annual spring training which focuses on pre-Warrant training and Basic Standard was held in Newbridge and attended by 69 members on the day. Code of Ethics and First Aid trainings were held at District and Area level.

A second pre-Warrant training was held in November at the new Portmarnock Scout and Guide Den when 24 members were trained in Promise and Law, Programme Planning, Outdoors and Branch specific planning.

Some of the other great events held in Eastern Region throughout the year include a Captain Ball tournament in February, an event for 300 Brownies in Bray in April, a Ladybird Day out in Malahide in September, and joint camp for four Guide Units in Larch Hill in September.

We are delighted to have five new COs - Carol O'Brady, Maresa Connolly, Aoife Leamy, Juila Gamble and Ann Doyle. Also, congratulations to Anne McPartland on achieving her OA and to a large number of Leaders who received Indoor Licences. A huge well done to all who worked hard to achieve these qualifications which will enable our members attend Pack Holidays and camps.



## North West Region

Lots of great events happened throughout the year in North West Region, so many that we can't feature them all here. In February, Mayo Area held a lovely World Thinking Day Ceremony at Ardagh Community Centre. A Taster Day was held at Skreen Community Centre in March and there was a celebration of Guiding in Donegal. Ballina and Ardagh Units had the privilege of being the guard of honour at the Mary Robinson Centre's 2nd Annual International Human Rights Lecture given by Graça Machel and attended by Mary Robinson on 28 November.

Ardagh Guides had the privilege of appearing on RTE Radio One "Morning Ireland" programme talking about Free Being Me. They did a wonderful job and also appeared in the local papers following the event.

Our Regional Camp - Camp Merlin was attended by 63 girls and 20 Leaders. 82 Brownies also joined for one day taking part in activities and some staying for campfire. All the girls enjoyed a range of outdoor activities including kayaking, team building/wide games, and crafts. Outdoor camp badges were achieved for Guides at different camping levels.

We were delighted to have Maureen Dillion, president of IGG come to our Regional Conference. The conference included an introductory training on the new Journey Programme for all Leaders.

Lots of Leaders in the North West have also been working towards their qualifications. Two Leaders attended the Trainers Conference and are working toward their Basic Trainer Bar. Frances Kilroy gained her QM Qualification and Anne McElchar gained her MO Qualification.

In December, our Region lost a wonderful Leader, when Jennifer Quinn passed away. Jennifer was a lady of many talents; she was our Regional OA, a Brownie and Code of Ethics trainer and a Brownie Leader in Convoy. She is sadly missed in the Region.

We'd like to wish Geraldine Kiely, our outgoing Regional Commissioner all the best and welcome Jacqueline Lavelle who was elected towards the end of 2015.





### South West Region

Many Regional trainings were held during the year resulting in a lot of Leaders gaining their warrants. Brushing up on and learning new skills saw a lot of Leaders attending First Aid training sessions. Theresa McCarthy ran a very successful training camp, ably assisted by Deirdre Henley and Rosaleen Henry. Many Leaders gained their Indoor and Outdoor qualifications during the year and three Senior Branch members achieved their Junior Campcraft Licences.

At both the Regional Fun Day and Regional Conference, Leaders set up craft stalls to pass on their skills. OGM sessions were run to help Leaders fill in their census returns and to learn how to use OGM for running their programmes, keeping badge and attendance records and finding other activities for their Units. The rollout of the Journey programme for all Branches has been very well received with large numbers of Leaders attending training of some sort.



Thinking Day 2015 was a very special day for all in the South West. We celebrated it with our longest serving member, Violet Warner, who has taken a step back from active Guiding after 70 years. Many former and current Leaders joined us for the ceremony.

278 Brownies and Ladybirds attended a

Regional Fun Day in Bandon in May which was run by the Carbery Area under the direction of Liz Flatman. Well done to all the Carbery Leaders for a fantastic Fun Day.

The Joint Committee for Guiding and Scouting in Cork held the following events and IGG members attended in great numbers: Hey Jinks for Brownies in Kilcully, SQUELCH for Guides in Farran Wood, the Pantomime in the Everyman Palace for Ladybirds and Brownies and the Ventact weekend in Kilcully for our Senior Branch members.

A Regional Camp was held in Goleen on the beautiful scenic Mizen Peninsula to which we invited Guiding friends from Worthing and Sheffield. Many other camps were held in the Region during the summer in Tralee, Macroom and Cuskinny Court.

