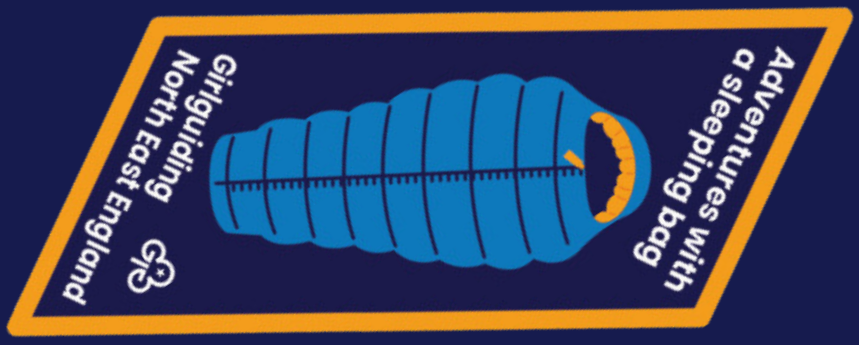
Girlguiding
North East England



Adventures with a sleeping bag

What is it?

- Adventures with a sleeping bag encourages everyone to have a residential adventure. This is particularly aimed at units who haven't been away previously or who have had a long gap since they last had a residential but the badges can be bought for anybody who spends a night away.
- We'd encourage everybody to plan a sleepover or longer residential any time from September onwards. (If you already have a suitable event planned sooner then this will still count.)

Why do it?

Residentials provide:

- fun!
- more time to do activities
- a chance for everyone to get to know each other better
- an opportunity to do activities that you can't do at your unit meeting
- confidence building
- skills building
- experiences
- an opportunity to do something else such as fundraising or selection for another event

We suggest doing it because you can!

Planning

The following are some of the steps involved in planning a residential.

- Talk to the unit (leaders and young members) to find out what they want to do
- Communicate with parents around idea and cost (how much are they willing to pay?)
- Speak to your commissioner and advisers (and ask for a mentor for the Going Away qualification if you haven't already and aren't already qualified)
- Find a venue that works for what the unit want to do and the members (consider any additional needs)
- Find your team (this could be leaders from your unit, leaders from other local units, parents etc) (Don't forget that all volunteers staying overnight

will need to be registered on GO and have completed recruitment checks and safe space training by the date of your event)

- Decide on a date which works for you, your team, the unit and the venue
- Complete REN form part 1 and initial risk assessment
- Make a budget for the event considering the costs involved and what you'll need to charge participants and volunteers. Think about allowing plenty of time for payments and opportunities for fundraising and applying for grants if the cost is likely to be an issue for any of your young members.
- With the young members, plan programme, menu etc

Likely costs you'll need to consider include:

- venue
- food
- activities
- transport (including leader petrol)
- badges

Types of events

The following are suggestions for types of events which you could consider and which would earn participants their badge.

- Sleepover in your meeting place (This could be an evening meeting followed by sleep, breakfast and go home or could be extended further.)
- Sleepover at attractions (e.g. The Deep, Climbing Hub, Soft play, Cathedral)
- Sleepout under the stars
- Camping (1 or more nights)
- Staying inside (e.g. at a village hall or Guiding owned property)
- Staying at a Youth Hostel
- Taking part in a joint event with another unit or as part of district, division or county
- Taking part in a joint event with another organisation (e.g. Scouts)
- Going to PGL (or similar activity centre)
- Going on an international trip (keeping in mind that you would need a leader who already has a Going Away Qualification to plan an international trip and planning needs to start 18 months to a year in advance)
- Have a virtual event where young members take part from their own home completing some activities and maybe having some online sessions. This could be an option for groups where none of the other options are possible.

Programme ideas

(Don't forget to gather ideas from your young members and get them involved in the planning as much as possible.)

You could include some or all of the following:

- Use a challenge badge
- Pick a theme for your activities (Christmas, Disney, a book, around the world)
- Use some programme resources (UMAs, skills builders, interest badges as chosen by individual young members)
- Bring someone in to run an activity (e.g. dancing, yoga)
- Venue specific activities (e.g. canoeing)
- Free time
- Plan a fundraiser
- Community project
- Six / Patrol activities

Menu ideas

(Don't forget to get input from your young members about their preferences and think about ways they can be involved in food preparation.)

Here are some ideas to consider:

- It doesn't have to be complicated or healthy!
- It can include a packed lunch / tea.
- Cereals or a similar cold breakfast is fine.
- You could get a takeaway for one meal.
- Give groups money to buy ingredients to prepare a meal.
- Can you match your menu to your theme?
- Make it part of your programme (preparing a meal or part of it).
- Discuss dietary requirements with young members and parents (some will opt to send their own meals to ensure they're catered for)
- Choose something that the group will eat!
- You can do an online shop and get food delivered. (Just check that they will deliver to your chosen venue.)

Risk assessment

- Don't forget to use the most up to date version of the Girlguiding form (downloaded from the website)
- If you're not sure where to start then why not use our editable risk assessment as a template

Tips

- Give it a go!
- Some employers give volunteering leave so it's worth checking whether yours do or asking whether they'd consider it if you'll need time off to attend a residential event with your unit.
- Work with other units if you don't have the numbers, confidence or experience to do it as a unit.
- Speak to other leaders for advice and ideas or to ask them to come with you!
- If you need to, build up experience by starting with a short local event.
- Leaders can bring their own children if they need to so they can attend (One or more extra adults will be needed to be responsible for them.)
- You don't need to go far.
- The event doesn't have to include lots of adventurous activities to be an adventure.
- It's ok to play to your strengths & to ask for help.
- Find someone with the qualifications needed to come with you if you don't feel comfortable to run it yourself.
- Young Leaders are a great resource.
- You could hire a van to transport equipment.
- The event doesn't have to be expensive – you can use existing resources.
- An adventure can be something simple if it's something someone hasn't done before.
- Ask to join or visit another unit (either as a leader or with your group).
- If you are completing your Going Away qualification or adding extra modules then you will have a mentor – don't forget to ask them for advice and help if there are any steps you are unsure of.
- Your county outdoor and residential advisers are a great source of advice and support if you need any ideas or are unsure about anything. (You can also get support from your local commissioner and any district or division advisers.)
- Don't forget that you can use the region sleep away badges to help members keep track of the total number of nights spent away as part of Girlguiding.