



Cover photo
at Newcourt WI
See page 6

Inside this issue:

Chairman's comment	page 2
Committee roundup	page 4
DFWI information	page 3, 5, 8
Diary dates	page 8
MCS info	page 3
Membership Support	page 3
News from WIs	page 5,6,7
Treasurer's tasks and tips	Page 2
300+ Club winners	Page 2

Spring Council is on

26 April 2023.

Book now to see Floella Benjamin

The photo on the right shows Evelyn, our Federation Chair, awarding the Molly Nosworthy Rosebowl to last year's winner Maggie McLeod of Christow WI. Find out this year's winner at the show.



Federation Office

The Firs, Honiton Road
Blackhorse, Exeter, EX5 2FT
Tel: 01392 255386

Email: enquiries@devonwi.org.uk
Web: www.devonwi.org.uk
Facebook: facebook.com/DevonWI

Office Hours

9am - 3.30pm Tuesday to Thursday
9am - 1pm Friday

Registered Charity 1191427

Federation Chairman

Evelyn Watson
federation.chairman@devonwi.org.uk

Federation Treasurer

Marie Rhodes
federation.treasurer@devonwi.org.uk

Federation Secretary

Alison Taylor
federation.secretary@devonwi.org.uk

Bookkeeper

Beverley Langdon
bookkeeper@devonwi.org.uk

Publisher

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news@devonwi.org.uk
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National Federation of Women's Institutes

104 New Kings Road, London, SW6 4LY
Tel: 0207 371 9300
Email: hq@nfwi.org.uk
Web: thewi.org.uk



Twinned with Powys-Brecknock Federation of Women's Institutes

Subcommittee contact details:

Combined Arts
p.wyatt@devonwi.org.uk

Environment and Rural Affairs
jackie.buften@devonwi.org.uk

Food, Craft and Skills
sally.wilson@devonwi.org.uk

Membership Support
wiadvisers@devonwi.org.uk

Sport and Leisure
rita.nebbett@devonwi.org.uk

International and Public Affairs
sue.mitchell@devonwi.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT



Dear Members,

It may only be February but there are positive signs of Spring appearing. I have snow drops, daffodils and a few timid primroses in a sheltered spot in the garden and my neighbour's pond is full of frog activity! However for me, being a dog walker, the longer hours of daylight make such a difference and are a positive sign that better days are coming.

We are coming to what could be called a 'New Year' of WI with the paying of our subscriptions for 2023/24, and then the Annual Meetings to follow. Please, if you are in need of help, contact your Adviser. We can't promise to solve everything but it always helps to talk things through.

The information for the Spring Council Meeting in April at The Riviera Centre is now with your Secretaries. Our main speaker is Floella Benjamin, whom I'm sure many of us remember from her days as a presenter on children's TV - I almost feel the need to say 'Through the square window!' I know we are in for a lively time with her and look forward to seeing lots of you on the day.

Best wishes

Evelyn Watson
Devon FWI Chairman

300+ Club winners

February	
265	Withycombe Raleigh WI
60	Roundswell WI
334	Dartington WI
142	Westward Ho! WI
288	Lewtrenchard WI

Join in 2023 if you haven't already.
The application form is with your Secretary.
Family and friends can buy a share too.

Treasurer's tasks and tips



For many of you this is the time of year when you are closing your books and creating your accounts for the year. We are recommending that all WIs change to a year end account finishing in December from the end of this year, so for 2023 only you will have two sets of accounts to complete. If you have questions or concerns re how you can spend your money please make contact as someone at DFWI will

be able to help.

Coming out with this mailing is a budget form—all WIs should have one as it is the only way to know if you need to fundraise or if you can afford to offer money off your affiliation fees (WI portion only) for your members.

I have also been in touch with NFWI about bank accounts as many of you are still having difficulties. The reply I have received is:

Over the past year we have consistently been looking for ways we can assist in this area, such as by providing letters for WIs who wish to open bank accounts and providing new guidance for the ever-changing issues with banks (such as the tax declaration related forms many WIs have received in the past couple of months).

However at a structural level unfortunately we have been unable to find inroads with the banks about what is ultimately a business decision. We will continue to try to help where we can on this matter.

You can email NFWI too about this.

DFWI BACS details are on the right. Please remember to email the person you are paying and copy in Beverley our DFWI bookkeeper. bookkeeper@devonwi.org.uk

Devon Federation of Women's Institutes
Sort code 08-92-99
Account no 67185081

Spring is comingand so are Annual Meetings!

