# DEVON WI NEWS

December 2025 - January 2026 Year 106 Issue 143 Cost 35p



**Wishing Every Devon WI**
**A Merry**
**Christmas**
**and**
**A Happy New Year 2026**


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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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**FROM THE OFFICE**

**If you send and SAE for multiple tickets please ensure it is sufficient in size and has the correct postage.**
**Thank you.**

A gentle reminder to bring milk if you are meeting at The Firs as we don't keep any supplies.

# CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT



*Dear Members*

Last month I had the pleasure to represent the Federation at the Dorset, Cornwall and Somerset Federation Annual Meetings. It's the opportunity to fly our flag, to see how other Federations do things and to share problems and successes. Two issues stood out for me.

First, some Federations are better at fundraising. We are working hard to run our operation as cost effectively as we can; the Firs project is an example; but the fact is that the Federation share of members' subscriptions barely covers the cost of running our office. The cost of everything else we do, must come either from reserves, which is not sustainable, or from fundraising. The primary task of the Trustees is to support and grow our WIs and to provide events and experiences for all our members. We can't do this without the money to fund it and this will inevitably mean more fundraising. We'll come back to this topic when we have been able to consider our 31st October year-end figures.

Second, some Federations are better at involving members in their activities, particularly in campaigning and involvement with their communities. Trustees cannot and should not do everything, so we are dependent on the involvement of members and WIs if we are going to make our experience of WI membership, more meaningful and enjoyable. This is one of the priorities of the Board.

We know that many WIs miss the old Speaker List, and it would like to have a new process which is easily accessible and able to be updated by WIs. I'm delighted that three members have stepped up to run a project themselves, which will design and implement a digital new Speaker List. A Trustee will oversee the project to provide connection with the Board. I hope this the first of many such projects as we go forward.

The WI was established in 1915 as a campaigning organisation and the Resolutions process is how we carry on this totemic tradition. NFWI are committed to completely revising the whole process over the next few years but meantime, we give our best support to what we have. I ask all our WI Committees to make time in their programmes to give all our members the space to discuss the Resolutions, so we can make informed decisions when we come to vote in the new year. Full details of each resolution and the resources available on My WI/Public Affairs and Campaigns tab and in briefer form in WI Life. If anyone is unsure about the process, please contact your Adviser.

On the 9th November, details of the next round of Denman Bursary Grants will have been published. The Scheme is designed to "support Federations in delivering enriching educational projects for their members, enabling them to create impactful projects that benefit their local communities". Grants are awarded up to £10,000. Details are on the Learning Hub and in WI Life. It would be great for Devon to be able to make an application. We need WIs to come up with ideas and be willing to help the Federation to complete the application process. Please look through the application details and send your ideas to the Federation Office or talk to your Adviser. You may want to think about joining with your adjacent WIs to create a joint project. The closing date is 30th April.

With my best wishes.

Lucy Brothwood , **Devon Federation Chair**



**300+ Club**

**Christmas Bonus Draws £50 each**
5 Roundswell
9 Stokenham Evening

**December £25 each**
148 Newton Abbot
166 Whimple

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 MATTERS

# Seasons Greetings to all our WIs from your Adviser Team



**LOOKING AFTER YOUR ARCHIVES** Archives are the historical record of the WI and should be carefully documented and stored properly so that information is easily accessible and can be passed on to future generations. These records once passed to Federation and the Record Office are often used by social historians, researchers to give a picture of social history through time, indeed your own local history group may research how their local area has changed over time. Why not use the winter months to go through your records, put in chronological order, date and name people places and events, throw away irrelevant paperwork. Some of your members may enjoy doing this over a cup of coffee and you may find some budding archivists and historians!

There is archiving help on MyWI regarding what should be kept or contact:

wiadvisers@devonwi.org.uk, or contact Jan Connolly our Federation Archivist for advice .

**IFE ALLOCATIONS** It's that time of year again when Treasurers will be thinking of closing their books and preparing the Financial Statement. We recommend that the WI accounting year ends on 31 December to allow adequate time for the independent examination of the accounts before they are presented at the Annual Meeting in the spring. If your WI has used a DFWI Independent Financial Examiner (IFE) in the past then , where possible, we will endeavour to allocate her to your WI again. You will shortly be hearing from her to arrange for the examination of the accounts for the latest financial year. If you have not yet heard from her, or if you have not used a DFWI IFE in the past but would like one allocated to you, please contact Maureen Hunter, the IFE Scheme Coordinator (ifecoordinator@devonwi.org.uk). We strongly recommend that you use one of the DFWI IFEs as they are fully trained and aware of the constitutional and legal requirements for the examination of charity accounts.

