

## Every Woman's Health Matters—new survey launched

### EVERY WOMAN'S HEALTH MATTERS

YOUR VOICE. YOUR HEALTH. YOUR SAY.

We want to hear from all women and girls across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland – from every community, culture and background.

Share your views to help improve women's health and care services in your community.

Take 10 minutes to complete our anonymous survey. Scan the QR code



[www.healthwatchll.com](http://www.healthwatchll.com)

healthwatch  
Leicester

healthwatch  
Leicestershire

TELL US  
WHAT  
MATTERS  
TO YOU.



We are happy to be supporting Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire, together with Healthwatch Rutland, they have launched a new survey to hear directly from women and girls across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) about their health and care experiences.

The “**Every Woman's Health Matters**” survey is part of a wider engagement programme to ensure women's voices are listened to and used to shape future health and care services locally.

We would be grateful if you wish to take part in the survey : [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WomansHealthMatters](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WomansHealthMatters), so that as many women and girls as possible can have their say.

There are also separate topic-based surveys for those who want to share more. The topics covered in the surveys include:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Menstrual health and gynaecological conditions
- Women's cancers
- Menopause
- Pregnancy loss and postnatal support
- Sexual health including contraception
- Termination of pregnancy
- Violence against women and girls
- Healthy ageing and long-term conditions

Complete a survey: [www.healthwatchll.com/WomansHealthMatters](http://www.healthwatchll.com/WomansHealthMatters)

They will also be running focus groups across LLR and would welcome invitations to attend local WI groups and communities. If you would like to host a session or need more information, please get in touch—they also have printed posters and other materials:

[outreach@healthwatchll.com](mailto:outreach@healthwatchll.com)

[info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk)

They are hoping to hear from as many women and girls as possible – including young women (14+), disabled women, carers, women from ethnic minority communities and those in rural or underserved areas.

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#### Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes

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[www.leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk](http://www.leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk) or scan QR code

Find us on Facebook: Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of WIs



## From the Board



This month we have been working hard behind the scenes getting everything sorted for our forthcoming **Annual Meeting**, which is being held on **Saturday 28th March 2026**, at Leicester Grammar School. If you have not done so already, please do make a note in your diaries, as we will be sending out information as to how you can obtain tickets for this annual event in the next County News.

Many thanks to those of you who completed our survey asking for your feedback and as a Board we will be looking at the results of these and implementing any improvements or suggestions from you. It takes a huge amount of planning to run an event such as this and it is a real pleasure on the day to see what a huge success our Annual Meetings are and that Members are all having a great time, listening to some wonderful speakers and socialising (and even doing a bit of retail therapy at the same time!). The lucky winner to get a free ticket for our Annual Meeting after completing this survey was Jan Ide, from Newbold Verdon WI. Well done Jan!

We also all met recently for a Future Planning Meeting, so that we can map out the forthcoming events in 2026 and to ensure that there is an even spread throughout the year of when these events take place, and again we have listened to our Members feedback and will be making some changes, but also at the same time keeping some firm favourites as you will see in the forthcoming months.

On the next two pages are details of our Denman Trust Grant application, which we are delighted to have been awarded. So much work has been done already and you can see the details over the page.

As always, we will do our absolute best to meet your needs, so do keep calling the office or feel free to speak to me directly with any ideas or concerns.

**Glenice Wignall**

## From the House



### Volunteers Needed:

Could you spare a couple of hours a week and have some experience of websites, formatting images or documents? If so would you like to volunteer to help with editing County News and keeping our website up-to-date?

Please get in contact with WI House to find out more. Thank you!



### Christmas is coming!

WI House will be closed over the Christmas and New Year period from Thursday 18th December 2025 and will re-open on Monday 5th January 2026.

## Finance & House Management Committee

Dear Treasurers,

We wish to inform you that Lloyds Bank has taken the decision to close their Treasurers' Accounts. As a result, charges will now apply to all account holders.

While the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) was able to subsidise these charges for a period of time, we regret to inform you that this arrangement has now come to an end. Going forward, all WIs with Lloyds accounts will be responsible for any applicable banking fees. Unfortunately, this is beyond our control and there is nothing further we can do to prevent these charges.

Please note that, as a Federation, we are **not permitted to advise individual WIs on which bank or financial institution to choose**. Each WI should therefore review its own circumstances and make a decision that best suits its needs.

We understand that this change may cause inconvenience, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation during this transition. Should you require clarification on the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact the Finance Office at WI House. Also a reminder that the Annual Reports will need to be submitted to WI House by **28th November** please.

Mary Hobbs—Federation Treasurer

## Denman Trust Grant Application

Dear Members

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am delighted to share details of our successful grant application, which has secured funding to offer **six sessions of Physical First Aid training** and **three sessions of Mental Health First Aid training** across Leicestershire and Rutland.

These sessions will be **free for WI members** who gain a place, with the federation also covering up to **£10 in travel expenses**.

The Denman Trust awards grants which will further its charitable purpose of **education to all WI members** and has a positive impact on the lives of members and communities.

All projects have one to three measurable objectives as part of the grant offer – and the federation must report on how these objectives are being met.

### Why First Aid Provision?

Well, at the time of our application for the grant, the resolution to be voted on at the National Annual Meeting was ‘Bystanders Can be Lifesavers’. As you know, this is now a campaign, and we felt a grant would enable LRFWI members to support this campaign.

One of the examples of projects that the Denman Trust stated it would look on favourably in applications was a Mental Health Programme.