WI committees should now be thinking ahead to their Annual Meetings in April and May. Annual report forms will be landing in your Secretary's email inbox by the end of the month so please look out for them and contact us if you do not receive one. Treasurers should close their books at least six weeks before their Annual Meeting and contact their IFE to arrange a date for their accounts to be examined. If you have any concerns about your accounts contact your IFE before handing over so that they can be sorted in good time.

The Secretary will be putting together the Annual Report on behalf of the committee. This should be an overview of the year highlighting any community connections, outings and events and of course highs and lows of the year.

Don't forget to invite tellers to oversee the election process. This can be arranged with neighbouring WIs or contact your Adviser if you would like her to attend. It's not too early to be thinking of seeking nominations for your committee positions and in particular those who are willing to stand for election as President and take on the roles of Secretary and Treasurer, (please see details of our training workshops below). If you have concerns about any aspect of the Annual Meeting do contact your Adviser for help or advice.

It is not advisable to have a speaker at the Annual Meeting so why not have a special social time with an interesting activity? Discuss outings and events with members, or gather ideas to help your WI develop. Make it enjoyable and fun and show that it is an important part of running your WI to make it the WI the members want it to be - and there is always cake!

Annual Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2023/2024 are due on the 1st April and can be paid by cheque, cash or BACS. Please remember that only paid up members are eligible to vote or stand for election at the Annual Meeting.

Advisers

Your Adviser is always happy to hear from you and willing to answer any queries or help with any concerns so feel free to contact us.

There is a very helpful guide to running Annual Meetings in the WI Handbook, which can be found at this link: <https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/running-your-wi/wi-handbook>

Training Opportunities

Due to popular demand we have organised a further Presidents and Secretaries workshop at The Firs on Friday 17th March. If this is oversubscribed an additional date will be arranged. Keep a look out for other officers' workshops, which are being planned for later this year.



The Membership Communication System (MCS) is the most important tool at all levels of the WI. Therefore it is important that the information stored there is accurate.

Annual Meetings are upon us and, for many WIs, it will be a time of change on the committee. Some officers and committee members will retire or change roles and other members will step forward and volunteer to help steer their WI through the coming year. Other roles may see a change too, one being the MCS Rep and, in this case – and this case only – the role has to be assigned by the federation, it cannot be effected on the MCS database at individual WI level.

If the MCS Rep changes at any WI, I need to be contacted to assign the role to the new volunteer. I will also introduce myself and make sure she knows how to get in touch for help and advice.

If your WI needs a new MCS Rep, please make sure she knows that help is always at hand.

Jenny Roberts, Federation MCS Administrator : mcsinfo@devonwi.org.uk

Meet the Board

Members of the DFWI Board of Trustees and our Federation Secretary were delighted to meet members at Barnstaple Library early in February. We explained our roles both on the Board and in our own WIs and talked about the difficulties we all face. It was good to discuss the problems some of you face with poor internet or in some cases not knowing about the resources available.

We hope to run this session again in other parts of the county—would you be interested and where would you like it?

Some members (not the ones we met) have suggested that we run events at The Firs which is our office building. We can hold small workshops there but it is a residential bungalow and when 12 of us are in the main room it is cosy—so there would be the Board and no guests or the guests and no Board of Trustees. We hope to see many of you at Spring Council.

Microsoft 365 rollout—coming soon!

We are working with a partner organisation to use our devonwi email system and related packages more effectively. Soon all WIs will only receive emails through their generic WI email address which can be shared by your officers. This will help with GDPR issues too. This will also mean that you will be able to access DFWI forms through Sharepoint.

If this makes you nervous or anxious we will ensure that support and training is available.

Committee Information and Roundup

Our Committees are the driving force behind the events we publish and comprise of a Board member plus any WI member with an interest in the topics covered by the Committee. Some of the teams are small and are struggling to organise events and we are reviewing all of them to make sure we can offer something different to all WI members in Devon. There may be a trip or activity that you would like to do but cannot get enough people in your WI or your area to make it possible—that is where a bigger offer comes in. At times our events are so popular that they are oversubscribed and have to go to a ballot, at other times they are under subscribed and would run at a loss so they have to be cancelled. If you are interested in helping out the teams meet on Zoom with one in 3 meetings at The Firs near Exeter. Make contact with any committee (details on page 2) to find out more or to suggest an event that could be offered across Devon. Everyone is a WI member just like you.