In November, Rosemary O'Driscoll handed over to our new Regional Commissioner, Deirdre Henley. The Region thanks Rosemary for her contribution for the past six years and wishes Deirdre all the best in her new role.

### South East Region

The Region was delighted to welcome six new Units in 2015, especially in the Wexford Area where we were able to open a Ladybird, Brownie and Guide Unit.

Throughout the year, members in the Region took part in many fun events including days out and St Patrick's Day Parades. The Regional final of Timpeall an Domhain was held in Kilkenny on 22 February 2015. It was a fantastic day and also an opportunity for the Guides to enjoy World Thinking Day together.

Ladybirds from Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford enjoyed a fun day out in Clonmel with a 'Frozen' theme. Thanks to all the Leaders and Guides who helped make the day out a fun day for all.

Carlow, Kilkenny, Clonmel and Waterford Guides converged on Inistioge, Co Kilkenny for a Regional Camp that focused on the countryside and environmental issues.

The Regional Conference was held in Waterford in October with 50 Leaders and Senior Branch members attending.

Warrant trainings were held throughout the Region and many Leaders availed of First Aid courses, both through ETBs and privately organised courses.

All of the Ladybirds, Brownies, Guides and Senior Branch members greatly benefited from the hard work and dedication of their Leaders. Thank you to all the Leaders whose effort makes Guiding possible in the South East.

### West and Central Midlands Region

We have another new District to add to the growing list in the Region and we're delighted to see new Units opening.

Regional Camp at Portlick Scout Campsite was again a huge success with almost 200 in attendance. Activities included kayaking, assault course, crate stacking, zip wire, climbing wall, pioneering, orienteering and foosball with humans.

96 Leaders attended our Regional Conference held in Athlone. We had excellent trainers bringing us on the very exciting 'Journey' Programme. Our morning sessions included: President's address, introduction to Camp 2017, and an overview of OGM.

In addition, throughout the year we held trainings in Code of Ethics, First Aid and Free Being Me. Many thanks to all who attended the trainings for giving up their time.

In October, the Region held their first Senior Branch weekend for 14-16 year olds.

We were also delighted to have four new COs in the Region. Congratulations to all who continued to develop their Guiding skills this year and thank you for your time and dedication.

### Mid West Region

There were lots of fun events in 2015 in the Mid West Region. We held a Regional Brownie Fun Day with 186 Brownies attending. It was based on different countries and the girls got to try out language, crafts, food, games and songs and a whole lot more as they moved around from country to country.

We had our Regional Conference in Nenagh



in October and had a record attendance of 182 Leaders which included over 30 Senior Branch members. The Journey Programme was explained and used in the morning sessions. In the afternoon we had sessions on "Life Coaching", "Confidence Building" and "Enthusiasm".

We aim to thank our Leaders and let them know how important they are to the organisation – to this end every Leader who attended the conference went home with a thank you bag. We finished off with the song "99 Red Balloons" each one to be popped to find an inspirational note inside for each of our Leaders.

We had 13 Senior Branchers working alongside the Trainers and Co-ordinators as an Action Team to ensure the Regional Conference ran smoothly. At the Regional Conference, we were also delighted to be able to present nine Leaders with their Indoor Licence and other Leaders with their QM or MO.

We also had sign-up sheets to see what the Leaders need in their progress through IGG. Subsequently Warrant trainings were arranged together with Code of Ethics training. In addition to that, we arranged for a few First Aid courses to be run throughout the Region to help Leaders with their training needs.



# Around the World

The Irish Girl Guides is part of a worldwide movement of 10 million girls and young women. IGG's membership of WAGGGS is held through the Council of Irish Guiding Associations (CIGA). The CIGA committee consists of four members of the Irish Girl Guides and four members of the Catholic Guides of Ireland with the positions of Secretary and Treasurer alternating between IGG and CGI. In addition, the International Commissioners from each association are in touch regularly to exchange information and to collaborate in sending members to International events and trainings.

Providing opportunities for our Senior Branch members and adult Leaders to experience the international side of Guiding is a key part of the work of the International Committee. Many adult Leaders cite their international experiences as one of the key reasons for staying involved in Guides throughout their teenage and young adult years. Connecting with Guides and Scouts across Europe through the Overtures Network and the Academy allow our Leaders to grow in a personal way and to bring back their enthusiasm to their Units and the organisation.

