



Effective Event Communication

A handy 'how to' guide to making the most of communications at your event





Welcome to Girlguiding Anglia's Guide to Effective Event Communication!

This guide has been produced by the Region Communications Team and is intended to help you to plan and deliver effective PR and media at any guiding event.

PR tips and keywords that you may wish to consider have been highlighted in **blue**.

You can adapt the suggestions in the guide according to the size of the event and the number of communications volunteers and trained media spokespeople available.

Social media is a great way to involve participants, supporters, the general public and the press before, during and after an event. Planning your **photography** and **video** needs prior to the event will ensure that you have a comprehensive collection of material to use for press releases and post-event requirements. And having a basic outline of your **reporting requirements** will ensure that you don't miss those special stories and assure you of plenty of material for your **event newsletters**, **press releases** and future **flyers**.

If you have any questions about the content, want to suggest ideas or seek advice, please contact the Region Communications Team in the first instance by emailing commsteam@girlguiding-anglia.org.uk.

Good Luck!



Setting up an event communications team

You could approach volunteers or members within your area, advertise on social media, your local guiding website or local newsletter or even talk to local schools or colleges for media students who might be able to help you with event communications.

Give everyone a **specific job** matching their skills and experience so that they know what is expected of them in advance of the day. You can determine the size of your team by looking at the size, duration and location of the event itself.

One day events can usually be covered by two to three **photographers**, and one or two **videographers** - you really don't need hours of footage! Try to allocate at least one person for **live tweeting** and **social media**, supported by one or more people tweeting from personal accounts.

You will also need at least one **roving reporter** to create collect quotes, gather stories and deal with any press on site. Any members of the press/visiting journalists should *always* be accompanied at events. Younger members who are trained media spokespeople can act as '**junior reporters**' to give a first-hand report of their experiences at the event.

At a large scale residential event, allocate the task of creating the **daily newsletter** and **souvenir brochure** to one person, ensuring that they are fully supported by the rest of the communications team.

For a camp/ residential event, simply adjust the suggested team ratios above according to what material and coverage you need, the venue and the amount of activities.

Your team will also need a **secure base** for their equipment (consider a lockable cabinet and laptop locks) and access to power points and the internet. Ideally you should check out **Wi-Fi access** before the event; it will be easier for your team if they can use smartphones and/or tablets for live social media.

Make sure that your communications team are **clearly identifiable** to all participants. Equip your team with high-vis vests, different coloured tops, brightly coloured lanyards and/or ID badges.



Social media

If your local guiding area already has a Facebook page and/or Twitter feed, it is better to stick to this rather than setting up accounts especially for the event. Ideally you should have one person live tweeting /posting to Facebook and another to cover breaks or capture important points during the day.

It is recommended that you **set up a hashtag specific to your event**; this will ensure effective and relevant engagement with your followers. Decide upon a **catchy, simple hashtag** far in advance and use it in every tweet and Facebook post about the event, from the very start of advertising. You might want to shorten the event name and add the year, for example #starburst2014.

Make sure your Twitter and Facebook comments are different; Facebook is better for asking people to share photos/ stories, whereas Twitter is great for instant responses and live interaction. Try to pick up on **popular social media apps** like Instagram, and **trends** like 'selfies' or #FollowFriday to join in bigger conversations.

Posts from third parties that are inappropriate or offensive can be deleted; any negative posts should be dealt with firstly by a polite response. If the issue escalates, please forward details to the Region Chair of Communications or the Communications Team at the Region office (commsteam@girlguiding-anglia.org.uk) who will deal with it as soon as possible.

Girlguiding Anglia is keen for volunteers to **live tweet** from the Girlguiding Anglia Twitter account at events. For more information and a guide to Girlguiding Anglia 'Twitter Takeovers', please e-mail commsteam@girlguiding-anglia.org.uk .

It's also a good idea to include links to your social media pages on your local Girlguiding **website**. And here are some great tips on using Twitter effectively from the Media Trust - <http://resources.mediatrust.org/guides/digital/ultra-social-top-tips/>.

Perfect podcasts

Podcasts are a great way to broadcast radio-style content recorded at events. You will need a sound recording device, such as a laptop, mobile phone or other professional sound recording equipment.

You will also need a platform to support your features, such as Mixcloud (www.mixcloud.com).

Your podcast could include the following:

- ★ Mentions of those arriving and comments about their journey.
- ★ Interviews with people participating in activities, those organising activities and/or entertaining at the event.
- ★ A mention of your social media links and your chosen platform site.
- ★ A final compilation of soundbites and interviews to be broadcast after the event.

Count on countdowns!

Countdowns on social media are a really effective way to **build up excitement** around an event and ensure that your followers are regularly reminded that the event is coming up.

Start to promote your event on social media as soon as bookings open, then depending on the scale of your event, you may wish to start promoting as many as 50 days beforehand. At this point it might be a good idea to introduce a **competition** to win a promotional item, such as a mug, t-shirt or pen. Setting the closing date for the competition will ensure that people keep their eyes on the prize!

Try to post something relating to the event on a **weekly basis**. Using the format of a question is the best way to evoke a response from your followers. Successful social media is measured by the level of interactivity from your followers and the generation of a two-way conversation, so questions are ideal.

For a day event, you might wish to ask:

- ★ What's your favourite guiding game, story or recipe?
- ★ Why do you love guiding?
- ★ What would be your fantasy guiding event?

