

Hello! I wanted to firstly introduce myself, I am Olivia!! I am a Guide and Ranger leader, and I am currently working towards my Queens Guide Award. My Girlguiding journey began when I was 8 years old when I joined as a Brownie. After working my way through Brownies, Guides and Senior Section (as it was years ago!) I was one of the few girls in my unit who went on to achieve my Baden-Powell award. During my time in Senior Section, I became a Young Leader for my Guide group, and I had the opportunity to complete my Rainbow leader qualification. At the time, I was working part-time in Nando's whilst helping volunteer at Guides on a Monday evening and Rainbows on a Tuesday evening.

I then left Girlguiding to excel my education in university. In 2019 I started university studying Childrens and Adolescent Mental Health and Wellbeing. University is a different experience for everyone, and for me I was a quite person at first. Sometimes I struggled with my own mental health, being away from home and my friends. But as the years went on, my confidence excelled massively, and I became more confident with public speaking. When COVID-19 hit, I moved back home with my parents to finish my course. Although I was living at home, I did not continue to volunteer with my local Girlguiding unit as my university course got progressively intense and I struggled to give my time to guiding, whilst I was also working my part-time job.

In September 2022, I joined back with my local unit, and I went on to complete my Brownie and Guide qualification. In March 2023 I started working towards my Queens Guide Award.

I have found myself whilst working with young people and I wouldn't change it for the world! Looking back at my pre-Guiding self, I have realised how much pressure I was putting myself under and just how far I have grown as a person whilst guiding! In light of all my volunteering experience and all of the roles I have undertaken, I want to share a few of my favourite memories with you.

#### **1. INTOPS selection process in 2017 and Peru 2024**

I signed up to going on an international trip when I was younger. I did get selected during the INTOPs process, but I didn't go on the trip as I was too nervous and scared at the time. 6 years later, I got the opportunity to go to Peru with Girlguiding Northwest England and that was a trip to remember forever!! I visited Machu Picchu and Rainbow Mountain. I also volunteered at a dog's shelter charity and I helped with a reforestation project. An absolutely amazing opportunity!

#### **2. Switzerland International in 2018**

When I was a Senior, we did a joint trip to Switzerland with our Guide unit. The trip was absolutely fantastic. We went to Our Chalet and it was amazing!!

#### **3. Receiving my 5 years of volunteering award in 2022**

#### **4. Volunteering at Wellies and Wristbands 2023**

As part of my Queens Guide Award, one of the clauses was to volunteer at an event. I chose Wellies and Wristbands. This was an event I have never been to and I did this by myself. Another outstanding opportunity.

#### **5. Completing my Going Away with Licence 2024**

In Summer 2024, I completed my Going Away with Licence for my Guide unit. This was a hard qualification to complete as it involved an extensive amount of information, however with the support of my mentor and the rest of my Guide unit, I was able to complete this!