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Girl Guides Australia

Girl E-News

Issue 01: Environment

April 2009

Welcome

Hi Guides,

Welcome to our first edition of the Girl Guides Australia e-newsletter for Guides! This is a very exciting time for us as we head into our Centenary celebrations. That's right – Guiding in Australia started just under 100 years ago. So soon we will be blasting off all our celebrations – there are lots of fantastic events and activities planned in your local area, in your State and even interstate. Check out the Girl Guides Australia website (www.girlguides.org.au) – and click on "Celebrate Guides Centenary" for more information. I hope you will help us to celebrate – so that we can ensure Guiding in Australia continues for at least another 100 years.

girls worldwide say
100 YEARS of changing lives
Girl Guides Australia

It's also a very exciting time for Guiding in Australia as we are re-connecting with our youth members directly from our National Office. This e-newsletter is yours – so I'd love to hear what you'd like to read about – the types of activities you want to do, the themes of each edition, who'd you like to interview or who you'd like someone else to interview. I'd love to hear what you're up to in Guides too – has your Unit or Patrol done something different recently or have you completed a great challenge? Then write in and share.
And of course, we also need a name for this e-newsletter. I know you can probably come up with something that's much better than what I can (Girl E-News). So make sure you read about the Naming the E-Newsletter competition box just below.

This e-newsletter theme is the environment. Read Page 2 for more information on why the Environment is important to Guides. Each e-newsletter will be based on a theme – which you can help decide. The feature story, and all the activities for each developmental stage, will be based on that theme. The activities for each developmental stage are only suggestions – start with the one considered appropriate for your age, and then if you want to explore the environment even more, have a look at the activities on other pages.

In the meantime, continue to have fun and try new things.

Karen Chatto
Program Manager

back to top

In This Issue

- Naming Competition
- Guides Say...Environment
- Photo Competition
- Environmental Activities
- Clean Up Australia

Also This Month

Feature Article - Abyilene McGuire

I am a Senior Environmental Health Officer in Local Government. I manage and oversee the operations of an Environmental Health section to ensure the maintenance of a healthy, safe and sustainable environment in my municipality... Read More »

Interview with Karen Chatto

Leader of Ballarat "Choc Chics" Guide Unit. Program Manager for Girl Guides Australia. Guiding Partner (that's to help new Leaders become Leaders) and I've almost completed my Level I as a Guide Trainer...Read More »

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Naming Competition

As part of our first issue, we are inviting you to send your ideas on what we should name the new youth e-newsletter. You can name the entire newsletter or just a part of it.

We would love to hear what ideas you have and girls who sends in the best name/s will win a fantastic prize and the two runners up will also receive a prize!

back to top

Feature Article - Abyilene McGuire

Abyilene McGuire is representing Girl Guides Australia at the next Kyoto Agreement Conference in Denmark later this year, as part of the delegation from the Australian Koala Foundation.

What is your Guide name?
Koala

What is your fave part of your Guide uniform?
I love our bright pink polo shirts!

What is your fave animal?
I have to say koalas given that it's my Guide name!

Do you have a pet?
Not at the moment. We did have goldfish about 6 years ago…but it didn't work out so well.

How long have you been involved with Guides?
For over 60% of my life! I've been a Guide since I was 10, a Junior Leader at 14 and then a Leader of Youth since I was 18. Almost 17 years in total – yikes.

What do you do in the 'real world'?
I am a Senior Environmental Health Officer in Local Government. I manage and oversee the operations of an Environmental Health section to ensure the maintenance of a healthy, safe and sustainable environment in my municipality. My job covers environmental management, public health and emergency management – plenty of challenges!

Do you like your job?
Love it - no day is ever the same and you never quite know what's around the corner. Let's just say that our 'Be Prepared' motto fits in very well with my job!

Do you have a nickname and what is it?
Aby is the most common…then there's so many other different ones from there. I answer to almost anything sometimes!

What would you like to see in Denmark?
I've heard that Copenhagen is like a fairytale wonderland in Winter so I'm looking forward to the night lights, snow and Christmas markets. Being Tasmanian, I'd of course like to see the royal castles/palaces.

Is there anything Guides can help with before you leave for Denmark?
I am always interested to know if Guides have any particular ideas on how the organisation should address climate change. This could be either in their Units, their Districts or general projects that could be developed. As Guides, we all see the environment as being very important and something that we need to protect – we just need to work out how we can do that in the best possible way.