Every year we endeavour to send some of our Leaders to key International seminars. In 2015 Shauna Murphy and Aishling Caulfield attended the 10th Helen Storrow Seminar in Switzerland.



Travelling to a World Centre is a dream many members of IGG have and in 2015 11 IGG members were joined by 2 CGI members to take part in a CIGA service project in Sangam, where those members got to make that dream a reality.

Working in a variety of community partners, from Doorstep Schools to youth groups and environmental projects, the group relished the challenge that the Indian Sub-Continent threw at them. They have returned home as transformed Leaders and we are all the richer as an organisation for their continued involvement.

In 2015 the International Committee also introduced a Tall Ships Experience for our members. Six members sailed on board various vessels in collaboration with Sail Training Ireland. We look forward to seeing this relationship develop in the coming years.

The International Permit training is now a well-established feature on the IGG Guiding calendar. This year a further fifteen Leaders undertook their permit training to help them further develop their skills before taking their Guides overseas. Experienced Guide Leaders and Trainers share their experiences of taking groups abroad in an interactive style that helps empower our newer Leaders as they seek to provide further opportunities for our youth members.

IGG also play an active part in the work of the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI). We encourage our NYCI representatives to attend their European Network meetings to learn and share with other Guides and Scouts from around Europe about the issues facing our organisations and our members and how our youth councils can best support us. In 2015 Mary T Hally attended the NYCI representatives event in Porto.



In addition to this, Jemma Lee represented the Irish Girl Guides on a European level working group. One of the tasks of the 'Skills for Life' project was to make connections between the language of the working world and the language of Guiding/Youth Work. Jemma presented the group's findings on the topic in Brussels, Belgium.

As well as all this, in April, a successful 'Tímeall an Domhain' International Competition was run for the Guide age group. In order to offer this event to even more girls in 2015 the competition was divided into senior and junior sections. Ten Patrols took part in the event representing six Regions. Having selected one of the four focus countries, France, Zambia, Japan & Brazil, the Patrols had to prepare a number of tasks prior to the national final.

Over the course of the weekend the girls had to teach a craft or game from their chosen country, learn all about Guiding in that country, cook a national dish, perform a piece of entertainment based on the life of a famous person from that country along with a few other surprises the International Committee put together!

The effort put in by all the girls and their Leaders was a testament to their hard work and dedication. The judges were blown away by the depth of knowledge that our younger members in particular demonstrated. Congratulations again to Mullagh Guides who took honours in both junior and senior sections.



## IGG at International Camps and Events 2015

Unit	Event	Location	Dates	Region	No. of Pax
Ballybrack and Tivoli Guides	Spring Break	Our Chalet, Switzerland	29 March - 4 April	E	17
Mullagh Guides	Unit Trip	Pax Lodge, UK	10 - 12 April	NE	14
Claire Davenport	Belfast County Camp	Belfast, Northern Ireland	19 - 21 June	NE	1
Drogheda Senior Branch	Unit Trip	Lorne House, Northern Ireland	22 - 24 June	NE	10
Augustine Guides and Nightingale Senior Branch	Unit Trip	Gloucestershire, UK	26 - 30 June	SW	26
Clondra and Viking Guides	Unit Trip	Czech Republic	26 June - 3 July	WCM	22
Kilternan Guides	Unit Trip	Netherlands	3 - 10 July	E	12
National Contingent	Sangam Service Project	Sangam, Pune, India	10 - 23 July	National	13
Bray Senior Branch	Unit Trip	London, UK	16 - 23 July	E	13
Realt na Mara, Crosshaven, Arbutus Guides	Unit Trip	Adelboden, Switzerland	18 - 25 July	SW	19
Howth Guides	Unit Trip	Utrecht, Netherlands	24 July - 2 August	E	20
Ballyroan Guides	Unit Trip	Essex, UK	31 July - 4 August	E	23
Senior Branch	Explorer Belt	Germany	3 - 15 August	National	9
Helen O'Reilly	Free Being Me Festival	Sangam, Pune, India	17 - 21 August	E	1
Griffen Valley Senior Branch	Unit Trip	Netherlands	26 - 28 October	E	10
Moycullen and Galway Bay Guides	Unit Trip	London, UK	27 - 30 October	WCM	9
Aóife Leamy	Winter Expedition	Netherlands	27 December - 2 January 2016	E	1

