

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 of the Board of Trustees



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### STAFF

WI House has had a change of focus 2023 and 2024. Whilst we continued to offer Speakers Showcases and delivered training to Treasurers, Presidents and Secretaries we considered different options about how the house is a place for members.

We have updated our IT, printing, utilities and more for cost effectiveness. We had a bump into the front wall and in the process found out the building was called 'Stanley House' as carved into the flagstone.

We have reinstated the gates as our neighbours at the nursery have reopened which improves safety at the House.

Our staff team has changed as we said goodbye to Anila Patel in Sept 2024 and until March 2025 we have 2 staff members to work across admin, finance and Federation Secretary roles and then plan to review.

7 Committee meetings still continue at WI House along with various events. and we have welcomed observers and co-opted new members to committees—please come along to see the work behind the scenes and you'd be very welcome!

## WI MEMBERS IN LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

There are 109 WIs in Leicestershire & Rutland and 3,300 members

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Chairman:** Glenice Wignall

**Vice Chairman:** Gail Wooliscroft, Susan Woollard

**Treasurer:** Mary Hobbs

**Elected Members:** Janet Kirk, Beverly Blackburn, Rita Caves, Rosemary Heyes, Sue Lobb,, Sue Kirk, Maxilyn Geary

**Co-opted Members:** Terri Eydman, Mandy Cutler

### COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

**Art & Crafts:** Eileen Williams/ Clare Farquhar

**Finance &**

**House Management:** Mary Hobbs

**Fund Raising:** Rita Caves

**Leisure Activities:** Maxilyn Geary/Sharon Stone

**Membership:** Janet Kirk/Mandy Cutler

**Public Affairs &**

**International:** Glenice Wignall

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is made up of eleven elected members who volunteer to give up their time to run the Federation for the Membership. They are responsible for the financial affairs of the Federation, the running of WI House and the staff, as well as overseeing all the committees and the events they put on for all the members.

The Annual Council Meeting at Leicester Grammar School was another amazing day with excellent speakers and displays. It was enjoyed by all who attended and was one of the standout events of this year.

The Board and Federation Secretary oversee the trip to the NFWI Annual Meeting that was in London Royal Albert Hall this year. It was an inspirational day.

The Board constantly review the events that are put on for the members to see if they are meeting the needs of the membership and we try to react to comments and suggestions to improve things. We have to be mindful of the Constitution and work within it. We are open to new ideas if you have any. We look forward to building on last year's successes.

## ART & CRAFTS

We have had a full year of

- Competitions at the ACM
- Dabble Days
- Whichcraft
- Stumpwork
- Prick and Stitch cards
- Lino cut workshop
- Crochet drop in
- Autumn Dabble day will go ahead

We had a Committee reshuffle and said a big thank you to Eileen Williams for being Chair and welcomed Clare Farquhar as our new chair along with some new members.

## FINANCE & HOUSE MANAGEMENT

The Committee has continued its work to maintain WI House and garden in good order.

House maintenance this year has included a full fire assessment which has meant improved safety.

Sales of Taylors Bulbs again went well and our thanks go to all who supported this Scheme. The new catalogue will be available on the website in the Spring and leaflets will be distributed at the ACM.

Support for the Monthly Draw has increased this year and now we have the NFWI Lottery which can raise a small income.

We have held three Speakers Showcase events this year, 1 in Scraftoft, 1 in Wing and 1 in Hinckley to reach more WIs. These were welcomed both by WI programme coordinators and prospective speakers. Lists of speakers are available in the Yearbook. We organised a successful holiday which was very much enjoyed by Members.

We thank you for your continued support of our committee and the Federation.

## FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

The events that Fund Raising has held during 2024 have been very successful. Our lunches continue to be well supported and by your comments much appreciated. Our Spring Lunch was in May when our guest speaker was Lesley Smith from Tutbury Castle portraying Katherine Swynford, mistress and wife of John of Gaunt, son of King Edward III. This proved an excellent event helped by a very popular speaker.

Our next lunch in October, the Autumn Lunch, was at one of our usual venues for these events, namely Devonshire Place in Leicester where we are very well served. This time our guest speaker was Graham Short, a Micro Artist. Graham explained that his work involved creating miniature paintings, engraving sculptures and other artworks that are extremely small. He took us back to his humble beginnings and his journey to television and news features. His presentation of his work was quite amazing and most entertaining.

In July we organised a Summer Afternoon Tea with strawberries and cakes. Our guest speaker was Mitchell Bridgewater who had been a contestant on The Great British Sewing Bee. He talked of his experiences before, during and after the Show. It was a packed hall and was greatly enjoyed by those attending.

We are now in the process of planning next year's events. We look forward to your continued support by attending these occasions.

## LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The Leisure Committee have worked hard this past year to bring you a variety of events along with our usual Darts & Skittles Tournaments.

We've enjoyed Treasure Hunts and Art Walks around the city of Leicester, even in the pouring rain, and a very enjoyable trip to the beautiful gardens of The White House in Ingarsby. Unfortunately, we had to cancel a few events due to bad weather or a lack of interest but we hope 2025 will be better.

We are always looking for new ideas and places to visit so if you have any suggestions please get in touch or better still come along to one of our meetings you're guaranteed to receive a warm welcome.



## MEMBERSHIP

The WI Advisers and support Advisers who make up the Membership Committee have been working hard visiting WIs as well as always being available to offer advice and encouragement on email or over the phone to any WIs or Members who contact us. We only have three Advisers currently and two helpers so are kept busy, but we do our utmost to deal with all enquiries. We run training sessions for officers and these are for new or long serving officers covering best practice and exchange ideas with others. We help pass on information and updates from NFWI and help WIs understand the working of these.

We run the Federation Quiz each year with help from willing WIs without whom it would not be possible to hold this successful event, so we thank you for your support. The Committee organise the link delegates for the National Annual Meeting and help brief the delegates attending on their role at the meeting. We also organise Groups and oversee the election of Group Secretaries and Treasurers.

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS & INTERNATIONAL

The Committee has maintained an active and interesting programme of events, furthering its role of keeping abreast of current issues in local and national life.

We were pleased to welcome a new charity of the year, Canine Partners, who were a speaker at our Annual Council Meeting. We arranged a visit to see Canine Partners and raised further funds for the charity.

We have had a great year of educational events for our Members. Any new committee members are always welcome, as are any ideas.