What do you like about Guides?
Everything! Where else would you put on waterproof pants and head down a hill on a giant iceblock?

I don't think there's any other organisation where you could fill a bus with females from different parts of Australia and the world and have them singing the same songs…which only make sense in 'Guide world'. It's like another language - and it doesn't matter what age you are.

If you had a baby, would you like a boy or a girl? If it was a girl would you name it Olave or Agnes?
I don't mind either way, as long as it's healthy. If we have a girl, she'll be a Girl Guide from a very young age! As for names, I haven't thought that far ahead yet. I think if I proposed Olave or Agnes, my husband might have something to say!

Have you ever taken a hair-dryer to camp?
No way!

back to top

Interview - Karen Chatto, Program Manager of Girl Guides Australia

What's your name?
Karen Chatto (no second name)

What's your role in Guiding?
Leader of Ballarat "Choc Chics" Guide Unit. Program Manager for Girl Guides Australia. Guiding Partner (that's to help new Leaders become Leaders) and I've almost completed my Level I as a Guide Trainer. [Wow! You do lots!]

What's your earliest Guiding memory?
Flying up from Brownies to Girl Scouts in the USA. [Flying up – how did you do that?] We actually had to walk along a plank from my Brownie Troop to my new Girl Scout Troop.

What's your greatest Guiding achievement?
[Having the fabulous girls that are in my Unit at the moment.] Hey, I didn't say that! [No, but it's the truth isn't it?] Well, I guess so. But I guess the most special moment to date has been the presentation of my Emu Award. This was recognition of my service to Guiding at a State and national level, but done without me "working towards" it. [You mean, like your Queen's Guide and OB-P Awards?] Yep – although they're significant achievements for me – I was working on achieving them. Whereas the Emu Award was done without me knowing. It was a lovely surprise. [Some of us were there – but we had no idea what it was about.]

How long have you been in Guides?
Well including being a Girl Scout in USA, I've been in Guiding for 30 years!

If you had a Guide mascot, what would it be?
A mascot? Now you've stumped me. OK, I've got a little soft toy platypus that I take on my overseas trips with me. His name is "George".

Have you visited any of the World Centres? If so, which one/s?
I've only been to Our Chalet, in Switzerland, so far. This was back when I was 25 – I went on an international camp in Sweden, and then went onto Our Chalet. I made some fantastic friends – many of whom I still keep in touch with. The following year, I even went back to Europe for 6 weeks – travelling by myself [really?] and visited the friends that I had met in Sweden. I'm hoping to get to the other World Centres one day.

What's your favourite animal?
It used to be a platypus. But I have a love for all animals – that is native, not domestic. I never had a pet when I was a kid – so pets don't do much for me.

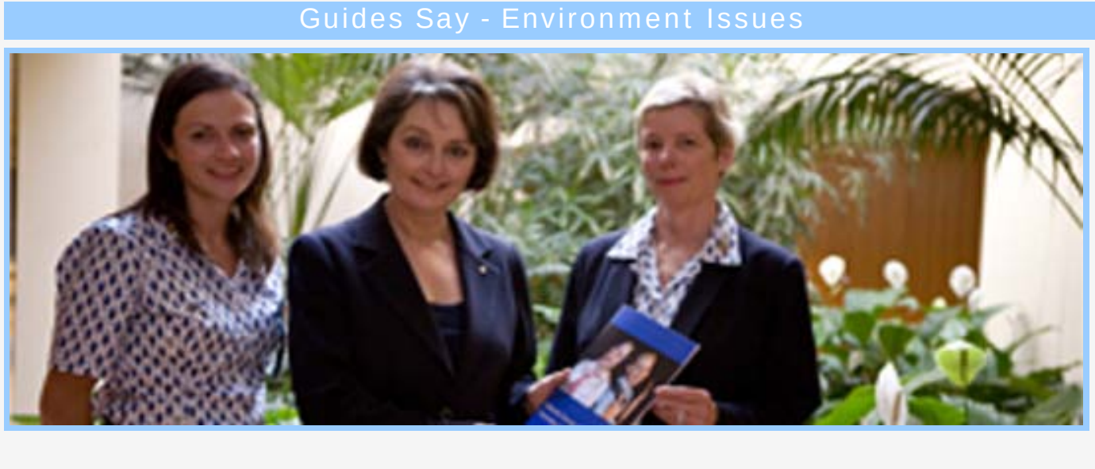
What's your favourite plant?
Trees of course! I'm a forester – I love anything relating to the environment. But my favourite tree is a gum (and yes there are hundreds), but I love the eucalypt smell after a good rain or a really hot day.

