



TG

townswomen's guilds

All sorts of ways to start a TG group and get together with TG members



TG Guiding Principles

- TG is open to all women over the age of 16 regardless of their background or beliefs.
- We are not Party Political or affiliated to a particular religion or denomination. However, the meaning of small "p" political is to seek to influence for change and we can do that.
- The objects of TG as a movement include supporting women through: advancing education, and development of individual capabilities, competences and skills. Educating in citizenship and the promotion of civic responsibilities and volunteering. Providing facilities of recreation and other leisure time occupation including creative and performance arts and crafts.
We sum this up as making women's lives better.
- We may also fund raise for charitable causes that make women's lives better but that is decided by individual Guilds.
- We respect one another, and enjoy our differences and our similarities.
- We maintain confidences and support and encourage each other in good times and not so good times.

Above all we make friends and have fun doing all of the above.



Discover TG

TG (Townswomen's Guilds) is a woman* only membership organisation started in 1929 with direct links to the lively, determined women of the Suffragist movement, who wanted women to be able to vote and have the same rights and opportunities as men.

TG still has a voice on all matters that affect women's lives and offers women of all ages the chance to develop lasting friendships, experience new things, visit different places, take on incredible challenges and have fun.

TG members like to meet regularly and meetings can be as varied as they wish them to be.

For larger groups of women who want to meet in person on a regular basis, then starting a TG group, which we call a Guild, could be the answer. This will provide local women a great way to meet other women, make friends, give them the opportunity to make a difference to communities both locally and nationally, build their confidence to try new things and have fun.

A guild is an organisation of people who share interests and a common goal. Our common goal is to make women's lives better, whoever and wherever they are, and in doing so have fun and make friends.

**For our purposes, a woman is defined as someone who lives as a woman, is accepted in the local community as a woman and defines themselves as a woman. Our definition is not defined by a person's biology at birth.*

If you would like a more informal group we have TG Associate Groups or TAGs

This is the easiest group to set up, TAGs have the advantage of needing no paperwork, committees treasurers or meeting place costs .



Members who have paid their subscription directly to TG (who are known as Associate members) meet in a place such as a café, pub, member's home.

If they want to go on a visit, take part in an activity etc they either pay for themselves or one of the group volunteers to collect the money and make the payment. There are no hard and fast rules for running a TAG, as long as members stick to the basic principles of TG. (see page 2)

The members still have all the benefits of membership; magazines, insurance, support from TG Headquarters, access to information on the website, and opportunities to attend National events.

Associate members can come to all TIGs (see next Page) for no extra cost and visit Guilds, where they will be asked to pay a small visitor's charge.

Another way to get involved is with a TG Internet Group or TIG

These are groups of members who meet on-line through the members area of our secure website using their internet connection and a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop with a webcam.



TIGs provide the same friendship, support, encouragement, benefits and opportunities without members leaving their own homes. Again, there are no hard and fast rules for running a TIG, as long as members stick to the basic principles of TG. (see page 2). Challenges and ideas for TIG meetings can be found on the Members' Area of the website, where there is information about starting a TIG.

If you are interested in doing this, contact Sara (sara@the-tg.com) tel 07521502846, who can set one up for you. Associate members, members of TAG's and Guilds can come to TIG's for no extra charge.

How to start a Small Guild

You don't have to have business knowledge, management experiences or be a natural born leader, you just have to care and the rest will come naturally. We will be with you all the way providing relevant information, advising on possible meeting places and providing support to help you promote your Guild.

First Steps

Let us know you're interested in starting a new Guild by giving us a call on 0121 326 0400 and our friendly office staff will take your details and pass them to Sara, our recruitment officer, or contact her directly at sara@the-tg.com or 0121 326 1973

Sara and the rest of our staff will provide help and advice and may be able to attend your initial meeting.

We suggest before anything else that, if you are not a member already, you join TG by paying the annual subscription, known as the affiliation fee. This will make you an Associate member and you will not need to pay this again when your Guild starts, as long as it is in the same year. Associate membership will give you access to the Members' Area of the website and the resources which you can use for your new Guild.

Arranging your first meeting

- Find somewhere to hold your meeting This might be a local café, pub, meeting room in a library or supermarket community room, or local hall
- Approach friends and family members who might be interested. Don't be put off if they aren't interested at first
- Find other new members by promoting your Guild locally, using one of our template posters – which our office can help you with. Many supermarkets and newsagents have notice boards which are free to local community organisations
- Use social media - Facebook and Twitter can be a very useful way of inviting people to a first meeting

Your First Meeting

- For those who haven't heard of TG, explain what TG and a Guild are.
- Set out what you hope to do eg holding regular meetings, providing fun, friendship, opportunities, learning about new things and taking part in activities and challenges.
- Explain that the Guild collectively decides what it wants to do, within TG guidelines known as the constitution, which you will need to adopt. As a Guild starting, this will be the Small Guild Constitution which is on the website.
- Discuss what activities people would like to do and start a list of things to plan your programme. Make sure that everyone has the chance to contribute, some may need a little coaxing and may prefer to write it down rather than speak about it. You might like to consider possible speakers, craft or other workshops, outings and other "experiences" – one Guild went to a pole dancing session!
- When your Guild is small you don't need a committee but it is important to share responsibilities. Invite people to take on particular roles, for example Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, may be even a Social Media Officer. You will need two people to be listed as contacts at TGHQ and when you open a bank account you should have 3 possible signatories with any 2 to sign cheques together.
- Explain what it costs to become a member of your Guild. They will need to pay an annual subscription to become a member of TG nationally, which is known as the affiliation fee, plus their share of the annual running costs of your Guild (room hire, refreshments, activities etc.)
- Every Guild needs its own name - traditionally this is determined by the location and if there are other Guilds close by, includes when it meets for example Solihull Afternoon, or Cheltenham Charlton Kings Evening etc. However, this is up to you (please keep it in the boundaries of decency). Ask for some ideas and put them to the vote.
- Agree a time, date and location for your regular meetings and make sure everyone knows when the next meeting will be held.
- Get the contact details of attendees so you can contact them, an email address or phone number. Remember to keep these details private and not share them with third parties without permission.

After the first meeting

- Start a Guild Facebook page and add the planned activities. It is easiest for people searching for the Guild to use the title '(Your Guild's name) TG' eg 'Bestever TG'. We can supply some images and logos to get you started - Head office will be on hand if you need support with this. Social Media is a great way of communicating with people and raising awareness of things going on
- Set up a bank account - again we can advise on this
- Complete the new Guild registration form and send to TGHQ (they will provide a Guild Code and new member forms)
- Every Guild has a page on our national website – use this as an additional advertising source.
- We don't want anyone to be out of pocket opening a new Guild. If you are thinking of opening one, please contact TGHQ to talk about what type of setting up expenses we can support (such as publicity and the cost of the first meeting). When we have agreed what and how much these are, we will reimburse the cost up to the agreed sum, on production of relevant invoices and receipts and details of the bank account to which the payment should be made. Once your new Guild has registered its details with TGHQ along with six "new to TG" members and has opened a bank account, we will make a grant of £200, from national funds to the Guild bank account.
- **Remember...** Some people may be cautious about becoming a member straight away so don't over pressure anyone, they can come to two or three meetings as a visitor (do make a small charge). If you meet regularly and arrange interesting activities, membership will evolve.



If you have any queries, please contact TG on 0121 326 1973

Or contact Sara, our National Recruitment Officer
sara@the-tg.com or tel no 07521502846