These two strands offered, therefore, a balance of health education provision across the two counties.

Mandy Cutler.

How can I apply for a free place on one of the courses?

DATE	COURSE TYPE	VENUE	START DATE FOR COUNTY NEWS & in subsequent issues
<b>Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Mental Health First Aid Champion	Mary Forryan Centre, Hinckley.	<b>November</b>
<b>Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April</b>	(Physical) First Aid Course for Adults	Our Lady of Victories Catholic Church, Market Harborough.	<b>December/January</b>
<b>Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May</b>	(Physical) First Aid Course for Adults	St Peter and St Paul Church Hall, Uppingham.	<b>February</b>
<b>Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May</b>	(Physical) First Aid Course for Adults	Beedles Lake Golf Club East Goscote.	<b>February</b>
<b>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June</b>	(Physical) First Aid Course for Adults	Ashby Baptist Church.	<b>March</b>
<b>Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June</b>	Mental Health First Aid Champion	Methodist Church, Oakham.	<b>March</b>
<b>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September</b>	Mental Health First Aid Champion	Church Rooms, Quorn.	<b>June</b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September</b>	(Physical) First Aid Course for Adults	Mary Forryan Centre, Hinckley.	<b>June</b>
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October</b>	(Physical) First Aid Course for Adults	All Saints Church, Oakham.	<b>June</b>

## Denman Trust Grant Application (continued)

### Booking Fairness

All members receive the newsletter at the same time, so everyone has an **equal opportunity** to apply for these free courses. Places will be allocated on a **first-come, first-served basis**, and a **waiting list** will be maintained if a course is full.

If I get a free place on one of these courses, what do I have to do in return?

The Denman Trust has placed emphasis on the 'reach' of the grant awarded – the greater the impact of the educational provision the better.

So, if you do gain a place on a course, we ask that in return you do **either**

a write up about your experiences for your own WI newsletter and a neighbouring WI's newsletter.

Or you may get your write up circulated to WI members on email.

**or**

you can request that you talk briefly to WI members about your experiences at one of your home WI monthly meetings and at a meeting of a neighbouring WI.

In addition, we would encourage you to book a **free** Heartwize visit to your home WI. Heartwize focus on the problem of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest and teach basic resuscitation skills .

For the **Heartwize Resuscitation Training Programme:**

**Tel:** [01455 687993](tel:01455687993)

**Mob:** [07976 275038](tel:07976275038)

**E-Mail:** [heartwize@heartwize.org](mailto:heartwize@heartwize.org)

## Membership Committee

The LRFWI Membership Committee is responsible for assisting WIs with any help they require. I hope you find the following items useful. Mandy Cutler, Membership Committee Chair.

Thanks to WIs for participating in the constitution review process; this feedback helped to shape the final revised document. Also, thank you to all WI link delegates who attended the NFWI Companies Act Meeting on 4th June 2025, casting their votes [on the proposals](#).

The new version of our WI Constitution is likely to be with us for the next 8 to 10 years, so I have completed a summary of the changes that have been incorporated. The **full summary of 11 changes** that I have produced can be found on the LRFWI website under **Federation and WI Information, then Running a WI** ; just click on this link:

<https://leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk/federation-downloads>

	Explanation
<b>15 – 17 Membership of multiple Women’s Institutes</b>	<p>The term ‘dual members’ is no longer used as it does not reflect the fact that a woman can be a member of more than two Women’s Institutes. So, the new term is ‘<b>multi-member</b>’.</p> <p>A multi-member can sit on the committee of any/ all of her WIs and may hold any role on those committees. No need for a byelaw.</p> <p>A multi-member can vote on all matters within all her WIs including national matters such as Public Affairs resolutions.</p> <p>The only restriction for multi-members is that they can only be appointed as a WI link delegate for their primary WI, i.e. they cannot represent their additional WIs.</p>
<b>18 – 20 Subscriptions</b>	<p>WIs can set the WI portion of the subscription up to the upper limit set by NFWI.</p> <p>Members of multiple WIs pay:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The WI portion of the subscription for <u>each</u> WI that they are a member of.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Federation and National Federation portion of the subscription for her Primary WI only.</p>
<b>21 - 24 Role and number of Committee Members</b>	<p>The minimum number of committee members remains at 3, with no upper limit.</p> <p>The total number of co-opted committee members must form less than 1/3 of the number of elected committee members.</p>

What I have included here is **a selection of these changes**, as follows:

In addition, there is an item in the September 2025 issue of WI Life (page 37) about the **Update on the WI’s Constitution** written by Kerri McGarvie, NFWI Legal and Governance Manager.

The LRFWI Membership Committee will be offering training for officers at WI House in spring 2026 for WI Officers new to the role, or those who want a refresher, free online training is available on the **WI Learning Hub**.

Just click on the following link which will take you to the WI Committee Roles Area:

<https://learninghub.thewi.org.uk/wi-committee-role-area/>



Here you will see **WI Officer Induction** and once you have clicked into this you can book the relevant **30 minute module**. There are **separate modules for Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers**.

Each module provides all the essential information needed to confidently take on the selected role.

Thank you for stepping into this leadership role within your WI.



