

The past year has been a busy and active one for the girls. They come from Chilton Polden and the wider surrounding area (attending several schools) and we meet once a week during school term in the Hall. Over the past year, we have had a slightly fluctuating membership of around 17 or 18 girls aged between 10 and 14.

In Spring 2016, we had a party to celebrate the Queen's birthday and we enjoyed being outside at the Playing Field whenever the weather allowed meetings to be there. We cleaned the church in May and by June we could have our much-loved cookouts. There is nothing quite like a sausage cooked over an open fire on a warm Summer evening. This teaches basic cookery skills and learning to light a fire safely. We ended the summer with a picnic with the parents.

In the Autumn, we were not able to get out and about during meetings so easily so the Guide Patrols concentrated on doing various badges they had chosen from a wide range of options. They always decide on the badges and they do the planning themselves. This leads to team work and learning to organise.

They were offered outings that term to do High Ropes out on the Quantocks with another Guide unit. Another Saturday afternoon in December we took over the Gym at East Quay in Bridgwater for us and other Guides and the girls learned trampolining and gymnastics from qualified instructors.

In October 2016 Sue spent 12 days visiting India with a group of mainly Guide Leaders. Most of the time was spent in Pune. This was to attend the 50th Anniversary of the setting up of the Indian World Guiding Centre and was an amazing opportunity. There was a visit to a girls' Home (for destitute slum children) and when Sue returned home the Guides were keen to help them. Guides, their parents and friends raised £440 to be sent to the Home. The Guides had an Indian themed meeting one evening too.

The Chilton Polden Guides and Brownies (who meet in Edington) were hosting the District Christmas event in 2016. This was an evening of carols, songs and poems and little performances which about 100 girls attended in Edington Village Hall. The term finished with our Unit's Christmas party in our village.

In January Guides and parents were given the opportunity to go as a group to the pantomime in Bridgwater. This has become a bit of a tradition which we all enjoy. The darker colder evenings have meant more badge work this past term and occasional evenings playing games. Some patrols have also liked trying new foods and making smoothies.

A Bridgwater Division Circus Skills fun day was available to the Guides in March enabling the 6 of our girls who attended it to get their Circus Skills Badge. This past Spring term ended with Easter Crafts and making chocolate Easter nests.

We are looking forward to the Summer term bringing us warm enough days again to go out on the Playing Field for rounders and games and cookouts. The Guides will be cleaning the church again in May and we are hoping to organise at least one outing.

Guiding continues to be popular in Chilton Polden and offers a place for fun, friendship and learning. The volunteer Leaders Sue and Sarah Burne run the meetings and take the girls on outings plus attend some meetings at District and Division level with other Guide Leaders. We are on the lookout for someone who might like to join us as a Leader in what is a very satisfying way to help young people. Watching youngsters gain in skills and confidence is very rewarding.