DEVON WI NEWS

November 2025 Year 106 Issue 142 Cost 35p



Say Cheese! **Exbourne, Sampford Courtenay and Jacobstowe WI** at ARLA Foods Taw Valley Creamery.

DFWI

CAROL SERVICE 2025

This will be at Exeter Cathedral on
Wednesday 3 December
Details now with your
Secretary or see TicketSource:
www.ticketsource.co.uk/devon-federation-of-womens-institutes

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Devon Federation of Women's Institutes
Printed by Brightsea Print Group.

Items for next issue by the 10th of the month.

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The opinions expressed in Devon WI News are not necessarily those of the Devon Federation of Women's Institutes .

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Cover picture: **Exbourne, Sampford Courtenay and Jacobstowe WI** visited ARLA Foods Taw Valley Creamery. As well as looking at cheddar cheese production, they were shown where the new production unit will be to make mozzarella, which will be used for pizza toppings around the world.



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT



Dear Members

I recently had the great pleasure of joining Pinhoe WI for their 60th Anniversary celebration lunch. Members revealed hidden secrets of their past, the cake was wonderful, and for tradition we sang *Jerusalem.* It was a perfect example of the friendship and fellowship found only in the WI. It set me asking the question, what does a WI need to do to sustain itself for 60 years? Obviously, there is a variety of circumstances which lead to a suspension, but the common factor has been a failure over time to recruit new members. New members bring with them fresh energy and ideas and are the source of future Committee Members and Officers. Growing our membership is a key objective of the whole WI and is key to securing the future of our WIs. Our Adviser team is available to help and support you with your new member recruitment.

I was delighted to hear the news that our Chair of the ERC, Jackie Bufton and the team have secured a grant of £2,000 for the Federation from the Devon Environment Foundation to support our Devon Pocket Meadows Project. We have already distributed packets of seeds to our WIs to begin establishing a corridor for pollinators. The next steps are to identify the locations of the meadows and to monitor the flowers and visiting pollinators over the next 2 years. The information collected will be passed to a national database; by the end we will have a map of the entire WI corridor. This is a great opportunity for WIs to engage with your communities and make a valuable contribution to the protection of our environment and wildlife. Further details and instructions will follow. Preparing a grant application for these projects takes a great deal of time and dedication, so a big thank you goes to Jackie for what she has achieved. Let's give her and the team every support in completing this exciting project.



FROM THE OFFICE

Speakers: Please give Speakers your contact number/email address when you agree to them visiting your WI group. Then confirm a few days before so they don't have to contact the office in a panic. Thank you.

Website: Do have a look at our website. It is a work in progress but there is some useful information on there including event information and booking forms.
A gentle reminder to bring milk if you are meeting at The Firs as we don't keep any supplies here.

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 Womens Institutes
Sort code 08-92-99
Account no 67185081

MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT from WI Advisers :- wiadvisers@devonwi.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS……from WI Advisers



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WI Advisers l-r: Evelyn Watson, Maureen Hunter, Anne Mellor, Pat Kirby, Liz Roberts, Jo-Ann Middleton, Sherrie Green, Lucy Brothwood and Lesley Beer.

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Recent positive feedback from an adviser-led session:

I recently attended the* Working Together *session at Barnstaple library and wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the friendly atmosphere . The way the meeting was structured made it easy to ask questions as they arose. Also we felt able to share how our WIs approached issues. It is always good to meet members from other WIs. We really appreciate the work and encouragement of the advisers. Meetings like this keep us well informed of changes but are also a fun reminder of the wider WI.

Thank you for organising this event. I'm champing at the bit to use what I learned.

Many thanks, we found the workshop to be interesting and stimulating.

It wasn't what I thought it was going to be, but I really enjoyed it!

It was good to be encouraged to work as a TEAM and not get tied down to the perception of Committees.

Advantageous to swap speakers in our area of North Devon.

Gave us the opportunity to network with other WI's and consider doing so more often both informally and at meetings organised by our Advisers, these could be in a central point or held by one of the WIs.

TEAM Roundup

ENVIRONMENT, RESOLUTIONS and CAMPAIGNS

Guidance for Devon WI members on caring for their wildflower spaces after the summer bloom:



1. Leave Seed Heads to Mature

Let plants stand for a few more weeks.
Seeds will ripen and drop naturally.
Provides food for birds and shelter for insects.

2. Collect Seeds (Optional)

Gently collect seed heads from native wildflowers.
Dry and store in paper bags or trays.
Use for autumn sowing or sharing.

3. Cut Back (Late September to October)

Cut meadow down to about 10 cm.
Remove cuttings to keep soil nutrient-poor.
Encourages regrowth and mimics hay meadow care.