**WE WOULD LIKE YOU ON OUR TEAM!** Are you flexible and enthusiastic about WI, do you like working with and alongside people, are you able to be a team player, willing to visit other WIs and attend Federation Events? Then maybe you are someone who could be an Adviser here in Devon. Contact advisers@devonwi.org.uk expressing your interest and we will arrange either to meet or have a telephone conversation about how the process of becoming an Adviser in Devon Federation is carried out. Initially the training is on MyWi followed by a period of shadowing an Adviser and attending team meetings, then if approved by the Board of Trustees there will be on the job in-house training. Do think about sharing your enthusiasm to help others get the best out of their WI experience.

**WORKSHOPS** These will recommence in the spring. After the success of the Working Together work shop which covers all aspects of Committee roles, Programme Planning and the opportunity to network with other WIs plus answering questions and time for discussion we will be putting on more of these around the County.

Contact us with any topics you would like covered or if your WI would like to host a meeting in your area.

WI Advisers: wiadvisers@devonwi.org.uk

# TEAM Roundup

**ERC/RESOLUTIONS** **email:** jackie.bufton@devonwi.org.uk

DFWI and the Environment, Resolutions, and Campaigns sub-Committee invited WIs in the Devon area to take part in a Pocket Meadow project providing free seeds. This is an initiative to raise awareness of habitat loss facing bees and other insects pollinators and positively creating small areas of meadow flowers across our county offering our bees and insects a foraging corridor and a better chance of survival.



**Newton Abbot WI** decided it would be great to involve the younger generation, and asked the Cubs at 1st Newton Abbot Sea Scouts (Kingsteignton ) if they'd like to help. Arkela Lauren thought it a lovely idea. Karen (President), and Liz (Vice President) from Newton Abbot WI, and are both on the ERC sub-committee. Karen was delighted to attend a Cub meeting, alongside Sarah, who is a member of Newton Abbot WI, but also a Scout leader of this group. Her husband Dean, also a Scout leader had prepared the one metre square piece of land needed. The decision to make the Air Dry Clay was a good one. The children had to read the recipe, measure out the flour, salt and warm water, then adding the wild flower seeds. Mixing it altogether with tools to begin with, and then their hands. They had great fun ! They each made two 'seed bombs', one to be placed on the prepared ground to let the rain disperse, and the other to dry, and throw when it had dried out. This gave the children two different styles to plant. They are all looking forward to monitoring the 'plot', and keeping Newton Abbot WI informed of progress.

**FOOD, CRAFT AND SKILLS** **email:** janet.connolly@devonwi.org.uk

We were well over subscribed for our Jane Austen tea afternoons with over 120 applications - luckily our speaker Hazel Jones was able to give us a second date. Our **Themed Lunches 2026** will be held in February at halls in Rattery and Longdown. Our speaker will be an ex Tiller girl. Flyer with your Secretary now.

All on our F,C & S team would like to send best wishes for Christmas and 2026.

## Competition

### Have Your Say – Help Rename *Devon WI News*!

We're giving *Devon News* a fresh new look, and we want YOU to be part of its exciting future! This is your chance to make history by choosing a name that reflects the spirit, creativity, and community of the WI in Devon.

Think bold, think inspiring, think uniquely WI! Whether it's something traditional, modern, or full of local charm, your ideas could become the new identity of our magazine.



**Why enter?**

- Your name could be on the cover of an issue!
- Celebrate your creativity and connection to our WI family. Win bragging rights (and maybe a little prize too!).

**How to enter:**

Send your suggested name to news@devonwi.org.uk by **14th January 2026 .**

Let's make this a true WI collaboration – your voice matters! So, grab a cuppa, get those creative juices flowing, and send us your best ideas today.

## SPACES STILL AVAILABLE!



**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.**

### 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 for both 20 February 2026.

### Combined Arts

Pat Wyatt wishes to thank everyone who took part in the Coffee Art afternoon last October (pictured below).

The afternoon - using coffee as paint - was a great success with much laughter, and some surprising results! We hope to have some more Craft for you this year. Watch this space!

The St George's Trophy, and Radio Cup Competitions are with your secretaries now.

We will accept Radio Devon Cup entries (*see left*) by email . However you must attach the entry as a Microsoft attachment, with a second attachment with your entry form details.

