

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26 of the Board of Trustees



Registered office: WI House,
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STAFF

WI House is available for members to visit Monday—Wednesday 9.30am—2.30pm. Whether you're popping in for WI business or simply fancy a relaxed chat in a comfortable space, WI House is here for you. It's a great place to connect with fellow members and make the most of everything being a WI member offers.

Our staff team has changed as we said goodbye to Sandra Woodward in March 2025 and welcomed Tina Lee. Lois Mckinder took over Finance as well as admin duties.

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 102 WIs in Leicestershire & Rutland and 3,100 members

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman: Glenice Wignall
Vice Chairman: Gail Wooliscroft, Mandy Cutler
Treasurer: Mary Hobbs
Elected Members: Janet Kirk, Rita Caves, Judith Follows, Sue Lobb, Susan Woollard, Sue Kirk,

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Art & Crafts: Clare Farquhar
Finance &
House Management: Mary Hobbs
Fund Raising: Rita Caves
Leisure Activities: Sharon Stone
Membership: Mandy Cutler
Public Affairs &
International: Glenice Wignall

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is made up of ten 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 NFWI Annual Meeting Last year was the first year it was done via Zoom and it was a success.

The Board Successfully retained the Denman Grant to provide multiple first aid courses across the county in 2026.

ART & CRAFTS

We have had a full year of

- Competitions at the ACM
- Dabble Days
- Stumpwork
- Prick and Stitch cards
- Lino cut workshop
- Crochet drop in
- Autumn Dabble

And many more! Events are getting increasingly popular so don't hesitate to book or you may miss out!

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 two Speakers Showcase events this year, 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

Our first fund raising event for 2025 was our Spring Lunch in May at Devonshire Place in Leicester. Our speaker was the W.I. National Chair, Jeryl Stone. Everyone had a great time and an enjoyable lunch. Jeryl delighted us all with a talk on the future of the W.I.

Unfortunately, our two summer events had to be cancelled due to limited support. However, our Autumn Lunch proved to be well attended and took place in a new venue for us at the Green Rooms in Hinckley in late October. Following our lunch, we were entertained by Jack Lawton who treated us to an hour of timeless swing and classic songs. Members really seemed to enjoy the change in the type of entertainment provided.

So far, ticket sales for the first two events in 2026 have been most encouraging. Our Musical Cream Tea in March is sold out and our Spring Lunch seems to be very popular.

We look forward to your continued support.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Leisure Committee Annual Report 2005/6

The Leisure Committee have again this year organised many successful events.

Including, the very popular Thomas Cook walks. About 70 W.I members enjoyed this event on four separate occasions walking around Leicester learning all about the famous travel agent Thomas Cook.

The Treasure Hunt in Market Harborough was another winner. Teams of four W.I members were seen chasing around Market Harborough peering up at roofs and inspecting pavements trying to solve the clues. Win or lose they were all rewarded with a lovely cream tea afterwards. On two very hot days last August we were guided around the beautiful Botanic Gardens at Leicester University. We also did some maths learning about the Fibonacci Square; used for patios apparently. Another garden visit featured in our programme; this was to a lovely garden in Cossington.

On a quiet September evening a few members enjoyed trying a new sport, that of Pétanque. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Now for the "Beer and Skittles", once again this year many members were seen hurling cheeses down alleys and throwing from the ochee. Skittles and Darts remain very popular with members and are a mainstay of leisure activities. However, this year it has become apparent that Skittle Alleys are becoming few and far between. This has meant some teams had to travel to matches a greater distance than before. We know travelling in the dark winter nights is not ideal, but the intrepid drivers/players made it to most matches.

During 2025/6 we're pleased to say that approximately 350 W.I members enjoyed themselves on Leisure Committee events.

Next year we aim to attract more W.I members to events and increase this number of participants.

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, Baldwin Trust, who were a speaker at our Annual Council Meeting. Wi's have raised around £300 for this charity!

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