ENVIRONMENT & RURAL AFFAIRS

Wednesday 22nd March is World Water Day and the theme this year is 'accelerating change'. This is something we can all consider – how can we make changes to the way we use water? Why not hold a discussion with you own members to see how they feel they could do more towards saving water or maybe a secret sticky pad comment that could be read out at end of the meeting.

There is an old poem that is nice to read and reminds us that we can all do our bit.

The Hummingbird

'One day in the forest, a fire broke out.

All the animals ran for their lives.

They stood at the edge of the blaze, looking at the flames in terror and sadness.

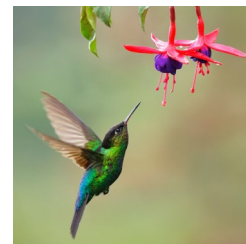
Up above their heads, a hummingbird was flying back and forth to the fire, over and over again.

The bigger animals asked the hummingbird what she was doing.

"I am flying to the lake to get water to help put out the fire."

The animals laughed at her and said, "You're crazy, you can't put out this fire!"

The hummingbird replied, "I'm doing what I can."



SPORT and LEISURE COMMITTEE

Another Tavistock walk has been arranged for March 29th with Paul Rendell. Priority was given to those W I 's who we were not able to be accommodated in September. Due to demand an afternoon walk has been added

Please contact me by email (margaretq20@gmail.com) to see if we have spaces left.

COMBINED ARTS COMMITTEE

After the success of the Elizabeths of York Tudor Fashion event we are planning a second show in September hopefully in Newton Abbot.

If you enjoyed singing in the Carol Service last year come and enjoy a singing morning in June/July with Matthew Cann .

Calling all bell ringers .We are hoping to have a day at Buckfast Abbey learning how to ring bells at the beginning of August .More news on all these events to very soon.

The St George's Day Trophy and Radio Devon Cup entries will be on view at the Spring Council meeting on 26th April at the ERC in Torquay .The cups will also be presented this year after a two year gap. See you there.

FOOD, CRAFT AND SKILLS SUBCOMMITTEE



Thanks to all who came to our Themed Lunches in January, whether you braved the cold at Longdown or were (hopefully) unaware of our electricity problem at Rattery. The food seemed to be enjoyed by all and the entertainment was a definite hit.

The Pashy Pops presented a 40s style musical medley and had some of you singing along. We hope to run events like this in other areas next year—would you be interested?



INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Apologies for the confusion caused by last month's entry! I was jumping ahead and writing as if the Vote Counting had been completed. Perhaps I was wishing for Spring to be here sooner! So to clarify:

The resolution votes from the WIs were returned to DFWI by 14th and counted on 15th February. Our results were passed on to NFWI for their deadline of 21st February . All the votes from each Federation will be compiled by NFWI and the resolution with the most votes will go forward to the 2023 Annual Meeting.

One of the following topics will become the WI Campaign for 2023/24

1. Save our water – every drop matters
2. Women to women – turning over a new leaf in the lives of women tea workers
3. Online gambling harm: time for action
4. Clean rivers for people and wildlife

If you would like to find out more information there will be updates in My Life magazine and MyWI website.

Many thanks for all your returns!

Update on A Challenge for all WIs in Devon

It has been wonderful to see the response from WIs in joining in the crafting challenge for CHSW. The talent and skills in our WI members is evident in the items you have produced.

Remember you can see the items for sale at Westpoint between March 30th and April 1st at Craft4Crafters. Some may be displayed on the DFWI stand at the same show. Please come and say hello if you are there.

The final update will be in next month's Devon News with photos of some of the goods made.

These WIs have registered interest but have not yet been mentioned in Devon News : Cranbrook & Rockbeare WI , Aveton Gifford WI and Withycombe Raleigh W.I. The total WIs who have informed us is now 41. We didn't meet the challenge of all WIs but well done and huge thanks to all of you who are taking part.

The photo on the right shows the items (cushions and cotton shopping bags) created by members of **Brixham WI's Sew Mondays** group for the South West Children's Hospice.

Other items include quilts, notepads, knitted blankets and much more.



As a member of the Women's Institute, I wanted to get in touch with you as I know that you will be passionate about supporting women and fighting for their rights. That's why I am excited to invite you and your federation to take part in Walk in Her Name, (www.ovarian.org.uk/walkinhername) a fundraising event to support ovarian cancer awareness and research. We would be delighted if you would consider taking part or sharing the word about this event.

