

Girlguiding Cumbria South international - India 2024

From August 7 to August 20, Girlguiding Cumbria South did their first county international trip since covid hit. 8 young members and 4 adults travel to Sangam to take part in the 'Leaders Today II' session, which is a week-long event to learn about the WAGGGS leadership model and participate in community action projects. Whilst in India we also travelled to Delhi and Agra for some post-Sangam travels. Here is a summary of what we got up to!



August 7 - We were up super early this morning, with a mini bus picking us up on route to the airport around 3am, for our 8.30am flight! We arrived at the airport and spent time sorting out our international neckers and looking around the shops, before flying to Doha for a few hours lay-over, and continuing to Mumbai!

August 8 - We landed in Mumbai at around 3am and got our transfer to our hotel for the night after getting our luggage. We managed to get around 4 hours of sleep before it was time to get up for breakfast and catch our transfer bus to Pune, where Sangam is located, a 4 hour drive away. On our way, we went through a scenic journey which included seeing some waterfalls and monkeys from the road. We arrived at Sangam just before 5pm. We had a short look around to get to know the world centre, and got unpacked before spending the evening around the pool watching bats fly over. We got to meet some of the other UK participants who would also be partaking in the Leaders Today programme!

August 9 - Today the Leaders Today session officially started! We began our day at 08.30 which was breakfast, before having some free time around the centre, and the

programme started with the Opening Flag at 12.30pm. Throughout the day we also got to have an official tour of Sangam and learn about its history, the event briefing and what we would be getting up to, an introduction to everybody we may meet and a neighbourhood walk around the local area. We also got to do lots of badge swapping! In the evening we had the official Opening ceremony, which was a unique ceremony which takes place at Sangam.

August 10 - We began our day with the flag ceremony before breakfast, and after breakfast we spent the day around the Laxmi Road area for a cultural tour, we had our first Rikshaw experience which was super fun on the busy Indian roads, after we all arrived safely we took part in an activity which helped us get to know about local life, did some shopping and also went to buy Sarees! We got to spend time at the local market and visit some of the history around the area.

August 11 - Today we learnt about WAGGGS global programmes, such as Free Being Me. We then began to explore what our Community Action Projects would be and getting to know the groups we would be working in, mixing with other participants from other groups! In the evening we met with some of the local Bharat Guides who met at Sangam for their unit meetings. We had an amazing time showing them songs and games which we use in the UK. In the evening we had a WAGGGS game night!

August 12 and August 13 - Both of these days were our community action projects! We were split into 4 groups which all went to different locations, 3 of these groups looked at working with young people in different school settings, and 1 went to see a local adults group at a waste collection centre. We also got to have some free time in the evenings.

August 14 - We began our day with the flag ceremony before having breakfast. Later in the day we went out to explore MG road, where we got to have a group meal and explore more shops. In the afternoon we had an Indian afternoon where we got to wear our Sarees that we had gotten. In the evening we learnt Indian dancing.

August 15 - Today was our last day at Sangam, and it fell on India's Independence day. We started the day with a ceremony at the flagpole before learning some more games and traditions from the Guides we had met previously in the week. We had a final lunch with all the groups and said our goodbyes before heading to the airport for our post-Sangam travels! We took a flight from Pune to Delhi which took around 2 hours.

August 16 - We were up early this morning to catch our bus to Agra, which was another 4 hour journey. Everyone used the time to catch up on some sleep or chill!

When we reached Agra we spent the afternoon at the Agra fort, where we saw our first look of the Taj Mahal! Later, we had a carpet making tutorial from a local shop, who showed us how they hand make all the carpets. In the evening we went out for tea at a fantastic Mediterranean restaurant.

August 17 - We were up at 5am this morning to head straight to the Taj Mahal for sunrise! We got to explore the site and find out more about its history and how the Taj Mahal came to be. In the afternoon we visited some more local shops including a jewellers and a store where they made traditional marble.

August 18 - We travelled back to Delhi today, once we were back we visited the Red Fort for an hour and learned about the site.

August 19 - Today was our final day in India, we began with an early drive to Old Delhi where we got to explore one of the largest mosques in India, before having a tour of the local area. We had some time left, so we spent time going around more mosques and Sikh temples. In the afternoon we headed to the airport and caught our flight back to Manchester, with another stopover in Doha.

For photos, check out our trips social media pages:
Facebook: [Girlguiding Cumbria South India 2024](#)
Instagram: [Cumbriasouth_India2024](#)

