



SFWI News Bulletin

Issue 69 April 2026

Find us on:



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Hello Everyone

Spring has sprung finally! Lambing has started and I have three lambs so far!

The "Here Come Spring" event is just around the corner, and we are very excited. There are some amazing speakers and stalls, all to inspire you. We look forward to seeing you. We are delighted to announce that we will be drawing WI Bursaries at this event. These will be for two WIs to enjoy something educational and special. Good luck with this!

Just a reminder to committees, our first Treasurer Update is 15th April. All officers are welcome as you are all responsible for the money. It's not too late to be on the list.

All our subcommittees at SFWI are now called teams, a move to be in line with modern language.

The NFWI Annual Meeting watch party is at Stafford Rugby Club on June 4th, 2026. Thank you to all delegates who have given up their time to represent our WIs. Observer tickets are now available at £10; this includes lunch. Look out for the application form this month. The meeting itself is online, but we wanted to make it a special day for us in Staffordshire. It will be great, once again to spend time together.

Thank you all for your ongoing support. See you soon.

Helen



SFWI Love Yourself Wellness Event - Save the Date!

A successful bid for a grant will enable ambitious plans for a Wellness event for all ladies to take place later this year.

Staffordshire Federation of Women's Institutes has been granted funds this year by the National Federation for a community-based educational event. Its bid has enabled us to host a Wellness Day at the County Showground in September - not just for WI members but for all women - although some activities will be restricted to members..

A variety of activities, led by experts, have been secured - all aimed to allow women to take time to be kind to themselves.

The event's brainchild is Helen Newman, Federation Trustee and former Chair. She said, 'In these days of juggling roles and tasks, many women need to consider themselves from time to time and this event will showcase activities that can provide much needed calmness in their hectic lives'. She added, 'Some activities will be offered in timed slots but mostly they will be drop-in sessions throughout the day, allowing greater attendance and participation'.

The day-long event will be held at The Showground on **Saturday 26 September** and all activities will be free of charge. More details will follow.

Committee News and Activities

This year's **Garden Festival Trophy** aims to raise awareness of the Swift - an amazing bird whose numbers are falling due to loss of habitat and climate change. The competition is for any item - crafted, artwork, written, poster etc - to shine a spotlight on their plight and to give one clear message for people to remember.

Competition details [here](#).
Please Show your Love for the Swift and help make a difference.

Entries will be displayed at Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to inspire visitors - and at the SFWI *It's Christmas* event when judge's comments will be

Staffordshire Newsletter Press Report Shield

Please take note that the competition for this year's Press Report Shield has new criteria: Entries are limited to an account of one meeting or event and one sheet of A4. Up to three photos may be included.

[Here is the link for the competition](#) which will be judged by a member of Reach Media - Staffordshire Newsletter is part of this group.

All entries, with the judge's comments, will be on display at the SFWI *It's Christmas* event.

Annual Federation Quiz

Have you entered your Team (or Teams) for the [Annual Federation Quiz](#)?

It is on THURSDAY 18 JUNE at the Showground and the theme for table decoration is *The Importance of Water*.

Questions will be on a range of subjects and a fun night is guaranteed!
Here is the link for the entry form - please make sure any mobility needs are stated.

All WI Committees have received a Best Finance Practice document and we hope that you find this useful.

Please remember that if you have large reserves in your bank account, this is members' money so please try to use this for their benefit. Reducing your WI portion of the Subscription is one way to benefit all members. If you do reduce your WI subscription, this should be the same for all members. All members should be treated equally.

EVERY ACTION COUNTS: -



Talking about things that matter to you raises awareness and starts other conversations. Showing people items to highlight the issue often has a more lasting effect.

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Dear WIs and Members

This is an update from the Member Support Team.

Currently we are dramatically reduced in numbers. We will continue to support you, but our response time may be reduced.

A member of the team will always be available at our big events at the County Showground; Here comes Spring, Its Christmas and The County Show and Wellness Day. We can answer your queries and give advice. Please come and see us at the "Here to Help Stand".

We always welcome the opportunity to have a chat with you.

Please don't hesitate to contact us by email (see Adviser List Form) or via the office admin@sfdwi.org.

We are recruiting to the WI Adviser role. If this interests you, please contact us for an informal chat.

Helen Mancey
Member Support Team Chair

Here Comes Spring!

April 21st will soon be here.

In the morning. Charlotte Almond the CEO of Staffordshire Women's Aid will give a short talk about her work, helping women in need. Then Sarah English, Lisa Williams & Helen Johnson from the Staffordshire History Centre will talk about their work and encourage us to help with their project, sewing map bags.

This will be swiftly followed by the arrival of royalty. King Charles II will be in our midst. Dr Gareth Williams will take on the regal persona of the Merry Monarch.

After lunch, we will welcome Julia Bradbury, TV presenter, a great lover of the outdoors and an advocate of healthy living. Our wonderful stalls will be there for you to enjoy, as well as an amazing raffle and a chance to shop 'til you drop. This Event is always a joyful affair, as spring is in the air.

Please ensure that if you have severe mobility issues let us know and a suitable seat will be allocated for you. We are trying hard to keep everyone safe, so that the day can run smoothly. The Events Committee will be there to welcome you. Enjoy the day and have fun.

Verity Conner Chair Events Team

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Congratulations to the March Winners!

1 st Prize	£ 25.00	No	1	C Burton, Whittington WI
2 nd Prize	£ 10.00	No	104	B Riddle, Haughton WI
3 rd Prize	£ 5.00	No	43	S Nicholas, Whittington WI

Upcoming Events:

[See here for upcoming events.](#)

Saturday Sewing Workshop: SFWI hosts at Cornerstone on 21st March 2026

Three zips types were demonstrated and then executed by the members in the workshop. All the materials were provided by Marianne our coach for the day; and included a variety of zips. Members brought their own sewing machine, and Marianne provided the ready-cut pieces and advice, guidance and different zips to use.

Sharing of equipment details was interesting, and depth of discussion about good quality materials was helpful. We tried: a zip with facing for a fly, a concealed zip, and a normal zip - all demonstrated by Marianne and then made up as an exemplar by each member; discussion about replacing zips, re-purposing and resizing garments as well as re-fitting broken zips took place.

Marianne took care to coach the participants who had varied skills and knowledge. All took away high quality finished examples completed to a professional level.

Participants said: “these were easier to make than expected with good explanations.” “I understand where I was going wrong before”. “I’ll have to practice”



Crafts, Art and Design Team

Resolutions—The National Results are in and The NFWI Board of Trustees has agreed to put forward the top two resolutions to the Annual Meeting in June.. See article from Lichfield Evening WI.

2025/26 resolutions		Selections Received to date	Percentages*
	Accessible public toilet facilities to promote dignity, health, and social inclusion	41068	44.7
2	Action on women’s homelessness	24791	27.0
3	Nearer to Nature	6337	6.9
4	Love your Vulva – Self checking is your best defence against vulval cancer	6651	7.2
5	Every child needs a friend	13151	14.3
Total selections received		91,998	

Lichfield is a beautiful but busy city without any toilet facilities at the city rail station and just two individual toilet cubicles at the adjacent bus and coach station. Hundreds of travellers to our city without accessible toilets where they are needed is a “desperate” situation.

Hurrah, a new proposed resolution! So what do the ladies of Lichfield Evening WI do? Well, to date I have made a “face to face” appointment with our MP, emails have gone out to the council, we have support from the Lib Dem leader and Lichfield Litter Legends are backing our campaign.

Watch this space and let the ladies of all the Staffordshire WIs make a difference!

Margaret Harrison - Lichfield Evening WI President.