As you may know, ovarian cancer is a devastating disease, with only 3 in 10 women diagnosed with ovarian cancer living beyond 10 years. We are determined to change this and supercharge our efforts to transform survival rates so that by 2032, at least half of women with ovarian cancer live for 10 years.

By participating in Walk in Her Name, you will be supporting our efforts to increase knowledge about ovarian cancer symptoms, develop ground-breaking treatments, and ensure that women have access to the best care regardless of their age, ethnicity, or location. I know these things align closely with the WI's **See the Sign's** campaign.

During the month of March, the official Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, we are asking our supporters to walk a cumulative total of 100km each. This impressive challenge can be fit around your lifestyle, or be completed through treks with family, friends or other WI members.

Walkers will be helping to turn the tide on ovarian cancer, helping to save the lives of more mothers, sisters, and friends. I hope that you will join us in this important cause and help raise awareness and funds to support ovarian cancer research.

Please do let me know if you have any questions or would like to know more. To register and receive your fundraising link and guide please visit www.facebook.com/groups/walkinhername. If you would prefer to take part outside of social media (or as a team) you can set up a JustGiving page here: <https://givp.nl/register/GvGowAgP>



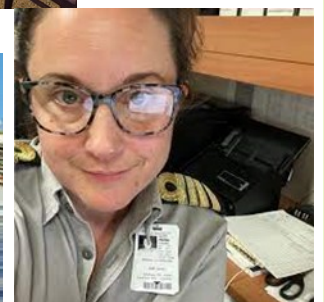
This invitation came too late for us to organise a countywide event but if any of you take up the challenge please let us know.

It's a small world.

Recently two **Westward Ho! WI** members embarked on a Caribbean cruise on the P and O ship the Ventura. During that cruise WI meetings were held and members from all over the UK attended them. Federations in attendance were Isle of Ely, Nottingham, Kent, West Sussex, Hampshire, Middlesex, Yorkshire, East Sussex, Lancashire and Devon. At the final meeting the speaker was the Deputy Captain of the ship. Her name was Martel Fursdon and she is the only female in the P and O line to hold such a high rank. The Cunard line has a female Captain. Martel did a question and answer format with the ladies and they learnt not only the technicalities of running a large cruise ship but also that only 2 percent of working crew are female. The lovely thing was that Martel was born in North Devon she now lives in Appledore, and that her first experience of sea faring was Galley Girl on the Oldenburg. It really is a small world. The Westward Ho! WI members introduced themselves after the talk and she was delighted that they came from North Devon. Martel said that she was interested in joining the WI and it was suggested that she join Appledore WI.



Photos:
Left
WI meeting on board
Below left
P&O Ventura
Below
Martel Fursdon
Deputy Captain



News from WIs including a look back at the end of 2022

Instead of a speaker at their November meeting **Appledore WI** enjoyed a Christmas card and gift tag making session which one of their members ran. Another member subsequently ran a productive and enjoyable afternoon paper printing class. A wide variety of designs were created on brown paper and cardboard tags for gift wrapping Christmas presents. Those attending the class greatly appreciated the expert tuition, together with a well-earned tea break with homemade cake provided by another member.



The **Sir Joshua Reynolds Plympton WI** entered a WI themed Christmas Tree they decorated for the Plympton St Mary Christmas Tree and Crib Festival. A number of other Community Groups joined in with this festive event over a weekend in December as part of the churches Advent and Christmas activities. The WI were also part of the Plympton Community Council Christmas Fair in December 2022. Over £100 was raised for the WI by selling cakes and craft.



A similar amount was raised for the charity, Jeremiah's Journey, with a raffle of a Christmas Hamper. The contents of the hamper were donated by the members.



Jeremiah's Journey is a Plymouth based charity that provides free support to children, young people and their parents/carers who have or are about to experience the death of someone special.



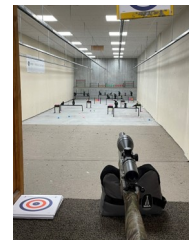
At **Newcourt WI** the monthly meetings are always lively, but in January the Community Centre looked more like Ascot on Ladies' Day than a winter WI meeting. Janet Williams gave a demonstration on the craft of hat-making which was extremely interesting, and then invited the members to try on any of the many samples she had brought with her. They needed no second bidding! See the **front cover** too.



