

Public Art Walk



Public Arts Walk—The first two days went well, meeting in the coffee shop for a coffee/ tea and cake, people had time for a chat before setting off with Steve. Day 1 we went towards Curve and Day 2 the mobility friendly walk



we went along High St, both walks were enjoyed by everyone. Unfortunately, on day 2 it rained towards the end of the walk but umbrellas came out and shelter was on hand.



Thanks to all those that supported this event.

<p>Federation Chairman Glenice Wignall glenicewignall@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>Federation Treasurer Mary Hobbs maryhobbs@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>Federation Secretary Sandra Woodward fedsec@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>Admin & Finance Officer Lois McKinder wihouse@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>WI House, 135 Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5LQ</p>
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Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes

incorporated in England and Wales as a Company limited by Guarantee No. 02769771 Charity Reg No. 1016 766

Tel: 0116 2661342 Email: wihouse@lrfwi.org

Opening hours: Mon-Thurs 9.30am—1.30pm

www.leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk or scan QR code

Find us on Facebook: Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of WIs



From the Board



LRFWI Strategic Action Plan & Governance Update

We are pleased to share the **Leicestershire and Rutland Federation of WIs'** updated **Strategic Action Plan** for 2024-2026, developed by the Board of Trustees to strengthen our Federation and better serve you, our Members.

Our Vision

We remain committed to our core mission to **connect, support, and empower women** – working together to improve lives in local, national, and global communities.

Strategic Priorities for 2024-2025

1. **Enhance Member Experience:** Improving services, events and engagement for current and future Members.
2. **Protect Existing WIs:** Supporting the sustainability and success of our current Institutes.
3. **Grow Membership:** Attracting new Members through engaging events and effective marketing.

Key Actions for 2024-2025

- **Governance Improvements:** Strengthening both Board and WI governance with simplified training for WI Officers.
- **Member Engagement:** Developing a diverse range of events to drive engagement and participation.

Social Media & Marketing: Boosting our presence to attract new Members and encourage current Members to spread the word.

Looking Ahead (2025-2026)

- **Governance Refinement:** Continuing to improve governance effectiveness.
- **Federation HQ:** Reviewing HQ for better accessibility and cost-effectiveness.

This updated plan will guide us over the next two years, ensuring we continue to meet the evolving needs of our Members and the wider community. Full details of the plan will be available on our website. We welcome your feedback and look forward to working together to achieve these goals.

Thank you for your continued support!

Merry Christmas to all WI Members - joy and good health to you all!

From the House

Improving WI House for Our Members

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure **WI House** serves our Members effectively, we are making key improvements to create a welcoming and functional space. While the **Strategic Action Plan** outlines plans to review the suitability of WI House in the future, we're continuing to make enhancements now to ensure it remains a place our Members enjoy visiting.

Recent Improvements:

1. **Fire Safety Upgrades:** Following a visit from a Fire Risk Specialist, we've updated signage and fire doors to comply with current safety legislation.
2. **Cost-Effective Services:** We've again secured competitive quotes for all services, ensuring our systems remain up to date and our costs remain competitive.
3. **Staffing and Processes:** We are trialling a two-person office team for six months to ensure we are operating as efficiently as possible.

During this time, we are documenting processes to align with the Federation's priorities, particularly focusing on delivering an improved Member Experience.

We are committed to continually improving the facilities at WI House and will keep you updated on further developments. Your feedback is always welcome as we strive to make our headquarters a better space for everyone.

Membership Committee

The LRFWI Membership Committee is responsible for supporting WIs. Do get in touch if you need help.

Mandy Cutler, Membership Committee Chair.

WI Committees. Now that your new committee is in place, please consider whether your Trustee Eligibility Document needs updating. (Members sign to certify that there are no circumstances that disqualify them from being a charity trustee.)