## Leisure Committee

### Victorious Ashby Spa edge Darts Final over Mountsorrel

The final of this year's Darts Competition took place on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 at The Bottom Railway in Shepshed between Ashby Spa and Mountsorrel. Ashby Spa took an early 1-0 lead before the scores were levelled when Mountsorrel won the second leg. A tight third leg went to Ashby Spa and was decided on double 1. Spa then took a 3-1 lead before Mountsorrel won the next two legs to level the scores at 3 legs all. The deciding leg was once again a battle on the doubles with Ashby Spa winning on double 11 to take the scoreline to 4-3. The trophies were then presented by Janet Harrison from the Leisure Committee. It was a wonderful night – we're all very much looking forward to next year's competition.



Ashby Spa – l-r: Val Moreland, Alice Gibbons, Val Clavijo, Jean Preece, captain Amy Shepherd, Joy Clark, Sue Rath, Sue Bloor, Sue Tyson, Alison Barlow

Ashby Spa – l-r: Sue Bloor, Val Moreland, Alice Gibbons, Val Clavijo, Jean Preece, captain Amy Shepherd, Joy Clark, Sue Rath, Sue Tyson, Alison Barlow.



Ashby Spa players – l-r: captain Amy Shepherd, Sue Tyson, Joy Clark, Alison Barlow

Ashby Spa captain Amy Shepherd with Janet Harrison from the Leisure Committee



Mountsorrel players – captain Trudi Porter (second from right) with Sue Lewin, Annie Ward and Kathryn Whittle

Janet Harrison of the Leisure Committee with captain Trudi Porter



### Petanque

Members from Countesthorpe, Cossington and Nailstone enjoyed friendly Petanque matches against each other, organised by the Leisure Committee. After some basic tuition from the Leicester Petanque Club in the lovely Western Park (and forecast rain did not materialise!), they all enjoyed a jacket potato supper.



## Leisure Committee—who are we?

**Chair** - Sharon Stone - Newbold Verdon—[sharonstone@lrfwi.org](mailto:sharonstone@lrfwi.org)

**Vice Chair** - Janet Harrison - Springbrook and Scraftoft

**Secretary** - Penny Weston - Webb - Cossington

Margaret Osborne—(Skittle and Darts Co - Ordinator) - Hinckley Hollycroft

Alma Wright – New Barkby

Susan Woollard – Great Bowden –[susanwoollard@lrfwi.org](mailto:susanwoollard@lrfwi.org)

### What we do?

We meet once a month at W.I House to plan outings, competitions and events for W.I members to enjoy. We are a small committee and we're keen to work with you to plan the types of activities that you would like to do. We don't want to be serving up the same old thing time and again to hear members saying "*been there, done that*".

We need you to help us innovate and initiate activities that will provide more fun and enjoyment in our lives.

That said there are some firm favourites that we will keep on doing, including tea and cakes whenever, wherever.

We know that you're a competitive lot as the Darts and Skittles matches prove. This year I had the pleasure of attending the darts final between Ashby Spa and Mountsorrel. Ladies, let me tell you it was thrilling, I was on the edge of my seat during the final leg! It was W. I at it's best, with friendship and of course lots of laughs abounding.

Amongst events that have been popular and successful this year have been the visits to gardens in Cossington and the Botanical at the University of Leicester. The Treasure Hunt in Market Harborough was also a great hit. Margaret Osborne organised this and there will be another one next year in a different town. Book early to avoid disappointment! Also, the Thomas Cook walks around Leicester were well supported.

We are mindful that we often ask you to book and pay months in advance for events. The major reason for this is to assess if the event can go ahead and meet costs, without incurring financial penalties.

We are also aware that some W.Iers work Monday - Friday and would appreciate events in the evenings and at the weekends.

Remember it is YOUR W.I. if you have something/somewhere you'd like to do, try or go to, please let us know.

**Janet Harrison. Vice Chair Leisure Committee.**

## Event bookings

**Secretaries/Treasurers—Don't leave your booking until the closing date. You can add to the booking by phone at a later date if further members want to attend.**

If you want to book as an individual, use the booking form on our website under:

Federation Downloads

—email the form to [wihouse@lrfwi.org](mailto:wihouse@lrfwi.org) or call 0116 2661342

If you want to book with your WI, contact your Secretary or Treasurer

### November 2025

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3	4 <i>PAT Testing</i>	5 <i>PAT Testing</i>	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

### December 2025

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	2	3 <i>Christmas Celebrations</i>	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

## The Baldwin Trust visit

LRFWI had a special invitation to visit the Baldwin Trust at Leicester Marina Thurmaston, and I was delighted to be able to attend on our behalf. I arrived at 2.45pm as instructed and boarded the narrow boat which was very impressive. There were several Councillors there, Fiona from the Syston News and the Mayor of Charnwood, David Northgate. We were given a talk on the Baldwin Trust. They operate a private crewed narrowboat cruise, on the Leicestershire waterways, and take up to 12 passengers for a 4-7 hour cruise for about £168 for 4 hours. The narrowboat has large windows on each side so you can see the scenery. They deal a lot with disabled children and adults, they have ramps to get wheelchairs on board. We had a short cruise through one set of locks with guests opening the locks, on the return journey we had tea and cakes, returning to the marina at 5pm. It was a wonderful afternoon and I learnt a lot. If anyone is interested they do cruises for the WI as well. It's a pity I don't live nearer.