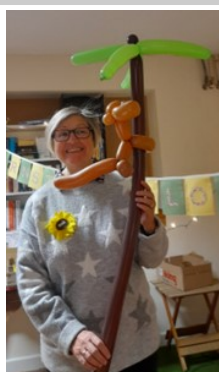
Diptford WI think they are quite adventurous.

Having tried archery and then axe throwing it was only natural that they would go on to shooting. They found it was a lot of fun and they were quite good at it.

The Gun Rooms at Endsleigh are very well equipped and the staff extremely helpful. They would certainly recommend that any of you try it.



Barnstaple Bloomers WI celebrated their 10th birthday last October. They had a party with a magician and balloon shape maker, handbag bingo and a wonderful cake baked by Pam. Their tablecloth has their member's names embroidered on it.



With so many new members joining the **Galmpton and Churston WI** it became imperative to find a way of identifying their Meet and Greeters. Claire and Ros joyfully flaunted their new sashes which proved a huge success among members and visitors alike!



Christow WI Celebrates 90 Years!

In September Christow WI celebrated their 90th birthday with a tea party kindly hosted at a member's home.

Everyone contributed food to share and as usual they had a rich and varied feast. A cake was produced for them by their member Hibly Woods.

The hexagonal cake was beautifully decorated with wild flowers through the seasons from spring wild daffodils to autumn acorns, it was also delicious.

After tea their president Vinny Logan interviewed their longest standing member and former president Jean Hoskin (see box below)

It was a very jolly occasion and made them feel proud to be members of Christow WI.

Pictured is Hibly with her cake.



On Tuesday 17th January 2023 **Cornwood W.I.'s** walking group walked around the grounds at the National Trust's Saltram House on a dry sunny morning. They followed this with a well deserved coffee in the café



"Exminster Green Spaces" organised a Wassail in the village at the end of January. Over 100 villagers turned up to enjoy the afternoon, which included Morris Dancing, a Wassail choir and a blessing of the Apple Trees in our Village Orchard. They also had mulled cider and apple cake. The apple cakes were made by the **Exminster WI** Committee members, all from the same recipe, and handed around to everyone attending - they dressed up their hats in the traditional way with green plants & ivy - it was a lovely community event!



Jean Hoskin – This is your WI Life!

VL Approximately when did you become a member of Christow WI and what are your memories of that very first meeting?

JH My first meeting was in 1961 I think and to be honest I have no memories of it!

VL Can you recall any of the other members? What sort of women were they?

JH Yes, other ladies of my age, mid 20's, with young families. The meetings were in the evening and there were village people from all different walks of life and all ages.

VL What is your most favourite memory from those early days of belonging to Christow WI?

JH It was a good way to meet other women and I feel that it helped in some cases to alleviate loneliness. Horizons were broadened, confidence built, new skills learnt, fun and some frivolity - I remember a fashion show we had of 'Notable Ladies in History' - Wow, you should have seen some of the outfits produced!

VL The WI has always been a campaigning organisation. Which campaign topics have meant the most to you and why?

JH In 1964 there was a campaign to ban smoking in public places and warnings on health issues, another was the introduction of cervical smear tests. Do you remember Tony Blair meeting his match at a WI AGM when he was accused of being political at a non-political organisation, the slow hand clap? I don't think Cheri was a WI member!

VL What do you think the WI will be like in another 90 years? Do you really think that it could keep going that long and what do we need to keep it evolving and growing?

JH In another 90 years' time? Well I think that it is possible, surely there is a need for such organisations. I am sad that Denman no longer exists and feel that it was a very bad decision. Talking to my youngsters seeking new ideas surprisingly they highlighted the need for education in schools to understand money management, taxation, national insurance, interest rates, also, to be taught good basic cooking skills. Finally, I would like to say how fortunate we are here at Christow to have these enthusiastic young members full of new ideas but also so thoughtful to we old stagers.

VL Thank you Jean. We are very lucky to have you showing us the ropes and forming such strong foundations for our WI to continue to build on.



What is wassailing?
The purpose is to encourage the spirits into ensuring a good harvest the following season. It takes place on the twelfth night after Christmas and involves a visit to a nearby orchard for singing, dancing, drinking and general merry-making.

Exminster WI sent in their recipe if anyone would like it.