There are two forms to choose from – one for adding a whole committee and another for adding individuals. The forms are on My WI; here is the link:

<https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/running-your-wi/wi-committee-roles>

WI Secretaries: after your Annual Meeting, please remember to complete your Annual Report Form and return it to WI House asap with a signed copy of the 2023-2024 Annual Financial Statement before Thursday 28th November.. (Thanks to those of you who have already done so.)

Updated officers' names and contact details will be shared in our yearbook.

New Group Co-ordinator: WI Adviser, Joy Hault, will be taking on this role, so if you need any help, you can contact Joy at: joyhault10wia@gmail.com

Updated WI Adviser Allocations: WIs previously supported by Anne Fullagar have now been allocated another WI Adviser. Our Federation Secretary, Sandra Woodward, has notified relevant Secretaries.

If you wish to check who your WI Adviser is go to the LRFWI website, then Federation & WI Information; you will find the list under Running a WI. WI Adviser contact details are in the Yearbook.

Members of Suspended WIs If you are a member of WI that has suspended, your subscription is paid until the 31st of March 2025. You will receive copies of County News and WI Life until your subscription lapses. You can, of course, join another WI as a dual member.



Finance and House Management Committee

Thanks to those Treasurers who have submitted their Financial Reports ahead of the deadline.

Any queries you may have on finances do email finance@lrfwi.org or call 0116 2661342 option 3.

As you'll see from the 'From the House' report we are saving funds where we can.

As you'll know the NFWI Lottery has launched and can be income generating for your WI Once your local lottery is set up, you can promote your own lotteries and get your local community to support and buy tickets via your own lottery page. Do contact for advice on this.

15 WIs will receive an Open meeting Grant of £50 just by sending an email. Do take up this offer.

Any member is always welcome to come and observe our Committee—we meet the 2nd Tuesday of the month 10-11.30am.



Fundraising Committee

A Witherley WI member wrote this article about their recent experience at the Autumn Lunch organised by the Fundraising Committee.

On Saturday 19th October 11 Witherley WI members travelled to Leicester for the Autumn Lunch.

As always, the meal was delicious, the staff well organised and efficient and the company of fellow members enjoyable. The speaker this time was Graham Short a Micro -artist.

He works from midnight to 5am in the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter in order to avoid vibration from traffic. He has regular Botox injections to his eyelids, takes beta blockers, potassium and magnesium to lower his heart rate and wearing a stethoscope monitors his heart whilst engraving with very fine needles between heartbeats. He produces 4 items a year. These have included engraving The Lord's Prayer on a speck of gold inside the eye of a needle, Jane Austen's portrait on 4 £5 notes which were given away in different parts of the country. He produces stationery for Royalty. What a journey from his first job emptying mouse traps in a Birmingham factory! He recounted amusing tales of the celebrities he has worked with including Ronnie Barker, Uri Geller, Simon Rattle, Stephen Fry and members of the Royal Family. A big thank you to Rita Caves and her team for organising these events.



Those members who haven't been to these lunches give it a try at next years Spring Lunch, you won't be disappointed. We even took a couple of raffle prizes home. Nina Marshall, Witherley WI



Adverts for new speakers.. See more on page 11 too

Maggie's everyone's home of cancer care. Learn all about this amazing support service and have all your questions answered!

Alexa Wigfield 07825 313040 Alexa.wigfield@maggies.org Donation only

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Edina Palko 07365 800854 www.healingwiththedina.co.uk

Stress Management and the impact of sleep on our stress levels - Explaining how Stress affects the brain, how we can manage it and how sleep is impacted due to stress levels. **How to be more confident** - Tools and techniques to be more confident including an explanation of how the brain works in relation to confidence **How to train our brain to be more positively focused**- How to train ourselves to be more positive and ultimately happier.

Rebeka Cohen 07969 088700 rebeka.cohen@hotmail.com

Leisure Committee

During October we organised a Guided Walk in Leicester which was very successful. We are now thinking about events for 2025. We realise that some Institutes have to travel a distance to attend events so we are thinking of some federation and some local events.