**Susan Woollard—Vice Chair, Board of Trustees**



## Mary Berry's White Chocolate and Ginger Cheesecake

### Ingredients

#### **For the base**

50g / 1½ oz **butter**, plus extra for greasing

25g / 1oz **plain chocolate**

150g / 5½ oz **digestive biscuits**, crushed

#### **For the filling**

300g / 10½ oz **white chocolate** buttons, or a bar chopped to pieces

400g / 14 oz full-fat **cream cheese**

150ml / 5fl oz **soured cream**

2 free range **eggs**

1 tsp **vanilla extract**

4 pieces of **stem ginger** (from a jar), finely chopped

#### **For the decoration**

150g / 5½ oz **plain chocolate**, grated or made into curls

### **Method**

1. Preheat the oven to 170C/150C Fan/Gas 3. Grease the base of a 20cm/8in spring-form cake tin with butter, then line a circle of baking parchment.

2. For the base, melt the butter and chocolate in a small saucepan over a low heat. Stir in the crushed biscuits.

3. Transfer the base mixture to the cake tin, and press down until there is an even layer. Chill in the fridge until needed.

4. For the filling, suspend a heatproof bowl over a pan of gently simmering water. Add the white chocolate to the bowl and melt until runny and smooth, stirring occasionally.

5. In a large bowl, whisk the cream cheese and soured cream. Whisk in the eggs and vanilla extract, then stir in the melted white chocolate. Fold in the chopped ginger.

6. Pour the mixture on top of the chilled base. Bake for 45-50 mins, or until firm and just set.

7. Remove from the oven and rest for 10 minutes. Run a blunt knife around the edges and allows to cool completely.

8. Remove the cake-tin ring and place the cheesecake, still on its base onto a serving plate. Top with the chocolate curls.

***This wintry ginger and chocolate cheesecake is perfect for jazzing up the dessert selection at Christmas.***

**Prep time**—Less than 30 mins

**Cook**—30 mins to 1 hour

**Serves**—8

**Dietary**—Vegetarian

This can be made three days ahead and kept in the fridge.

## Monthly Draw

**Our monthly draw winners will be informed by letter and announced on our Facebook page:**

**1st Prize £25—Ann Neale, Nailstone WI**

**2nd Prize £15—Winfred Bradbury, Sapcote WI**

**3rd Prize £10—Stella Elliott, Shearsby & Arnesby WI**

**Thank you to all of the members who have supported the Federation by buying a Monthly Draw ticket!**





## Around the Counties

### Waltham on the Wolds

Waltham on the Wolds WI Celebrates 100 Years of Friendship, Learning, and Community



Founded in 1925, Waltham on the Wolds Women's Institute has stood the test of time, contributing significantly during the war years and evolving through the decades. While much has changed, the core ethos-education, fun, and friendship-remains as strong as ever.

To mark this remarkable milestone, members gathered in July for a celebratory afternoon tea at The George in Stamford. In August, the County Chairman, Glenice Wignall, joined members and guests from neighbouring WIs-Wymondham and Scaford-for an open evening filled with camaraderie. The event featured a fascinating talk on tea, vibrant networking, light refreshments, and a beautiful celebration cake made by Sue Rayers, ceremoniously cut by our 100th President, Louise Castle.

As we look ahead, 2025 is not just a year of reflection but a call to action. Today's members are committed to ensuring that Waltham WI continues to thrive and remain relevant for women across Waltham and the surrounding areas-honouring the past while embracing the future.



### Witherley

Over the last few months members have been out and about enjoying various events including an excellent open air performance of the musical Grease at Kilworth House and a delicious Afternoon Tea at Purley Chase.

We have once again been invited to visit Hotters in Mancetter, following a very successful visit there last Summer when we were able to buy reduced price shoes and enjoy excellent refreshments.

The guest speaker for July was David Price who gave a presentation on Great Women Artists. David pointed out that most artists are men and often become famous after their death. Art Histories rely on past Art Histories and therefore are mostly about men. Despite the lack of publicity, there have been many great women artists, including portrait artist Sofonisba Anguissola, who in the 16th century became the first woman to achieve international fame. Bernie W thanked David for his fascinating talk.

The guest speaker for August was Michael Peachey who talked about Fun with Oil Painting. Michael gave a humorous talk on life as an artist and showed samples of his paintings. He, also, gave an oil painting demonstration, including audience participation, which was very amusing and light hearted. Michael certainly did have fun with oil painting, as we did.



### Broughton Astley

Our September guest speaker was Angelo Errico from Co-Op Financial Services, who gave information on navigating the intricacies of *"Tax and Care"*. He recommended that we all seek personal advice from professional financial advice companies to make the best arrangements for our beneficiaries regarding inheritance tax, be aware of the laws around funding care in later life, should this be needed. He also advised the importance of reviewing wills regularly to reflect any changes that might have occurred since its previous drafting and how re-marriage can affect your beneficiaries., and urged everyone to make lasting powers of Attorney.



Our "Poppy Group" has been busy completing more nets of knitted poppies that will be used in our extended Remembrance display this year.

### Newbold Verdon

September was notable not only for our meeting, but also for the village Scouts Gala. We paraded our banner and had a stall. A very good event with several enquiries about WI.

We had the Workhouse Storytellers at the meeting. Three "paupers" came and told us some sad and some adventurous stories of life in the workhouse. We were told that they were all true events, taken from the archives of the original workhouse in Southall, Notts.



### Glenfield Park

Suzi Felstead came to talk about her Life as a Magistrate. We were concerned that this might be a series of facts and figures but we needn't have worried. Suzi's talk was absolutely fascinating. She explained that she became a magistrate because she felt that the bench should comprise of ordinary people who had experience of normal life. It is not a vocation to be taken lightly as you can be on duty for 6 days and sometimes 24 hours, as sometimes the police might need a warrant in the middle of the night. A magistrate has 5 days training and a mentor for a year. We were surprised to learn that 97% of cases go before a magistrate's court but they cannot deal with cases involving finance and if they commit a traffic offence they have to stand down.