## IGG Individuals at Seminars/Conferences/Trainings in 2015

Participants	Event	Location	Dates
Jemma Lee	Skills for Life	Brussels, Belgium	25 February
Lydia O'Connor Val Lynam	Overtures Network Meeting	Edinburgh, Scotland	10 - 12 April
Shauna Murphy Aisling Claffey	Helen Storrow Seminar	Our Chalet, Switzerland	18 - 26 April
Lucy O'Donovan Aoife Leamy	Yourope	Bonn, Germany	29 April - 3 May
Elizabeth Lynch	National Leadership Development Programme	Brussels, Belgium	26 June - 2 July
Clare Sheridan Helen Moriarty	The Future is Yours	Edinburgh, Scotland	11 - 13 September
Dara Daly Catherine Swanwick	Women in the World Summit	London, UK	6 - 9 October
Christine Cronin	Roverway Head Of Contingent Meeting	Jambville, France	16 - 18 October
Lydia O'Connor Aisling O'Boyle	Overtures Network Meeting	Talinn, Estonia	16 - 18 October
Mary T. Hally	National Youth Council Representatives Network Meeting	Porto, Portugal	26 - 29 October
Lorna Finnegan	The Academy	Porto, Portugal	28 October - 1 November
Helen Concannon	Chief Volunteers Meeting	Porto, Portugal	30 October - 1 November

# Governance and Management of the Irish Girl Guides 2015

**IGG is a self-governing, uniformed youth organisation led by volunteers and supported by national and regional staff. Membership is voluntary and open to all girls and women who accept the Guide Promise and Law. The National Office of the organisation is in Dublin and IGG is a registered charity. IGG has full membership of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts through the Council of Irish Guiding Associations. IGG is independent from any political organisation or any political party.**



## Structure of the organisation

The General Council is responsible for the control and general supervision of the organisation. The Executive Committee, subject to the supervision of the General Council, controls and manages the affairs of IGG. In 2015, the Executive Committee

consisted of 24 members who met a total of seven times. The Chief Commissioner is the Chairman of the committee and has overall responsibility for the organisation, ensuring it is run professionally and is in keeping with its aims and objectives.

The National Programme and Training Committee, subject to the supervision of the General Council, is responsible for coordinating the development and delivery of all aspects of the Guiding programme and maintaining communication between Chairmen of National Committees and Branches.

There are seven administrative Regions of IGG. Each Region has a Regional Commissioner and a Regional Committee/Team. Within the Region there are geographical groupings of Areas and Districts, each one having a Commissioner and an Area/District Team. Units of up to 36 girls are run by a team of Leaders who have undertaken the relevant screening and training.



## Staffing and Volunteers

IGG acknowledges the vital role both staff and volunteers play in ensuring the organisation achieves its mission. IGG employs ten staff members at national level who work in varying roles in National Office under the supervision of the Chief Executive Officer. Each Region

has at least one Regional Development Officer who is responsible to her Regional Commissioner/Regional Team. IGG also avails of third party services including suppliers, auditors and service providers.

Volunteers are the backbone of the organisation operating Units and working as committees across the country. All volunteers undergo a screening process which includes attendance at Code of Ethics and child protection training. Further support and training opportunities are provided through local, national and international events and volunteers are encouraged to develop skills and knowledge throughout their time in Irish Girl Guides.



## Financial Records and Audit

The financial affairs of the organisation are managed by the Finance Committee with responsibility to, and in consultation with, the Executive Committee. The Finance Committee is responsible for the audit, budgeting and finances which are all subject to detailed review.

Adequate systems of internal control are in place which aim to ensure compliance with laws and policies, ensure efficient and effective use of resources, safeguard assets and maintain the integrity of the financial information produced. IGG properties are vested in the Trust Corporation who are represented on the Executive Committee.

Each Unit, District and Area keeps proper financial records for which they appoint a treasurer who monitors the finances at local level. Regions' and Committees' financial records are checked by key volunteers on an annual basis. An external auditor checks the national accounts. These are available at [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie) or on request by post through National Office.