4. Autumn Sowing Opportunity

Autumn is ideal for sowing seeds.

Rake soil lightly and scatter seeds.

No need to cover them.

5. Reflect & Share – share photos and stories

Share photos and stories of your meadow.

Inspire others and build a community!

POCKET MEADOWS UPDATE

Autumn sowing of seeds for the Pocket Meadow citizen science project is now complete.

We have distributed around 450 packs to 54 WIs all around the county. Thank you ladies- please don't forget to send your sowing positions in! The next sowing season will be Spring 2026 and we can send seeds out at any time – just let us know. The map showing locations is taking shape but is also taking a bit longer as we await some of the Autumn sowing positions to be sent in. We can't wait to see what blooms in the spring/ summer next year. We will want to record the flowers and will let you know more on how to do this later.

It is fantastic that we as a county of WI members are having such a big impact to help nature.

RESOLUTIONS

The next round of Resolutions proposals have been voted on and we will all be notified in November's copy of *WI Life* on the topics to go forward. Resolution discussion events will be held at Bradley Community Hall in Newton Abbot on Tuesday **25th November** and also at Barnstaple Library (Monday **24th November**).

Flyer including a booking form with your Secretaries now. We look forward to seeing you at one of these events.

Email: jackie.bufton@devonwi.org.uk

The Manor Resort Craft and Activity Event 16th – 18th March 2026



Following the success of last Spring's residential event we are pleased to offer it again.

Inclusive prices for 2 nights: **Members:** £210 (shared twin room per person); £250 (single room). **Non-members**: £240 (shared twin room per person); £290 (single room).

Prices are inclusive of all meals from lunch on Monday until breakfast on Wednesday; prices include all activities, sports and crafts and all WI exclusive activities and evening entertainment (a small charge may be payable for craft materials). Spa treatments and bar drinks are at your own cost. Limited places are available and will be on a first come, first served basis. **Details with your Secretary now or see the DFWI website.**



COMBINED ARTS

Note for Combined Arts Playwright Finalists: *The CA team is moving the play rehearsals and production to the New Year as Catherine is unable to set up the producer meetings due to unforeseen circumstances.*

Radio Devon Cup 2026 Competition

A short story of not more than 500 words with the title **'Childhood Memories'**. Please use double spaced typing and an easy to read font.

The St George's Day Trophy

A birthday card for a child aged 4 -12. This can be in any medium but must fit inside an A5 envelope. Please state the intended recipient.

These competition Flyers are with your Secretary now. Closing date **20th February 2026**.

We are looking forward meeting you all at the Carol Service. Book through TicketSource or if needed please contact the office.

p.wyattt@devonwi.org.uk

300+ Club

Winning numbers and the WIs that those numbers are linked to are listed below. These winners will receive £25.

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
53 Chudleigh WI	58 Shebbear WI
177 Newton Abbot	156 Honiton Evening WI

Forms to be sent to: 300plusclubcoordinator@devonwi.org.uk

There will be an extra 2 draws in November as a special Christmas Draw (£50 each).

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South Devon WIs cordially invite you to a Christmas Carol Service

Thursday 4th December 2025 from 2pm to 4 pm

£5 per WI Member (cash only)

Minster Church of St Andrew, Royal Parade, Plymouth PL1 2AD

*Your contribution helps cover event costs.

Any surplus will be donated to charity, to support the Devon community. Refreshments: Hot drinks and festive mince pies. Come and celebrate with fellow WI members from across South Devon!

We'll start with a festive photo loop featuring the WI groups who helped bring this event to life. Then settle in for a service of seasonal readings, traditional carols, and a Christmas sermon. After the service, there will be plenty of time to mingle, chat, and enjoy each other's company.

Please RSVP by Thursday 27 November to:

plymouthcity@devonwi.org.uk

WI News

Parke WI, Bovey Tracey started their October meeting by welcoming Joss from Devon Rape Crisis based in Newton Abbot. Members have chosen this very worthy charity as their Charity of the Year and Joss attended to thank members for their donation of £500. The monies were raised over the summer with an Afternoon Tea and participation in the Bovey Tracey Carnival Fete.







Members and husbands (*pictured above*) enjoyed a week in October on the annual **Federation Holiday** in Lincolnshire staying near Grantham. They visited Melton Mowbray, had a boat trip on Rutland Water passing St Matthew's church Normanton - with the bottom half being below the reservoir. The next day was a visit to the delightful historic city of Lincoln with a steep hill to the Cathedral. The driver dropped the group off at the top - some walked back down! The last day was to Stamford, a really lovely town with many historic buildings and then on to Burghley House (*pictured left*) which is still lived in by members of the Cecil family. Friday saw them returning home after a lovely week away.