Suzi explained that you have to remain detached. You can't alter the past but can hope that you can make lives better from then on. After several years on the bench she was transferred to the family court which was challenging and sometimes awful. However on the plus side it can be very rewarding with one of the best cases being the ceremony to celebrate the final sign off of an adoption. Tears all round and a teddy for the child. This was an excellent evening and Suzi has such a warm personality that we really enjoyed listening to her.



## Around the Counties

### Oakham

Oakham WI benefitted from a lovely summer day for their annual petanque match. Twenty two members met for lunch at the Wheatsheaf in Oakham and then enjoyed playing petanque in their beautiful garden. There were 8 teams playing, with some being more proficient than others.

Members also enjoyed a walk along the Oakham Canal, which, through the hard work of local volunteers from the Oakham Canal Green Corridor Project has been restored into a lovely peaceful circular walk.



### Kirby Muxloe



Kirby Muxloe WI has recently taken part in the Village Scarecrow Festival and Family Fun Day. Fifty scarecrows were displayed around the Village. The theme was Horrible (and Happy) Histories. A team of WI members (with family

helpers) chose Alice Hawkins, Leicester Suffragette. She had been imprisoned five times for taking direct action and was an inspirational woman. We were delighted when our Scarecrow won! At the Family Fun Day, teams of WI members sold tea and homemade cakes in the Village Hall, raising over £400 for charity. Our Craft Group also had a stall at the Makers Market.



### Clarendon Park

September was blessed with warm sunshine for our annual trip which this year was to Stratford. Twenty five of us arrived and all went their separate ways to explore Stratford as suited. Several active members walked along the river or explored the town and places of interest connected with Shakespeare, including the Black Swan (Mucky Duck) as featured in Shakespeare and Hathaway. The shoppers had plenty of scope and a group of us had a guided tour of the Royal Shakespeare Company, a real treat including trying some costumes. The river looked lovely with the customary boats and swans. Sitting in the park being serenaded by a guitar and drinking coffee was a very welcome interlude. Everyone went home tired but happy after adventures and some with bulging shopping bags.



### Cossington



Some of our members enjoyed a lovely afternoon visiting a local aviary and chatting. They then finished the afternoon enjoying a fish and chips meal.

It was a very hot evening in August for our Members meeting and we soon realised that we couldn't hold the meeting in the Village Hall it was so hot. We were lucky enough to move outside to the garden of our member Margaret who opened her garden for us. We had a committee member posted at the Hall to redirect members so nobody missed the meeting. Our evening meeting was *"Have I got news for you"*. What an interesting and fun meeting it was.

### Barrow on Soar

The Jerusalem Jammers, a Garland Morris dancing team, performed for us, along with their musicians, Peter and Clem, his wife.

Formed in 1982 with the help of the Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes, they wear striking outfits in red, green & white, the original colours of the WI. Peter explained several different types of Morris Dancing, distinguished by different regions. Border Morris is from the Welsh/English border; a vigorous dance, with sticks and hankies, often having colour on their faces. Cotswold Morris, originally danced by men, often dressed in white breeches with bells below the knees and waistcoats with ribbons and rosettes attached. North West Morris often performed by women around the mills in the Cheshire/ Manchester area. It was performed in village and street processions with dancers wearing clogs with bells on. Short sticks, garlands and slings are used.

The Jammers performed dances, including Grenoside with Garlands, Pixie (mimicking train actions) with hankies, and a dance from Gisburn in the north west. This dance was performed by men but as so many men were killed in the Great War, ladies became involved.

Our members joined in the dancing twice. The first included heavy sticks bashed together with your partner (lucky no accidents)! The second, was the formation of a large circle with alternate numbers going into the middle of the circle and out again. The benefits of Morris dancing are: it keeps you fit, good for your brain, remembering steps, it's very sociable, and visit lots of pubs!

### Ratby

We opened the doors to our meeting for visitors this month and welcomed our speaker for the evening Mr Richard Warren. Our talk for this open evening was Street names of Leicester. The evening was a fascinating history taking us from the Middle Ages right to how Leicester city is placed on the map now. Who knew that the small alley in Leicester cutting through to the market still has the place name Angel Gate because there was a pub of the same name there years ago and a well used to be on the site just outside of St Martins square near the sweet shop.



## Around the Counties

### Illston on the Hill

Illston-on-the-Hill WI had that excited *'Back to school'* feeling at their September meeting, when almost all members were able to be present. We were entertained by our speaker for the evening, Chris Knight. His presentation was titled *'Auntie, the war is over'*.

He was clearly a dutiful and kind nephew, as he and his wife helped the Auntie in question move from the cottage that had been her home for over 30 years, from the 1950s onwards. The time had come, she decided, to move somewhere with radiators rather than having to light a fire in the mornings! The challenge was that Auntie never threw anything away, being of the *'make do and mend'* generation. Everything was carefully stored away, and Chris illustrated his presentation with just a few of the items he retained. Auntie had kept paper bags from decades ago, ironing and folding them for storage – and she had thousands! So many of the items reminded our members of times gone by, such as the Be-Ro cookery books, vintage plastic rain hoods, aprons (separate ones for everyday and when the Vicar was expected!), and tins and implements no longer used today. Only one person was able to identify correctly a pipe stand, but most of us remembered the ashtrays that had a plunger in the middle to whisk away the debris.