Some ideas we have are skittles, table skittles, darts, dominoes, pétanque, crib, bingo, bridge, local quizzes. Please let us have some more ideas. We are also looking for suitable halls and pubs especially pubs that serve food to groups.

Please send in any ideas your institute may have to pennywestonwebb2022@gmail.com in time for us to discuss at our meeting in January.

If you have any queries also please contact Penny

Arts and Crafts Committee

Art & Craft ladies spent 2 days at the Big Textile Show held at Leicester Racecourse. They were promoting the WI and showing people how to crochet worry worms. However if people couldn't crochet they could take one free that had already been made. Both days went really well with lots of socialising, talking about different crafts and encouraging ladies to join a local WI.



What's On?

23rd Nov	Dabble Day	South Croxton	£20
3rd Dec	PAT Testing	WI House	£2.50
7th Dec	Stratford Xmas market	Coaches from Oakham, Burbage and WI House	£20

Please note WI House will be closed from 19th Dec 2024 to 6th January 2025. Next years events coming soon!



Jammers were very impressed with the dancing of Cromwell Group members at their meeting. The ladies were really enthusiastic as the picture shows and we may have found a potential new member. We have settled well into our new home with the added bonus of frequenting their coffee bar after practice when our dates coincide. Come along and see what we do - usually on the last Saturday in the month - at St Andrew's Hall, Hinckley Road, Leicester Forest East, LE3 3PF from 9.45 am - 11.45. The cakes are really good too!



WIs – Have you applied for a £50 grant yet?

Trying to recruit new members? Maybe an open meeting will help.

Should your WI members want to hold an Open Meeting, the Federation Board of Trustees would like to support you. A **grant of £50** will be available to all WIs to subsidise the costs of an open meeting – **with invitations to non-members.**

All you have to do is:

Email or phone our Federation Secretary, Sandra Woodward, at fedsec@lrfwi.org or 0116 2661342.

Let Sandra know when your open evening will be.

(Your open evening can be an extra meeting or one of your 11 planned meetings.)

In return a photo of your open evening and a few lines describing it – to be included in County News – would be welcome.

Eight WIs have already benefited from this grant – and some have attracted new members!

Deadlines: Apply for the £50 grant before the end of March 2025. Use the grant by end of December 2025.

Monthly Draw

Congratulations to our Monthly Draw winners!

- 1st Prize £25— Rosalie Morling, Birstall & Wanlip**
- 2nd Prize £15— Barbara Haberfield, Burbage**
- 3rd Prize £10—Joy Bark, Birstall & Wanlip**

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



PAT Testing for WIs



3rd December
 WI House
 10.30am—2pm
 £2.50 per item

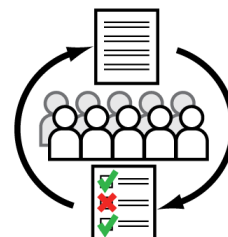
Wishing all WI Members a very happy



Christmas!

From all staff and Board of Trustees of LRFWI Federation

Resolution Briefing Meetings



Wednesday 30th April 2025
 2pm & 7pm
 WI House
£5 per 2 members per WI

Gurdwara Visit



Wednesday 7th May 2025
 10.30am -12.30pm
 £10 to include refreshments

Bletchley Park



Wed 18th June
 Coaches from WI House & Burbage 9am
 £45 to include refreshments (lunch available to purchase)

Advertising Rates

Charity rate £5.00
 Commercial rate (including WI members business advertising)
 Please note we have made our advertising prices simpler!

Months	1	3	6	12 = 10% off
S	£15	£45	£90	£162
M	£20	£60	£120	£216
L	£30	£90	£180	£324

Please pay on receipt of invoice only.

We do not accept any responsibility for any adverts published in County News.

Please send material for County News to **WI House** by email: **fedsec@lrfwi.org** or post to arrive by the **FIRST of the preceding month at the latest.**

Any WI announcements can be made in County News.