For a camp/ residential event, you may wish to ask:

- ★ What's your essential camp item or camp luxury?
- ★ Is it your first camp? Are you excited?
- ★ Where's the strangest place you've ever camped?

From day ten onwards put out a post and tweet each day. You could use the following:

- ★ What's arrived on site - food deliveries, shop supplies etc.
- ★ Shout outs for girls, Leaders, venue and guests.
- ★ Ask if participants are packed and prepared.

The big day:

- ★ Lively comments and updates throughout the day, including quotes, shout outs and photos/videos.
- ★ Don't forget a final wrap-up after the event showcasing event highlights, or a Storify (www.storify.com).



Fabulous photos & viral videos

Photographers at the event could download a free version of software such as Lightroom (<http://www.adobe.com/uk/products/photoshop-lightroom.html>) so that they can process their own photos and tag with relevant details to enable easy searching and identification.

Before the event, decide on what images you wish to gather; do you need photos/ videos for general guiding promotion or to promote specific sections and their events? If you intend to use the photos in a daily camp newsletter, consider photographic themes such as activities taking place (dance, craft, outdoor activities), scenery (sunrise & sunset, the weather, camp surroundings) or locations (chill-out zone, tents, main stage) etc.

At a one-day event it may be best to take quick 'snapshots' to upload on the day, saving better photos to use for a post-event round up. If you are making a video of the event for which you will need footage and stills, you could use an online service such as Animoto (www.animoto.com).

The best photos are those that **reflect our key messages** and are **colourful**, **action packed** and **activity focused**. Before taking your photos, ask yourself the following:

- ★ Are the subjects laughing, smiling and having fun?
- ★ Is there an element of action to the photo?
- ★ Have I gathered both group and individual photos?
- ★ Have I taken a picture that represents an overview of the site? Include any banners, logos and flag sails.
- ★ Have I taken photos of Leaders and supporters, as well as girls?
- ★ Have any of my photos got a 'quirky' element to them, for example someone with wacky hair or clothing?
- ★ Are my photos bright and colourful?

After the event you can collate your videos, photos and soundbites to upload onto YouTube, social media, your local website and the Region website. 'Vine' **short videos** work really well on Twitter (these are a maximum of six seconds).

All attendees without photo/video permissions should be clearly identifiable. Please ensure you brief your Communications Team as to how to identify those without photo/video permissions before the event begins. Contact the Region Communications Team (commsteam@girlguiding-anglia.org.uk) should you have any queries about this.



Impress the press

To ensure your event receives the widest press coverage possible, contact the **local press**, **TV** and **radio stations** before the event with a 'Forward Planning Note' if there is an opportunity for reporters/photographers to attend.

Prepare your **press release** in advance by writing a template. After the event you can simply fill this in with quotes from girls and Leaders taken on the day. You can distribute a version of the template to those attending so that they can pass onto local press after the event. You can seek advice from the Girlguiding HQ Press Team or check out the PRA Resources area of the Girlguiding website for sample press releases.

If television cameras are attending, Girlguiding Press Office must be informed prior to the filming taking place so they can offer support to you and the event team.

Junior reporters, roving reporters and spokespeople should be briefed if they are to be interviewed by the press. Ensure that any **media-trained spokespeople** attending are identified in case of media opportunities.

Spokespeople could also show VIPs or other special guests around the event, alongside Guides and members of The Senior Section. **Guest invites** should be sent out around two months prior to the event.

You could use the following ideas when compiling a press or radio report:

- ★ Make a list of questions for those entertaining at the event, participants, Leaders/ staff and of course the girls themselves.
- ★ Include quirky and unusual questions; try to fit work in some questions that reflect current Girlguiding themes (e.g. asking what the interviewee's ideal birthday party would be like, to tie in with the Big Brownie Birthday).
- ★ Within your report, name-drop any bands, celebrities, event organisers, guests or prominent guiding members in attendance (e.g. Chief Guide).



Read all about it!

Most large scale camps have a daily newsletter or newspaper. This could be printed by an outsourced company (if you have enough budget!), or you could stick to a one-page newsletter handed out or displayed around the site, and then posted on your website/ social media pages for downloading.

Articles and photos can be themed to events taking place on particular days, with short and snappy quotes from participants.

It's a nice idea to finish the event with a souvenir newsletter or brochure to be posted or e-mailed to all participants after the event.

FRIDAY 16 AUGUST PAGE 1

THE BAKER'S DOZEN

"13, 13s IN A 13!"





We hope everyone had a brilliant day at Pleasurewood Hills! What was your favourite ride?!



CLOSING CEREMONY
Friday night will be the perfect way for us all to celebrate Anglia 13. Don't forget to wear your coloured t-shirts! What a week!



SMILE
SMILE arrived yesterday and had a wonderful time settling in to camp life and doing activities such as canoeing.









Review and relax...

After the event, ensure that the following tasks are complete:

- ★ **Press releases** and **photos** have been sent to local press and Region Office.
- ★ **Photos** and **video footage** has been compiled onto one external hard drive or a secure online file sharing site for future use.
- ★ Photos have been made available for participants to **view** and/or **purchase online**; consider using Photobox, Tumblr, Instagram or Flickr to do this.
- ★ A **social media round-up** of your event has been posted, perhaps using Storify; reflect on the success of the event and advertise the next!
- ★ **Souvenir brochures** have been posted/ made available to download.
- ★ **Videos** and **podcasts** have been completed and uploaded to relevant sites.

Now you can thank your Communications Team and have a well-earned rest!