All-in-all it was a fascinating evening as the members reminisced about long-forgotten household items.

### Coleorton

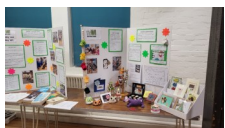
At our September meeting our speaker was Paul Tabener, a retired head police forensic scientist who gave us a very interesting talk on CSI crime scenes. It appears that many of the members of Coleorton WI are armchair detectives and fans of murder mysteries and crimes!

So the first thing he assured us was that the reality of the job bears no resemblance to TV crime and dramas! He described the methodical nature of the role and said it involved lots of logging of evidence and lots of paperwork.

He gave us many anecdotes about his cases and some were amusing in spite of the subject matter.



### Thurnby & Bushby



Our September meeting was an open meeting. We invited members to bring along a guest and advertised the meeting on local noticeboards. We had a series of display boards about both the WI in general and our specific group. There were photos of meetings and outings and a selection of craft items made by our members at Dabble Days and group meetings.

Gareth Howell gave us a very entertaining, if at times gruesome, talk about Medieval Medicine. This was followed by refreshments and a chance to look at the displays and chat.

### Glenfield

This month we welcomed Carolyn Boulter to our meeting. Carolyn is a very talented needle woman, and she brought many examples of her work to show us. She then guided us through the making of owl paper weights using fabric pieces and small bags of rice. Everybody became engrossed in their endeavour to complete the task successfully and there was much laughter and chatting to be heard. By the end of the afternoon, we all had little owl paper weights to take home.



### New Barkby

New Barkby members + two helpful husbands turned out early to set up a stall and gazebo for Syston's Annual Summer Fayre in August. We had jigsaws and hand knitted garments to attract attention from the public, who were then treated to all that's on offer from the WI, with our display of past event flyers and took away free WI Life magazines (and of course our meeting details).

Women from other areas of Leicestershire were given the contact details of their nearest WI branch and, to date, we have one new member. Thanks to the Federation for the grant that bought our pitch and paid for printing and thanks to our rota of members that helped "man" the stall until late afternoon when the inevitable British rain suddenly stopped play!



### Ullesthorpe



At our meeting in August, we met Bob Neill and his partner Del. They came with several boxes labelled *"bits and bobs"*. We were intrigued. These were filled with various objects of great use in the past – but what for?

Bob placed them on our tables and each group was asked to find out what they were and try to figure out their purpose. It was fascinating, some looked like objects of torture, others we remembered from our grandparents' homes. It provoked a lot of discussion. The objects were from his grandfather's shop and his grandmother's house.

September was a more serious meeting with a talk from Martin Grant from Remap. This is a charity that provides aids and equipment for people with disabilities where there is nothing readily available. The service is free, and work done by volunteers. Each piece is tailor made to suit the need of the person.

Martin showed slides and a video of the people, young and old who had benefited from the devices, and we saw how their lives had changed. Remap, which started in Leicestershire and Rutland but is now country wide, relies on donations and sponsorship from organisations.



## Around the Counties

### Glooston



In September we held an Open Meeting. (Many thanks to LRFWI for the £50 grant).

18 visitors joined us to hear Joanna Richart's talk called "*Forage for Colours*". This vibrant and inspiring talk was packed with information about edible wild plants. Jo used a colourful theme to illustrate the plants and fungi to be found in "Nature's Larder". The talk mainly focused on foraging for food: how to safely identify, prepare and cook the plants.

Stories about the traditions and folklore associated with the plants added interest, and some medicinal properties were also featured (notably the remarkable Birch polypore).

Jo was a very entertaining speaker: enthusiastic, witty and keen to share her wide knowledge.

We enjoyed some tasty samples of food and drink which Jo had made using foraged plants, and she shared the recipes. We learnt a lot and it was good fun!

<https://charnwoodforaging.co.uk/talks/>



### Bitteswell

Bitteswell WI celebrated the 110<sup>th</sup> birthday with an informative talk by Ian Pettit showing a variety of beautiful photographs of local landmarks and buildings around the county. He also gave tips on how to improve taking our own photographs.

This was followed by a look back at the WI resolutions since 1915 and a discussion as to whether they had been successful or needed more work. Keep Britain Tidy 1954 is still current along with the need to reduce plastic pollution which started in 1971 and is currently supported by the Microplastics, End Plastic Soup resolution 2017.

Progress has been made on some health-related resolutions, i.e. Cervical screening, Breast screening, recruit More Midwives to name a few.



### Melton Mowbray



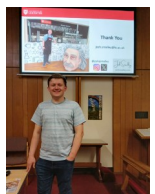
Melton Mowbray Afternoon WI recently celebrated their 25th birthday.

We had a very interesting talk by the authoress Margaret Dickinson who spoke about the amazing amount of research that goes into writing her books and she kindly donated two books as raffle prizes.

We were then treated to delicious cake made by one of our members.

A very special afternoon to celebrate a very special birthday.