What's your best piece of advice you'd give to other Guides?
Take every opportunity offered. You never know where Guiding will lead you – but it will be an adventure!

Interview conducted by Ballarat "Choc Chics" Guide Unit (girls aged 13-17 yrs)

back to top

Guides Say - Environment Issues



Going back a little way, in 2007, Girl Guides Australia conducted its first ever national survey of Guides aged 5 to 17 years. The aim of this survey was to find out what issues affect you at a global, Australian and local level. The results were really interesting:

Global issues:	Australian issues:	Local issues:
1. Global Warming	1. Water	1. Environment
2. Environment	2. Environment	2. Addications
3. Poverty	3. Addictions	3. Bullying

So this first e-newsletter is going to focus on the environment, including global warming, water, drought, climate change, pollution, recycling. We hope you enjoy doing some of the activities.

Environment-related Action Days
There are lots of Action Days throughout the year that your Patrol or Unit could use to develop Unit meetings around. Even if you've missed the day that's been selected – you can always celebrate or take action at another time. You could even challenge another Unit in your District. Or why not try 'making a difference' at least once a month. We'd love to hear what you did to celebrate or action these themes.

1 March	Clean up Australia Day	www.cleanup.org.au
21 March	World Forestry Day	
22 March	World Water Day	www.worldwaterday.org
23 March	World Meteorological Day	www.wmo.int
28 March	Earth Hour	www.earthhour.org
22 April	Earth Day	www.earthday.net
5 June	World Environment Day	www.unep.org/wed/2009/english/
2 August	National Tree Day	treeday.planetark.com
24-30 Aug	Keep Australia Beautiful Week	www.kab.org
September	Save the Koala Month	www.savethekoala.com
1 September	National Wattle Day	www.wattleday.asn.au
7 September	National Threatened Species Day	www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/ts-day/index.html
7 – 13 September	Landcare Week	www.landcareonline.com.au
18-20 September	Clean Up the World	www.cleanuptheworld.org
4 - 10 October	World Space Week	www.spaceweek.org/
18 – 24 October	National Water Week	www.nationalwaterweek.org.au/
9 - 15 November	National Recycling Week	recyclingweek.planetark.org
7 - 13 December	National Coastcare Week	www.coastcare.com.au/

Note: the dates indicated above are accurate for 2009.

back to top

Photo Completion - Girls in the Environment

For your chance to win a USB data stick send in photos of yourself in the environment. Whether you're planting trees, cleaning up rubbish or just having fun we want to see it!

Email us your photo from a recent activity you have participated in and the competition winner will have her photo featured on the Girl Guides Australia website, e-newsletter or other exciting publications. Two runners up will also receive a prize of having their photos up in the next youth e-newsletter!

Send your entry to Kirsty at admin@girlguides.com.au with the subject line as 'Environment Photo Comp'.

Before you go ahead and start sending in your fab photos, you will need to get a parent or guardian to fill out this form here and send it in with your photo to make sure we can use your photo.

back to top

Clean Up Australia Day

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability girls worldwide say 'we can save our planet"

Guides get some help from friends

Victoria Girl Guides
In our Guides Say... project, many Guides expressed concern about the environment. Hence our formal alliance with Clean Up Australia is even more important to us. Once again in March, Guides, Leaders and other supporters put their gloves on and got "cleaning up"!

In 2009, 218 Guide Units around Australia took part in cleaning parks, bush land, school grounds, play grounds and shopping centres. While Cleaning Up Australia, some Guide Units have extended the project and practiced their advocacy.

One Guide Unit that meets at a school, cleaned the school grounds and found a large hidden cache of uneaten lunches. They thought this was not very good so the older Guides wrote a letter to the Principal while the younger Guides drew pictures of the rubbish. In their letter, they gave the Principal ideas on how they thought the problem could be solved.