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 or call 0116 2661342

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

Around the Counties

Whissendine

At our September meeting we were delighted to welcome Rob Allan, manager of the Stapleford Farm Estate whose fields surround Whissendine. He gave us a talk about food, farming and the environment

At every meeting through the year we have a competition for members to bring an item that starts with a letter. This year we are spelling 'Rutlanders' and we had reached the letter 'E' and so the evening concluded with the announcement of this month's competition winner, Barbara Burnish with her wonderful English Paper Piecing Patchwork.

Our October meeting was our AGM and after that was concluded we had a lovely evening making beaded bracelets under the watchful eye of one of our members Rosie Meakin. She had made up a set of beads for each of us and also threaded two needles with the nylon thread that we needed. She then took us through the sets of instructions and let us loose to have a go.

There was a lot of laughter and a few wayward beads but what we thought would be fiendishly difficult turned out to be manageable thanks to Rosie's excellent instructions.

I now have a lovely purple and silver bracelet!



Sweptone, Newton and Snarestone

In July we held a Summer pudding evening which was open to all friends and family who enjoyed many different puddings and a glass of wine.

August we had our summer break but September we came back to Phil Jesson who talked to us about modern day slavery which was an eye opener to some for us especially when he told us about some of the well-known companies involved in this.

October we had Dr Richard Davies who brought along some of his unusual and very interesting medical objects which in some cases made us all shudder at the thought of it actually being used on humans but all in all we had a very good evening.

Fleckney

Some of our members enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea at a new wartime themed tea shop in Kettering in September. Another treat was that month's meeting when we were shown how to make a hanging basket by the proprietor of Kibworth garden centre. A bonus was being able to buy plants and bulbs to take home for our own gardens.



Sheepy

Our October meeting was also our AGM. Once business had been dispatched we settled down to our taste test evening.

We were presented with the following cheeses: Brie, Red Leicester and Wensleydale with cranberry from three different shops to compare and score.

Aldi came top for brie and red Leicester and second with Wensleydale cranberry. Tesco came out top for Wensleydale. The farm shop didn't fare well, although their crackers were voted the best.

This was a very sociable evening, with lots of discussion about the merits of the various cheeses. I was so engrossed I forgot to take photos! We had a number of visitors and gained five new members!

Glenfield

This month we held our AGM, which in addition to reflecting on the past year, also gave us the opportunity to discuss plans for the future. We were pleased to welcome Joy Hoult from WI House for this part of our meeting.

Jo Golby was this month's Speaker and she entertained us with a selection of spine tingling tales of her personal ghostly experiences whilst working as a costume guide in Warwick Castle and Calke Abbey.

A notable story concerned the time she was working alone in a souvenir shop at Warwick Castle when the stock shelves began to shake. She hurriedly left the scene only to return later with another guide to find the shop totally wrecked. The security camera picked up glowing balls of light racing around the room before the lens was smashed and the camera stopped recording. She never worked alone in that particular souvenir shop again!!



Around the Counties

Ashby Spa

In July, some of our members helped to set up the Ashby Show. Some of our members and our ladies were successful in the competitions, and our ladies ran the bra pong stall, which was great fun.

Our summer outing to the National Arboretum was a great success. Our guides were very informative, and a great day was had by all.

September, our Craft Club made some resin pots and coasters, and our Skittles ladies won their match against Breedon.

Our darts group came runners-up in the Federation darts competition. Our ladies who keep the WI garden so beautiful have had a visit from Paddington Bear this year and have put on an amazing show of poppies for this year's remembrance parade.

During our AGM, a few of our ladies hosted an assortment of craft tables, and our members were able to learn new crafting skills. We were also celebrating our 15th anniversary as a WI.