### Markfield



Markfield WI had an interesting couple of months. In August Amanda Phelps talked to us about her charity Horse Savvy assisted by her son Jacob in charge of the slide presentation. Starting with one horse Amanda offers adults with



learning difficulties a chance to try riding and horse husbandry, understanding from her own experience how few opportunities there are. From those humble beginnings the charity has now become Forever Savvy offering support and vocational training in many areas giving people a chance to learn new life and work skills while offering them all the support they need to succeed. Amanda was a very inspirational speaker and we enjoyed learning more about this local charity and she should be rightly proud of all that has been achieved. The Charity's work includes a cafe at Bagworth Community Centre which opens Monday to Friday from 10am to 5pm and is well worth a visit.

In September, with the financial assistance available from the WI, we held an Open Meeting when our speaker was Josh Smalley, a finalist in the Great British Bake Off in 2023. Josh describes himself as a Baker, Chemist and Gardener and his talk showcased how he combines these three things. He spoke about his time in the Bake Off tent, including the Hollywood handshake. His slide presentation took us through each weekly challenge and if his showstoppers looked amazing on TV they looked even more amazing in detail. Josh is a chemist by profession with a doctorate in chemical biology which he says gives him an understanding of how ingredients react and in collaboration with Leicester University he leads the Science Kitchen project helping to educate and inspire the younger generation.

Josh's other passion is gardening and he was keen to use his home grown produce on Bake Off. His passion was obvious as he proudly showed pictures of his immaculate garden and the wonderful produce he grows. As well as tending the garden he also worked full time during his time on Bake Off practising his bakes at the weekend and indeed he admitted his FAQs are '*Do you sleep?*' and '*Who eats all the cake?*' (it transpires there are plenty of crew on hand to help). We loved having an evening with Josh and we hope our visitors did too.

## Around the Counties

### Swannington

At October's meeting we were lucky enough to be joined by Iain Hunt, who in tune with the WI Resolution Bystanders can be Lifesavers, gave us a very informative talk on CPR and how, in an emergency situation, to use the type of defibrillator available in many public places.

Iain had previously worked for ten years for the Ambulance Service, before moving into first aid training and he managed, despite the importance of the subject to keep it reasonably light and he certainly held our attention.

Iain stressed that whilst the first thing to do was always phone 999, the time between the call and the arrival of paramedics was vital and bystanders can certainly be lifesavers. He demonstrated on a Resusci Annie the correct way to carry out CPR, the right order in which to approach it and the different techniques to be used for babies, children and adults.

Iain then moved onto how to use a defibrillator, should one be available nearby for use. He explained how to access the defibrillator, then using an example one he had brought with him, showed us how to place the pads correctly and the procedure to follow, reassuring us that full instructions would always be available, as would verbal help from 999. Whilst we all hoped the need would not arise, members went home with valuable information on how to help should it do so.



### Ketton

In October, over 60 residents of Ketton joined the Ketton WI ladies at the village's Sports and Community Centre to learn CPR and the vital steps to take if someone collapses. Three trainers, led by Ketton WI's own former first responder, took residents through the steps to take to get emergency help and undertake CPR until professional medical help arrives. The training also included the use of defibrillators, and female-specific information. Residents were urged to practice the skill on one of the 'Annies' - the dummies used in training.

In the run-up to the event, every household in Ketton received a leaflet detailing what to do in the event of an emergency, for residents to keep handy in the home, and it included a checklist of things everyone can do to prepare for that moment, so even those who didn't attend would hopefully be better placed to help.



### Peatling Magna WI is 80!



On Sunday 27th July we held a garden party and afternoon tea event to celebrate our 80th birthday and to raise funds for our institute. We had a prebooking system for our afternoon teas and sold 56 in total. There was also the option to buy a jam and cream scone on the day. The event was held in the beautiful gardens of White House Farm, where the family of one of the founding members of the institute still live and are still involved in Peatling Magna WI. We had a display of vintage tractors and jeeps. Our president, Ann Duffin and her family very kindly brought along their steam engine and visitors were able to take part in some steering games! We had a brilliant day celebrating Peatling Magna WI.



### Groby



Our speaker for September was Nick Sydenham from Canine Partners which is an amazing national charity that trains assistance dogs for people with disabilities, examples of which are multiple sclerosis and spinal injuries and anything that limits mobility. The charity has been going for 35 years and has trained over 1000 dogs in that time. Currently there are 300 client/dog partnerships in the UK. The main breeds used are labradors, retrievers and labradoodles (used mainly because they tend not to moult). For every partnership it costs £50,000 from puppy selection to dog retirement and no government money is paid to the charity so they rely totally on donations.

The puppies stay with their mum for 8 weeks and then go to 'puppy parents' until they are 14 months old. Here they will be taught basic commands such as touch, tug and retrieve. From there they go to the charity's base at Osgathorpe for 2 years of advanced training but stay with foster carers overnight. Half way through their training the dog will be matched with a person for 1 day to see if the dog would meet the specific needs of that person. At the end of the training period the person will stay in accommodation at Osgathorpe for two weeks with the dog to ensure that the match is perfect, if it is they will stay together until the dog retires from official duties, usually around 12 years of age. Nick said that a partner will have another working dog but often continue to keep the original dog after retirement as a pet! The working dogs wear a purple coat and they know that as soon as the coat is put on their training comes in to play.

Nick showed us some videos of the amazing things that the dogs are able to do, some of which you can see in the photos - the list is endless! The dog also has to be allowed to be a companion to their partner and when the purple jacket is off, can have a cuddle!

It was an inspiring talk and these dogs improve the quality of their partners' lives immensely. The charity is always short of volunteers so would be grateful for any help.