## Good Governance

IGG is registered with the Charity Regulator in Ireland. Over the last few years IGG has been voluntarily working towards compliance with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations. This is a code of good practice that holds us to the highest

international standards of best practice and ensures transparency and accountability.

IGG has also adopted the Irish Charities' Tax Reform Group (ICTR) Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising and is currently working to ensure we are compliant with both standards. IGG is registered with the Lobbying Register and submits quarterly reports.

IGG was one of the first youth work organisations to take part in the National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work (NQSF) when it was introduced. The NQSF enables us to review and assess our work on a cyclical basis and to have it externally assessed, thereby assisting the continuous development of services to our members.

The Executive and Programme and Training Committees are responsible for the strategic direction of IGG and currently monitor the activities to ensure the organisation achieved its agreed outcomes as stated in our Strategic Plan 2012-2015. A broad review of the work of the Plan took place in 2015 and its findings were incorporated into the Strategic Plan for 2016-2020.



# Finances and Fundraising

IGG is a not-for-profit organisation and a registered charity in Ireland (Registered Charity No. 20006327 /CHY4726). IGG's income is dependant on a grant from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs administered by Pobal (51%), membership fees (44%) and fundraising through grants, sponsorships and donations (5%).

Since 2014 Irish Girl Guides is officially recognised as meeting the requirements for the ICTR Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. This means that we are committed to complying with this Statement by endeavoring to:

- adhere to the core principles of respect, honesty and openness
- demonstrate commitment to donors
- ensure high standards of fundraising practice
- be financially accountable

IGG was delighted to once again be the recipient of National Lottery funding and IGG greatly appreciates the grants from Trócaire, Léargas and Irish Aid

It is imperative for all organisations in receipt of public funding to live up to their fiduciary responsibilities in terms of corporate governance. This is an ongoing process which requires us to review and sometimes modify our procedures as we develop and which we believe is in the best interests of all our members. When one considers the amount of money transacted by the organisation, it is a source of pride that such amounts are handled by trustworthy volunteers supported by a small number of hardworking, dedicated staff.

During the year our esteemed National Treasurer, Cathy Thewlis, left us to return to England and has been ably replaced by Julie Stephens. We would also like to acknowledge the help provided to her by Pauline Kennedy and Fiona O'Connor in compiling the year end accounts.

## Donating to IGG

We continued to work with iDonate to collect online donations and run fundraising events this year. In the summer several teams of ladies represented IGG in mini marathons around the country, including the Dublin's Flora Women's Mini Marathon, raising over €500.

We also received generous donations in memory of our Guiding sister, Diane Dixon, including three sponsorships from WAGGS in recognition of Diane's contribution to Guiding on an international level. IGG is grateful for all donations, sponsorships and fundraising.

## Remembering IGG Through Your Will or Bequest

Every year IGG benefits from donations that people have made in their will. Leaving a gift to the Irish Girl Guides in this way is a lovely way for your generosity to last beyond your own lifetime and helps to ensure the organization you value will continue to make a difference tomorrow. Your gift can be as general or as specific as you like. IGG will fully honour your wishes and donors can remain anonymous if they so wish. Any bequests you make in your will to a registered charity such as IGG are exempt from Gift or Inheritance Tax.

**TRÓCAIRE**  
Working for a Just World

**léargas**

**Irish Aid**  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

**iDONATE**  
MAKING GIVING EASIER

Supported by  
**National Lottery**

**NDP**  
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**H**  
A QUALITY HEALTH  
PROMOTING ORGANISATION

## 2015 Financial Summary

Income - National Organisation	€
Department of Children & Youth Affairs - Youth Service Grant	364,343
Membership Fees	311,764
Other Grants, sponsorship and sundry income	17,032
<b>Total</b>	<b>693,139</b>
Expenditure - National Organisation	
Staff salaries, training & related expenses (20 Part-time, 6 Full time)	322,399
Programme, Development & Promotion	196,149
Administration, Establishment & I.T.	120,218
Other expenditure e.g. conferences, subscriptions, donations	52,753
<b>Total</b>	<b>691,519</b>
Surplus/(deficit) on National Organisation	1,620
Surplus/(deficit) on Distribution Centre	(7,715)
Surplus/(deficit) on National Memorial Cottage	(4,574)
<b>Net Surplus/(deficit) for 2015</b>	<b>(10,669)</b>



## Irish Girl Guides

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