Best Wishes for 2026 from Pat and the Combined Arts sub-Committee. email p.wyatt@devonwi.org.uk



## Around the County

At **Feniton and Buckerell WIs** (*below*) September meeting they welcomed as their Speaker a representative of South West Blood Bikes who arrived on his magnificent motor cycle and members were allowed to sit on it! This is a very worthy charity, funded by donations and fundraising. It is manned by volunteers who deliver blood, stem cells, pathology samples and breast milk all over the West Country saving the NHS thousands of pounds a year .



A group of **North Tawton WI** members (*right)* spent an informative afternoon watching family blacksmiths Tim and Ollie at work. A few had the chance to hammer steel using a modern day electromagnetic forge and acknowledged that bending metal is a skill that requires strength and patience.



**Lewtrenchard WI** members and guests enjoyed a very informative evening with OVAID, an orangutan veterinary aid charity, vet Nigel Hicks and his wife Sarah (*right)* were telling us about the charity they set up and the work they do in Borneo, rescuing orphaned babies , where in some cases their mothers have been killed. They set up the charity over 16 years ago after visiting Indonesia.
For more information on the charity visit: www.ovaid.org



### RESOLUTIONS IN ACTION



For their September meeting **Aylesbeare WI** their Secretary, Christina Butterworth, is qualified to teach life saving techniques and supported by other members with nursing/medical backgrounds, she took us through a demonstration of emergency first aid. Dealing with choking, unconsciousness, the recovery position, stemming severe bleeding, heart attack and cardiac arrest. By the end of the evening, we had learned what would give us increased confidence to react in an emergency, instead of just being an onlooker.

**Stokeinteignhead WI** is a small village group. Their meeting in October was a session to teach everyone about CPR and demonstrate how to use a defibrillator. Following a fatality on Maidencombe beach the week before, they decided to open their meeting to anyone wanting to learn how to help save a life. The group was given clear and concise information and a film showing the use of a Defibrillator.
Questions were answered and then the group had plenty of opportunity to attempt cardiac compressions on a dummy, with 20 available to work on.

Guidance and much encouragement was given!





All this year **Brixham WI** has enjoyed a monthly afternoon with the Life on the Edge team at South Devon National landscape. Instigated by Jackie Bufton, they have been able to benefit from guided walks with wildlife experts along our coastline and a number of workshops, making bug hotels and willow bees for example. If you visit the National Trust property Coleton Fishacre next season you may well notice the wildflower meadow which the WI helped to seed.



**Honiton WI Art Group** (*below*) exhibited their work at The Beehive in Honiton in October. They are a small enthusiastic group who range in abilities/interests and varied backgrounds who get together to have arty fun . This was their first exhibition so they were nervous but excited. Their WI group encourages anyone who leans towards creativity to join a welcoming class that gets together fortnightly to paint/draw/collage experiment in any medium, a sense of humour helps! We have a talented tutor in Jacky Hazeldine who leads them through their endeavours. Some of the group have never put brush to canvas or paper before. Others have returned to a much loved creative release before life and work got in the way. Colour, laughter and friendship being an essential





The speaker for **Combe Martin WI**'s November meeting cancelled at very short notice but two Combe Martin WI members stepped in. Linda Dovell and Pam Norman who regularly create floral arrangements gave members guidance making Christmas log decorations. The hall was filled with the fragrance of winter foliage and Jenny's delicious homemade mince pies!



As with most WIs, **South Molton Sisters** have a tea rota but these two (Penny Coleman and Jenny Lathbury) took the job so seriously they dressed up for the occasion!



| Dates for your Diary | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| Working Together Session | Date in 2026 TBC | North Devon |
| Resolutions 2026 | Voting Slips to Federation | 6 February 206 |
| 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 |
| National Annual Meeting | 4 June 2026 | Online— see website |
| DFWI Annual Meeting—Plymouth Area | TBC | Venue 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.

## WI – 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 Keep Your Membership?

**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.

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### #WIAndProud – Are You Our Next Social Media Star?

Think WI is all jam and Jerusalem? Think again! We're shaking things up in Devon and looking for some savvy social media gurus to help us show the world what WI is really about –friendship, fun, and fabulousness (with the occasional cake pic, obviously).

Do you love Instagram filters more than coffee filters? Can you craft a caption that makes people laugh, cry, and click "Follow" all at once? Then we need YOU on our team!

We're building a squad to spread WI magic online—sharing stories, events, and the occasional cheeky meme. No tweed required, just enthusiasm, creativity, and maybe a knack for TikTok dances.
Contact enquiries@devonwi.org.uk

Join us and make WI the hottest hashtag in Devon!