Walking netball continues to meet, but the ladies have moved indoors for the winter months. Our power walkers meet for a walk and a coffee, and our strollers continue to brave the British weather and have an enjoyable walk at Willesley Woods. The ladies that lunch met at the Nags Head in Castle Donington, and the coffee morning girls continue to meet at Ivanhoe social club. The theatre group had a great 'Night at the Movies', and our bookworms love meeting up to chat about their current read.



Ilston on the Hill

Our meeting was a real treat with a visit from Jill and John from "Bridge 67". Jill gave us a short history of how it all started during covid. The shop opened in November 2020 and is a very popular venue in Kibworth. Both Jill and John gave us a cooking demonstration making Sausage Pappardelle, using Andy's gluten free sausages and Colin's traditional sausages. This was delicious and enjoyed by us all. Following a slimming world meeting Andy's famous gooseberry sausages were deemed to contain "no sins" (containing nothing fattening). Also for our delectation was a wonderful section of cheeses, what a treat this proved to be. A really enjoyable evening topped off by our tea ladies producing a splendid array of cakes. Certainly no supper was needed when we got home!



Loughborough Ladies

The Loughborough Ladies organised a fused glass workshop run by Smartsy Fused Glass. It was thoroughly enjoyable. We all carefully created our designs by gluing beautiful pieces of coloured glass onto clear glass shapes such as sun catchers and tree ornaments. A week later we collected the glass after it had been fused in the oven. Everyone is delighted with the finished results which look quite stunning.



Anstey

Bishop Peter Fox visited us to give a Magical History Tour of Stage Magic. The only bishop in the Magic Circle (indeed the Inner Magic Circle) he is a very engaging character who quickly established a warm, humorous rapport with his audience.

Bishop Fox performed familiar tricks, including the Chinese rings and the rope trick (cutting it in half and re-joining the halves.) Good-natured members were recruited to assist and performed their parts to great amusement.

The monthly competition was for something associated with Halloween, and as the photograph shows, attracted a good variety of entries. Sue Crook was the winner, with Gill Bryce and Sylvia Cole tied in 2nd place.



Newbold Verdon

Jo Golby came to tell us about a woman's role in society from 1850 to 1930. In the early years it was divided between the haves and have-nots. While the better off had servants to wait upon them, obviously the lower orders were the servants, although some women stayed home to raise their children, working from home as seamstresses or doing other out work.

This mostly carried on until 1914 when WW1 happened. Although some women went into such occupations as nursing and joined Queen Mary's Domestic Service, more were put to work in the munitions factories which was dangerous work. They could also join the Land Army and in 1917 the WRNS were formed and in 1918 the WRAF was formed.

When war ended on 11.11.1918, things seemed to get better until the Spanish Flu epidemic came along and killed millions. The country finally recovered and enjoyed the coronation of George VI.

Around the Counties

Woodhouse Eaves

Sandy Leong told the story of Lady Jane Grey, the forgotten Tudor in October's meeting

Jane lived at Bradgate until she was nine, her parents were not loving and she immersed herself in her studies and became known as a scholar. Jane and Edward were educated together at Syon House in London until she was 12 when she returned to Bradgate for about three years.

Sadly Jane was surrounded by scheming and ambitious men who had no interest in her wishes and it was arranged for her to marry Lord Guildford Dudley. Thomas Seymour persuaded the dying young King Edward to nominate Jane as first in the line of succession giving the Duke of Northumberland (and father of Dudley) an opportunity to present the reluctant 16-year-old Jane to the people of London as their queen.



Swinford

It's been a busy morning for some of the members of our WI

We've been planting 100 daffodil bulbs on the outskirts of the village as part of our celebrations. Hopefully we can all enjoy them in the Spring



Barsby

Our members present and past celebrated their 100th birthday on 9th October starting off with Singing Jerusalem, followed by our speaker D L Ellis who is a brilliant talented poet covering all sorts of subjects! Her stint ended with us all singing 'You are my sunshine'.

The committee members provided a traditional afternoon tea, we raised a toast to BARSBY W.I. and our speaker kindly did the group photo shoot. Our AGM followed. Many thanks to all who made it very memorable.