The Principal acted on their letters and changed the eating arrangements for some of the students.

The Guides were speaking out about their peers and they accepted responsibility. This showed that they cared for their school friends, their school and the planet.

Guides call for action to clean up the town

Tasmania Girl Guides

back to top

Environmental Activities

Ages 5-7

Make a fungus garden
Equipment:
slice of moist bread
Clear plastic bag
Tie/rubber band

Instructions:

- Place slice of moist bread into a clear plastic bag.
- Put the bag in a warm sunny spot and watch what happens daily.

Fungus will grow and change quickly and display many beautiful colours and forms. Eventually the bread will disappear.

Try this with each Patrol member using a different type of bread – white, wholemeal, grains, sourdough, gluten free, etc.. Does the same fungus grow on each piece of bread?

Spot the Litter Bug
Equipment: 3 pieces of litter

Instructions:

- Everyone sits in a circle surrounding a team standing in the middle of the circle.
- One member of the team in the middle has 3 pieces of litter. By mingling among her team, she tries to drop the pieces of litter without being spotted.
- The group shouts out if they spot the litter bug.

Earth Hour challenges

- Walk to the shops, or your friends or school or ... instead of taking the car.
- Keep your own vegetable or herb garden.
- Find out how people traveled 100 years ago. Visit a museum or similar which shows a historic form of transport. Do you think it was better or worse for the environment?
- Turn off taps and bubblers when you are finished.
- Make and use draught stoppers to save energy in heating.
- How is your family saving water? Can you think of other ways to save water at home and at Guides? Design a poster demonstrating a water saving method and present it to your Patrol or Unit.
- Make instruments out of recycled materials and perform a musical item with them.

Remember some of these activities could be used towards a challenge in many of the badges in ***Look Wide***.

back to top

Ages 7-9

Make a pond peeper
Equipment: clear plastic bag with no extra holes (you need to be able to see through it)
tube (smaller in length than plastic bag)
rubber bands

Instructions:

- Place plastic bag over tube with bottom of bag over bottom of tube. Remember if there is a seam in the bag – then move that away from the bottom of the tube.
- Place rubber bands securely around the tube and bag – so that the bag is held in place.
- Find a pond
- Place peeper into pond (remembering not to go deeper than top of tube or plastic bag) and have a look. What can you see? Write a list, draw, take a photo.

Compare what you see to what other members of your Patrols sees. Visit your pond each term – what changes, what stays the same?

Reuse night
Equipment: everyone to bring in recyclable materials from home (i.e. newspapers, bottles, cans – you could allocate a different type of material to each Patrol)

Instructions:

- Challenge each Patrol to reuse/recycle the products that they brought into something useful.
- Share the materials between Patrols (so that each Patrol has a mixture of materials) – challenge each Patrol to reuse/recycle the products they have into something useful.

Make sure the items that are designed are truly useful – otherwise it's not really reusing.

Earth Hour challenges

- Visit a power station or wind farm.
- Find out about recycling symbols and what they mean. How do you know what can what cannot be recycled? Could you be recycling more things at home, school and Guides?
- Make a poster or model of a house or room, and mark on all of the places where energy is used and where energy is lost.
- Does your school have a walking bus? If not, find out about this program and what it involves. Share with your Patrol how programs such as these are helping the environment.
- Compare recycled paper with "normal" paper. Make a list of advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Plan and go on an outing with your Patrol or Unit using public transport.
- Play Kim's Game using materials that are bad for the environment, or items that can be recycled, or whatever environmental theme you come up with

Remember some of these activities could be used towards a challenge in many of the badges in ***Look Wide***.

back to top

Ages 9-12

Create a great compost (thanks to Clean Up Australia website www.cleanup.org.au)
Equipment: site for compost (well-drained, and some shade as too much sun will dry your compost out)
mulch or twigs
fruit and veggie peelings, fresh grass clippings, dry leaves, woody twigs, paper, tea leaves and tea bags, coffee grounds, vacuum cleaner dust, soft stems, dead flowers, used vegetable oil, egg shells, sawdust (but not from treated timber), wood ash
water

Instructions:

- Choose a site – place your compost heap or bin in a well-drained area with some shade.
- Start with a thick layer of coarse material, such as twigs or mulch. Follow with a layer of garden clippings, food and vegetable scraps, and grass clippings.
- Add water after each layer of material to keep the heap moist, but not wet.
- Keep your compost well aerated to prevent foul odious or methane.
- Turn your compost over with a garden fork at least once a week.