Members at **Preston and Chelston WI** showed the love at their February meeting by making seed bombs for use in their own gardens, areas within the local community, and even to make as a gift for someone this Valentine's Day. It was an inclusive activity suitable for all ages and abilities but most importantly one that will have a huge impact to local wildlife and the environment We have the seed bomb recipe too.




Dates for your diary		
Activity	Date	Closing date (if relevant)
Beauty and Pampering Days at Exeter College * Please note corrected date	Tuesday 21 February 2023 Thursday 2 March 2023 * Friday 10 March 2023 Monday 13 March 2023 Friday 24 March 2023 Wednesday 29 March 2023	Closed
President and Secretary Workshop at The Firs	Friday 17 March 2023	
Whist Day	18 March 2023	27 January 2023
Tavistock Walk	29 March 2023	TBC
St George's Day Trophy (photographs)	Awarded at Spring Council	24 February 2023
Radio Devon Cup (writing)	Awarded at Spring Council	24 February 2023
Molly Nosworthy Trophy	Awarded at Spring Council	
Chairman's Rose Bowl	Awarded at Spring Council	
DFWI Spring Council Meeting at Torquay RICC	26 April 2023	31 March 2023
NFWI Annual Meeting Cardiff	25 May 2023	January 2023
NFWI Annual meeting Royal Albert Hall	5 June 2024	TBA

The list above shows all events that we know about to date. For information on a specific event see elsewhere in this Devon News, contact the relevant committee, look on our website devonwi.org.uk, or contact Jo at The Firs .

Events and Refunds. Please note when booking events we cannot give refunds unless we have to cancel them. If we were to refund one WI member who could not attend for valid reasons we would have to refund everyone who becomes unable to go. We could then find ourselves in the situation where DFWI was having to subsidise the trip and we cost them to make sure we break even. It is a balancing act when planning as we do not know if we will have sufficient take up. It is your responsibility to sell your places on.

Speakers List Update

Our thanks to all those WIs who returned the recent Speakers' survey. It is clear that relevance, cost, interest and travelling expenses are major issues that are important to most of you. We have also noted that we need to include a feedback rating system. Your views will now help our working group to focus on delivering an up to date and helpful new Speakers List. We are looking to hold Speakers Day Auditions as soon as we can and hope many of you will come along to help make the decision about any speakers inclusion in the list. Although the first Speakers Audition is likely to be nearer Exeter we intend to hold these in different places around the county in the future. We may need to hold a Zoom audition too to catch up. Keep looking out for more updates and bear with us.



Have you tried phoning the office and nobody answers? Sorry, but it is because only one person is there and they are on the other line. If you can send an email please do. If the phone is your only option please bear with us—we are investigating options.



FURSDON, CADBURY, DEVON, EX5 5JS
www.fursdon.co.uk 01392 860860

House tours, Gardens and Cream Teas

Fursdon is the perfect location for your WI group day out!

Explore the beautiful gardens, take a fascinating house tour and then relax with delicious home baking at our tearoom. Bespoke opening for larger groups (20+ people) and smaller groups welcome on public open days.

Please call for a chat about what we can offer.

The West Country's Favourite Stitch & Craft Supply Exhibition

The Craft4 Crafters Show

Westpoint Centre Exeter Devon
Thursday 30th March - Saturday 1st April 2023

190 leading exhibitors specialising in Textiles, Sewing & Needle Crafts including Paper and Hobby crafts. Over 100 workshop classes, drop-in Make & Takes, Displays and Galleries.




Stitching 4 All joins the Craft4Crafters show to bring the worlds of sewing, fashion, knitting, and quilting to the largest exhibition venue in the South-West of England.

Stitching 4 All

Buy Now & Save £2 on all Advance tickets
www.craft4crafters.co.uk



Door Admission: £10
Concession: £9
Under 16's go free with an accompanying adult.
Group booking rates available.
Call 0117 370 3342 or
email: web@craft4crafters.co.uk
Doors Open 10am - 5pm every day

Tickets - Scan Me

A perfect day out for anyone who loves making things!

Booking events and closing dates.

When possible we will allow bookings past the closing date but for some events we need to know numbers in good time because of other issues or to make sure it is viable. We are looking at more efficient ways to book but in the meantime please book as early as you can. It will help us to help you. If you miss the closing date you may miss the event.

Devon WI will be at Craft4Crafters from March 30th to April 1st. If you are there do find us to say hello.

If you have any simple sewing ideas or tips please let us know.