Glenfield Park

We enjoyed another excellent talk by Richard Warren. His subject this time was Foxton Locks and the History of canals. Did you know that the first canal in Britain was built by the Romans. It was not until 1759 that the golden age of canals began. When they wanted to build a canal from the East Midlands to London there was a problem in that there is a difference of 175 ft between Foxton and Watford and the answer was Foxton Locks which has a unique system of locks. Foxton locks were renovated and in 1944 a man called Rolt went on holiday on a canal, wrote a book about it and canal holidays became very fashionable. In fact there are now more boats than there were during what is known as Canal Mania.



Our visit to the Secret Garden was cancelled because of a slight problem called torrential rain. However a couple of members enjoyed the Public Art Walk around Leicester. Sunny but cold. We learnt so much about the unseen parts of Leicester.

Broughton Astley

Sandy Leong gave us a fascinating look into "The History of Witches" at our October meeting.

The witch craze started in Europe in the 1500 to 1600s. At this time "wise women" used their knowledge, such as herbal potions, to cure various illnesses. However, if these didn't work the women soon became blamed. There is documented evidence of women being accused of witchcraft in Leicestershire in the early 1600s and in Husbands Bosworth 15 women were accused of witchcraft.

Many members and friends have been busy knitting and crocheting hundreds of red, white and purple poppies for a new poppy display. Four nets of poppies will be draped over the hedges surrounding our War Memorial for the Remembrance period, along side our 'plastic bottle' poppies



News to **WI House** by email: 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.

Advertisements

Monica (Wing WI) Member

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John J. Delaney 07774 215087 Free talk + travel costs of 40p per mile

john.delaney3@btinternet.com

Dog Eat Dog, the life of an investigative news journalist (I was once one of these beasts); eight about the Civil War period (I recommend *Female Spies*, *14 Days: the story of the Siege of Leicester* and *the Battle of Naseby*, and *Femme Fatale: the life of Lady Lucy Hutchinson*), as well as a series I call *Faithful and Fearless* – talks about historical figures like George Fox (founder of the Quakers) and Thomas Babington (slavery abolitionist and close associate of William Wilberforce). Most of the talks I offer have a strong connection to Leicestershire.

£50 per talk and £10 travelling expenses if the journey is greater than 40 miles.

To find out more please visit philipyorke.org Alternatively call **07879 658888** or send an email to philipyorke.com

Philip Yorke 07879658888 £50.00

philipyorke@aol.com

Fashion Show - I offer fun filled and inclusive fashion shows, where your members become the stars of the catwalk. Great affordable fashion that spans the ages. Items also available to buy on the night. **Styling tips and tricks** - Perfect for smaller groups. We use WI members to display outfits and talk about styling and how to put your outfits together. Learn some tips and tricks to get you looking amazing ☺ **Packing the ultimate capsule suitcase** - Struggle with packing for that all important holiday or weekend away? Let's talk all things packing, as we pack the ultimate capsule suitcase

Jackie Allen East Midlands

07766661420 £70 plus a contribution towards travel.

jackie.m.allen@gmail.com Face to Face only

Learn to Line Dance - I am a qualified & fully insured line dance teacher offering an hour of line dance tuition (& fun) to social groups, parties etc. No previous experience required just the desire to enjoy a fun hour of gentle exercise ! Dances suitable for all ages and physical ability and not all country music...

Yvonne Anderson Market Harborough, All Leicestershire & Rutland

07738913026 £75 per hour plus + 40p per mile travel outside of Market Harborough

anderson2603@sky.com Face to Face only

Charnwood Clog Step Dancers A talk on clogs - the history, social aspects, local links, and a demonstration of clog dancing. Workshop available

Tessa de Ville 40 Minute radius of Rothley, LE7

01509 852189 £85. We only ask for travel expenses if the booking is at a considerable distance.

alisonjriggall@gmail.com Face to Face only

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