Your compost should turn into a rich soil within 6-8 weeks.

What not to add to your compost:

- Meat and dairy products
- Diseased plants
- Metals, plastic, glass
- Animal manures (especially the droppings of cats and dogs)
- Fat
- Magazines
- Large branches
- Weeds that have seeds or underground stems
- Bread or cake (may attract mice)
- Bones
- Sawdust from treated timber

Make a rain gauge
Equipment: plastic bottle
scissors
tape
ruler
marking pen

Instructions:

- Cut the top off the plastic bottle.
- Turn the top part of the plastic bottle upside down, and then fit it into the rest of the bottle to form a funnel. Secure with tape.
- Use the ruler to make a scale on the side of the bottle. (Note – that this will only be a comparative scale – if you want accurate measurements in millimeters of how much rain fell – then you will need to place known quantities of water into the gauge and mark your scale as you add the quantities.)
- Place your rain gauge in an open space – so that nothing will interfere with it collecting rain when it's raining. Secure your gauge so that it won't blow over in the wind. (It could be placed inside a weighted flower pot.)
- Check your rain gauge daily at the same time every day. (Official records of rain are recorded at 9am every day.) Record the amount of rain on your rainfall chart. And remember to empty your rain gauge after each recording.

You could compare rain fall within your Patrol or Unit. Why are there such differences? What effects rainfall in your area?

Earth Hour challenges

- Visit a power station or wind farm.
- How does installing low energy light bulbs in your house help the environment? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using these?
- Investigate solar and wind-up battery chargers and torches. How could you use these?
- Make a Snakes and Ladders game – ladders correspond to saving energy, snakes as wasted energy. Play it with your Patrol.
- Make a map of your area and mark where all members of your Unit live. Arrange carpooling to get to Unit meetings. Is it possible to walk or cycle to meetings during summer? Try it one week.
- Does your school or Guide hall have a water tank? If not, how can they acquire one?
- Make a poster to explain the "El Nino / La Nina" effect. Make sure to include how this effect relates to global warming.

Remember some of these activities could be used towards a challenge in many of the badges in ***Look Wide***.

back to top

Ages 12-14

Purifying water
Some States in Australia are investigating and developing factories that will convert salt water into fresh water. Why don't you give it a go!

Equipment:
salt
water
heat-proof cup
oven gloves
saucepan with lid
stove

Instructions:

- Pour approximately one cup of water into the saucepan. Mix in five tablespoons of salt, and place the lid on the saucepan.
- Bring to the boil and simmer.
- When you see water droplets forming on the saucepan lid, use oven gloves to lift off the lid and drain the water droplets from the lid into the cup. Replace lid and wait for more water droplets to form before repeating.

Safety Notes:
Take care with the boiling water and the hot stove.
Remember not to burn the bottom of the pot.
Get an adult to help if required.

How long did it take you to retrieve as much fresh water as possible from your cup of salty water? How much fresh water did you retrieve? As much as you started with?

How do environmental conditions affect what inhabits certain areas? (Thanks to Barinya Education barinya.com)

Instructions:

- Your creature can be any kind ... insect, bird, mammal, reptile, amphibian, etc.. Decide whether it will change as it develops (i.e. caterpillar into a butterfly, or tadpole into a frog). If it does change – then be sure to make a representation of it at each stage.
- Decide on the environment your creature lives in. Describe the environment – you could use words or draw your environment. Your environment can be one found on Earth or an imaginary one from somewhere else in the universe.
- Think about what kinds of traits a life form living in your chosen environment should have in order to have a good chance of survival. Some things to consider:
- What kind of survival / protection could it use? Camouflage, venom, claws, teeth, nocturnal, living mainly underground, very fast mover????
- What adaptations does it have to suit its environment? Fur or feathers for warmth, areas to give off heat in a hot climate, ability to use little water, ability to store water, only coming out at night to avoid heat of day, living mainly underground????
- What special traits might it need if it has any of these adaptations?
- What will it eat and how will it get water?
- What is there available in its environment to provide these? How do they obtain/find/hunt/eat/drink this?
- Do they any competition for food, water, habitat, and if so, how do they combat this?
- What does it use to attract a mate? Colouring, sounds, scents, fancy displays of activity, fighting off competition????
- What about babies? Live babies, eggs, pouch, nest, hollow trees, burrows, who cares for them, how long do the babies remain reliant on their parents????
- Where does it spend most of it's time? On the ground, in scrub, low bushes, trees, in water, underground, in the sky?
- Try drawing or creating your creature and it's environment.
- Decide a name for the species of your creature.
- Make a fact sheet on your creature, including its name, basic facts and its lifestyle.
- Share your creature with others from your Patrol or Unit. You might even be able to set up a zoo – with other Guides visiting to see these amazing creatures!

