Girlguiding
North East England

Saying goodbye

Sometimes volunteers decide to step away from their role. They may feel nervous about sharing their decision or worry about the impact on girls and fellow volunteers. How we respond leaves a lasting impression and can influence whether they return to guiding in the future. This flowchart is designed to help unit teams and commissioners say goodbye in a way that reflects our values.

Volunteer decides to leave Girlguiding

Are they willing to chat with you?

You might hear second-hand that a volunteer has decided to leave, or you may receive the news by email. If so, reach out and ask whether they'd be open to a quick chat about their decision. Let them know you're not trying to change their mind — you simply want the chance to say thank you.

Say thank you

Once you've made contact, arrange a time that works for you both. When you speak, avoid expressing disappointment or frustration about needing to find a replacement, and don't try to make them feel guilty — it won't change their decision. Instead, focus on thanking them. Whether they're a new volunteer or a long-standing member, acknowledge the contribution they've made. If they leave feeling unappreciated or unsure their efforts made a difference, they'll have little reason to return in the future.

Are they willing to share why they are leaving?

Ask whether they'd be willing to share what led to their decision to leave. As tempting as it may be, avoid jumping straight into problem-solving. Instead, try to see things from their perspective. They've likely been considering this choice for some time, so empathy and understanding will mean a lot. By inviting them to share anything that might have made a difference, you also give them the chance to suggest potential solutions — and they may highlight something simple that could be put in place.

Do they know how to get back in touch?

Make sure that they know how to get back in touch or rejoin if their circumstances change.

Update GO

Say a final thanks, wish them well and end their role on GO. Don't contact them again.