Join the Women's Institute – Where Every Woman Belongs

Annual Membership: Just *£54.00

That's less than **£4.92 per meeting** – cheaper than a cuppa and a slice of cake, but worth so much more. ***This is an extra £2.00 for YOUR WI and increase of 50p for DFWI & NFWI. Based on 11 meetings***

Why Join?

Unbeatable Value

For the price of a monthly coffee habit, you gain access to a year of enriching experiences, friendships and opportunities.

A Voice That Matters

WI members have shaped national conversations for over a century. From food waste to mental health, our **resolutions** have influenced policy and empowered communities.

Friendship & Belonging

Meet inspiring women, share stories, and build lasting connections in a welcoming, inclusive space.

Learn, Create, Enjoy

Whether it's crafts, cooking, campaigning, or culture – there's something for everyone.

Tea, Cake & Conversation

Every meeting is a warm friendly gathering – with refreshments that feel like home.

Be Part of Something Bigger

The WI is a proud, proactive force for good. Your membership supports local and national initiatives that make a real difference.

Proud Past, Powerful Present

We're proud of our **resolution history** – a legacy of informed, passionate women driving change. When you join the WI, you don't just attend meetings you belong to the WI family.

Highbray and Charles WI have been busy over the past couple of months making over 100 toiletry bags to support the Dental Health Matters campaign. The issue of accessing dental care in Devon is a huge challenge! We are pleased to be able to donate the dental bags to our chosen charity for this year - the Freedom Centre, Barnstaple which supports the homeless and also the Salvation Army.



Dates for your Diary		
Activity/Event **REMEMBRANCE DAY** 	**Date/details** **11 November 2025**	**Closing date (if relevant)** **N/A**
Resolutions – Barnstaple Library	24 November 2025 10am-1pm	16 November 2025
Resolutions—Bradley Community Centre	25 November 2025 10am-1pm	16 November 2025
Christmas Shopping Trip Bristol	26 November 2025	Book via TicketSource
Exeter Cathedral Carol Service	3 December 2025	N/A Book viaTicketSource
Radio Devon Cup/St George's Day Trophy	Details with Secretary	20 February 2026
Manor Resort Craft and Activity Event	16-18 March 2026	Book asap – limited places

Federation Holiday 2026: ***The Lake District 4-8 October 2026 TBC.***

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 the office .

If the closing date has passed please make contact to see if there are any spaces left.

Please note that **we do not give refunds** for events booked, unless we have to cancel, as we may have to refuse other applications and can incur booking charges. If you book and cannot go please try to sell on your space to others in yours or neighbouring WIs.

Some events should be booked through your WI while others may be individual bookings, For instance holidays or overnight stays will be by individuals. Online bookings will usually be personal too although a group of members may book together.

Justification for Using Ticket Source* for WI Events

The WI is committed to delivering well-organized, accessible, and enjoyable events for all members. To support this goal, we propose using **Ticket Source*** as our ticketing platform. While there is a fee involved, the benefits to both organizers and attendees make it a worthwhile investment.

Key Benefits:

1. **Efficient Event Management** Ticket Source streamlines the process of setting up events, managing bookings, and tracking attendance. This reduces the workload for WI volunteers and ensures a smooth experience for everyone involved.
2. **Secure and Professional Ticketing** The platform offers secure payment processing and a professional interface, which builds trust and encourages participation from both members and the wider community.
3. **Real-Time Reporting and Insights** Organizers can access live data on ticket sales and attendance, helping with planning and improving future events.
4. **Flexible for Free and Paid Events** Ticket Source supports both free and paid ticket options, making it suitable for a wide range of WI activities—from social gatherings to fundraising events.
5. **Support and Reliability** The platform provides technical support and a reliable infrastructure, reducing the risk of issues during ticket sales or event check-in.

Supporting Members Who Need Help

We recognize that not all WI members may be comfortable using online platforms.
To ensure Inclusivity:

- **Assisted Booking Options**: Members can book tickets through a designated WI contact who will assist with online registration on their behalf.
- **In-Person Support**: Help will be available at meetings or events for those who need guidance using Ticket Source.
- **Printed Tickets**: For members without email access, printed tickets or confirmations can be provided.

Clear Instructions: Step-by-step guides will be made available to help members navigate the booking process.

Value for Money

Although Ticket Source* charges a fee, the time saved, reduced administrative burden, and improved attendee experience justify the cost. It allows WI to focus more on delivering meaningful events rather than managing logistics manually.

*Or a similar platform.