## Around the Counties

### Anstey

Anstey WI ran a very successful stall at the British Legions VJ day celebrations at the Hare and Hounds. As well as our own contributions we received an outside donation of a beautiful white chocolate decorated cake, which we raffled, raising a considerable sum.

At our September meeting had a wonderful flower arranging demonstration from Kerry Evans, a trained florist. She explained every step of the process. She arrived with foliage from her garden, and bunches of supermarket flowers, and apparently improvised her designs as she went along, most impressively. Her delivery was light hearted and friendly. Those members who won the arrangements in the raffle were much envied by the rest of us.

The WI also ran a successful stall at the Anstey Gala.

In October member Sheryl Bramley demonstrated cake decorating for Christmas, covering a cake with fondant icing and moulding some decorations. The cake was then served with the refreshments. This was another free taster meeting, attracting two new ladies, and we were delighted that last month's visitors returned.



### Little Bowden

Our open event at our September meeting attracted 17 visitors, there was a lovely display and presentation of LBWI. Our guest Speaker Admiral Sir James Perowne, who following his Naval career was the Governor of Windsor Castle for 8 years, including the COVID years so he was very interesting.



### Thorpe Acre

Sue Wainwright stepped in as speaker to talk about her trip to Japan. Ending with her visit to Hiroshima, she showed examples of paper cranes - the Japanese symbol of Peace.

Several members were keen to have a go at making these and two craft sessions produced some very good ones. These will be added to the W.I. tree at the Loughborough Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival.



### Whissendine

September's speaker was Carol, who came to talk to us about her life as a taxidermist, she was the funniest speaker we've ever had, she was also a really lovely, compassionate lady. All her animals and birds were from road accidents or natural causes and they are not stuffed but mounted. Several times she has been given animals that were thought to be dead, only to have them come back to life, whereupon she cared for them and raised them before returning them to the wild.

Next year is our centenary year and we are planning lots of different things for each month.



### Countesthorpe

Countesthorpe hosted the Cromwell group Autumn Gathering. Well over 60 people attended that evening and many thanks to Tricia Dean for getting us off to a good start and to Barbara Talbot who created fourteen beautiful flower arrangements one for each table.

Ladies from Countesthorpe WI made all the food and helped serve all our guests with amazing food and delicious desserts (non fattening of course).



### New Barkby

Our September speaker was Suzie Lickman, "How to enjoy your house plants". There was plenty of advice and tips about plant care, including not over-watering, or placing them in a space that can become overwhelming, just for the sake of filling the area.

There was an opportunity to look at the range of plants Suzie had brought with her, or to purchase any, afterwards.



# Around the Counties

## Botcheston



Our August meeting was held on a Canal Boat – Georgies Canal Cruises in Penkridge, Staffs. The weather was kind to us, after some inclement weather just before, we had a lovely afternoon in the sunshine. A 2 hour cruise with afternoon tea (and Prosecco!), being navigated through locks was a lovely way to spend a late summer afternoon.

The baking skills of our members was called upon again to provide tea, coffee, cakes and sandwiches for one day of Desford Scarecrow Festival. A busy day in St Martins Church Rooms – thanks to all members who baked and/or served on the day.

AGM OF THE FOREST GROUP OF WIs: The day the music hall came to Botcheston! After the business part of the meeting we were entertained by Dave Moylan – Dave had us all laughing and smiling from beginning to end with jokes, anecdotes, songs and magic from the days of the music hall. A buffet was a lovely end to the evening.

Our September meetings over the past couple of years have become open meetings with friends, family and neighbours all welcome. The evening was opened with a rendition of Jerusalem – always sounding lovely with the deep voices of our male friends in the audience.

This year we welcomed Kate Twitchin to Botcheston. Many of you will know Kate – most recently she was the driving force behind the recent Desford 40s Festival. The title of her talk was '*The Other Rippin Girl*' – daughter of a Quaker family who lived in Desford at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. A trailblazer for women of her time (and even today) – Muriel excelled in the sciences at school and went on to study medicine at University.

If you get a chance to attend any of Kates talks /guided walks then do – if everyone had a history teacher like Kate, then we would all be historians, she is engaging, inspiring and brings history to life.



## Woodhouse Eaves

Our September meeting was a lively one, with so many members attending that extra chairs had to be set up! After the usual business, we welcomed Kerry Evans, who shared her love of flower arranging and many practical tips. With enthusiasm and flair, she created three striking arrangements while encouraging us all to have a go ourselves. The evening ended with the raffle, and three delighted winners took home Kerry's beautiful creations.



## Wigston Magna

We've enjoyed a few outings and events over the last few weeks including coffee and cake, and a lovely evening meal at our local Italian restaurant. Leicester Ladies WI held a line dancing event which several of our members attended and had lots of fun. A supper of hot dogs and dessert was enjoyed too.



News to **WI House** by email: [fedsec@lrfwi.org](mailto:fedsec@lrfwi.org) or post to arrive by the **FIRST** of the **preceding month**

Make sure to include the name of your WI with your article

Please try to keep Around the Counties articles to **120 words and 2 photos** so we can include as many as possible and save paper, ink and postage costs. Articles may be edited.

County News will be emailed, posted on Wednesday of the third full week of the month.

### County News Calendar 2025/26:

<u>County News Issue</u>	<u>Deadline for items to be submitted</u>	<u>Release Date for County News</u>
Dec 2025/Jan 2026 (combined)	1st November 2025	17th November 2025
February 2026	1st January 2026	19th January 2026
March 2026	1st February 2026	16th February 2026

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