Earth Hour challenges

- What is the 'plastic bag levy'? Where and when will it be introduced, and how will this help the environment?
- Learn about energy efficiency labels – tell your Patrol about them at Guides.
- Calculate your carbon footprint using an online calculator.
- Cook a meal where everything is grown or manufactured in Australia.
- Work out how long you shower for and how much water you use. How can you save water while showering/washing?
- At home, what temperature is your heating / air conditioning set at? Is there an ideal temperature?
- Investigate the difference in energy usage boiling water in a saucepan with and without a lid – which boils first and which cools faster? Make tea in a variety of glasses e.g. ceramic, glass, tin, thermos. Which keeps the tea hottest for longest?

Remember some of these activities could be used towards a challenge in many of the badges in ***Look Wide***.

back to top

Ages 14-17

How to make recycled paper (thanks to The Gould League, www.gould.edu.au)

Equipment:
2 sheets of newspaper
large bowl
hot water
potato masher
shallow dish
piece of fly wire screen (15cm x 15cm) with a frame (you may need some adult assistance with this)
paper towel
extra newspaper
rolling pin
Piece of cardboard
towel
iron

Instructions:

- Shred the sheets of newspapers into small pieces. Place them into the large bowl and cover with hot water. (You may want adult help for this.) Let paper soak for three hours.
- Mash with the potato masher til it is mashed as finely as possible and stand overnight. This makes a paper slurry.
- The next day pour the slurry into the shallow dish.
- Dip the fly wire screen into the shallow dish, and slowly lift out some of the paper slurry. Allow the water to drain away.
- Place paper towel on top of the paper slurry in the screen, and gently tip the screen over.
- Lift the screen off gently and place another sheet of paper towel over it. Sandwich the paper towel and paper slurry between some folded newspapers.
- Roll the paper gently with the rolling pin to squeeze out any extra water.
- Transfer the paper onto the cardboard and leave overnight.
- Remove the cardboard, extra newspaper and paper towel carefully. Cover your recycled paper with a towel and flatten with a warm iron.

Safety Notes:
Take care with the hot water and the iron. Get an adult to help/supervise if required.

Code of Environmental Ethics
Instructions:

- Use the Guide Law to help you write a Code of Environmental Ethics for you to follow in your daily life. Consider what you feel is important: actions that you believe are beneficial compared to actions that you believe are harmful.
- Once you have decided what is important to you - format your Code in a way that will be meaningful to you: in a song, poem, painting, or whatever.
- Share your Code with your Unit. Compare your Code to those of others – are they similar or are there differences?

Earth Hour challenges

- Find out how to read your electricity meter. Read it at the start and end of a week to see how much electricity you use. Read the meter again after another week when you have tried to save electricity. How much did you save? Try turning appliances off while not in use. Unplug any appliances like mobile phone chargers, TVs, microwaves, MP3 players, which are not being used and are on standby. Keep the doors & windows closed when the heating or air conditioning is running. Find out which appliances make the biggest difference to energy consumption.
- Learn how to change a washer to prevent leaking taps wasting water.
- How is your family saving energy, can you think of other ways to save energy at home and at Guides? What devices exist that can help you save energy (hint – think wind up torches)?
- Compare the fuel economy of different family cars used within the Unit.
- Organise an inter-Patrol debate on whether one person can make a difference by taking part in Earth Hour, or another related topic.
- Design a form of transport for the future. Share your design with another Patrol.
- Try an alternative energy source for cooking (i.e. solar).

Remember some of these activities could be used towards a challenge in many of the badges in ***Look Wide or Look Wider Still***.

back to top

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