



WEST KENT WI NEWS

westkentnews@wkwfwi.org.uk

December 2025—January 2026



*Seasons Greeting and Best
Wishes*

*For a Happy and Healthy
New Year 2026*

*From all at West Kent Federation
of WIs*

Have You Booked your Early Bird Ticket with your Rep for the AGM at the Woodville, Woodville Place, Gravesend DA12 1DD on 18 March yet?
10.30am—4.45pm (doors open at 10am)



The National Federation of WIs CEO Melissa Green is one of the speakers.

Judith Holder comedian and writer. Will be sure to entertain us with her stories. She will probably be keeping an eye out for new material from women of a certain age!



SCHOOLREADERS

The most important people at Schoolreaders are our volunteers who give up their time to go into schools and support children's reading. Schoolreaders come from all sorts of backgrounds - the thing that unites them is their genuine passion for inspiring children with a love of reading. Many of our volunteers have been with the scheme since it started, and say that their school visits are one of the high points of their week.

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



I always try to ignore Christmas until December but with adverts appearing already in November it gets harder every year! As many of you know I work matchdays at Crystal Palace fc and with our involvement in Europe this year the next few

months are busier than usual with a trip to Strasbourg (apparently the Christmas market is amazing!) and Dublin as well as our usual Premier League and cup games, all before the big day!

WI is also busy with carol concerts and Christmas crafting meetings, as well as parties and pantos!

This year we have a December/January edition for you of West Kent News to give editors and contributors a break over the festive period. Don't forget to look at the events for next year and book up early for the AGM to get the early bird price!! I know that some WIs don't have December meetings while others miss out the January one so please watch out for the closing date of the 30 January!

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, WI Advisers and office staff we wish you all a **wonderful Christmas and a prosperous New Year!**

Take Care
Amanda

Sadly, we must announce the passing of **GILL LAMBERT & ELIZABETH PATTERSON**, both previous West Kent Board members. An obituary from the Federation will appear in the next edition of WKN.



Treasurer's Corner

Your WI would have received notification of the subscription prices due 1 April 2026. The increase from last year is £3. £2 of this increase would go to the WI and a 50p increase for the Federation and 50p to NFWI.



The individual WIs are still able to set their own portion of the subscription fee up to price set.

I am the Treasurer of the Federation as well as being Treasurer of my own WI so I wear two hats! My own WI is in a fortunate position, at the moment, to subsidise the subscription portion retained by our WI, not all WIs are so lucky. We do have to look very carefully at our expenditure and ways to boost our income. Not an easy task and we look at inventive ways to run our meetings.

The same is with the Federation. Costs are constantly increasing and we are not unique in struggling to balance income with expenditure. We are conscious of maintaining our commitment to provide workshops and Federations days.

Technology has played a very large part in being able to keep costs to a minimum. With postage costs escalating and also information being able to reach the WIs promptly has meant that emails and Zoom meetings have been vital. If you are apprehensive of using the latest technology or want to expand your use, do let us know and we could perhaps assist.

Kind regards

Rita King

On Sunday 9 November several members of **BEXLEYHEATH & CRAYFORD WATERSIDE WI** attended the remembrance service at the War Memorial in Bexleyheath. Our members had made poppies in felt and wool (crochet and knitted) which were then made into the wreath by our President Sophie Matthews. The wreath was laid by Chris Watson, one of our WI members who is an army veteran from a military family and an active member of the Royal British Legion.

Federation Noticeboard for December 2025—January 2026

Donations

Many thanks to West Peckham WI for their very kind donation. As always, the Trustees are most grateful for the support they receive from the members of the West Kent Federation and very much appreciate these generous donations

Yearbook

Please note that Erith WIs meeting venue has changed its name to Erith Community and Activities Club. All other details remain the same.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2026

FEBRUARY

Thur	19	Introduction to Pen, ink and	EHL
Fri	20	Watercolour Wash	Snodland

MARCH

Sat	07	Intro to Pen Ink & watercolour wash	Westerham
Weds	18	WKFWI Annual General Meeting	Gravesend

JUNE

Thurs 4	NFWI Annual General Meeting	Online
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Spring Time - Murder Mystery—date and place to be confirmed

List of Speakers 2025/2026 Please note the following additional speaker

Pete Benson - Tales of a Film Prop Man · Tales of a Film Prop Man: Take Two

Primroses, Bodiam Road, Sandhurst, Kent TN18 5LN

Tel No: 07464 073180 Email: benson.clare@yahoo.co.uk Website: www.peter-benson.com

No fee: Donations gratefully received, 15p per mile travel expenses Available at all times and at short notice

New Speakers

A big thank you to the PA&I sub-committee for hosting such a successful Speakers Audition Day in October. The Federation is delighted to welcome the following speakers:

Jo de Serrano - Professional Declutterer and Organiser

62 Edward Road, Croydon CR0 6DY

Tel No: 07769 065404 Email: hello@neat-tidy.co.uk Fee: £80 plus travel expenses

Sophie Brigden - Unleashing Resilience from Within – A Story of Growth after Trauma

10 Woodside Road, Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 8QA

Tel No: 07796 686906 Email: sambrigden@hotmail.com Fee: £80 plus travel expenses

Tim Millett

Royalty, Celebrity and Scandal – The Marriage of George IV and Caroline of Brunswick

161 Friern Road, London SE22 0AZ

Tel No: 07778 637898 Email: tim@historicmedals.com Fee: £85 plus 45p per mile travel expenses

Lucy Carr - Tropic Skincare

Maidstone

Tel No: 07903 201603 Email: lucycarr6@hotmail.co.uk Fee: Travel expenses only

Sonia Case - Burying the Ghosts – My Mother's Experience of Escaping Nazi Germany

4 Crofton Lane, Orpington BR5 1HL

Tel No: 07941 172319 Email: scase92@gmail.com Fee: £75 plus travel expenses

Sue Parker-Nutley - An Actor's Life for Me

24 Melody Road, Biggin Hill TN16 3PG

Tel No: 07813 251300 Email: sparkernut@talktalk.net Fee: £100 plus 40p per mile travel expenses if 20 miles from Biggin Hill

RESOLUTIONS

Your WI Secretary will by now have received the information on the first round of voting for this year's resolutions, having started with 30 potential resolutions, the shortlisting meeting voted to put through five potential resolutions. The proposals will need to be discussed & voted on by your WI between November and February and your Secretary will submit a table of the votes cast for each resolution to WKF, for the numbers to be collated at federation level. Within your WI each member has a vote to choose one resolution out of these five, to put forward to the final vote at the NFWI AGM on the 4 June. The total of your WI vote must be sent to Ethel Hunt Lodge (Fedsec@wkfwi.org.uk) by the 6 February by your WI at the latest so that they can be sent off to the NFWI. After last year's Constitution change members of multiple WIs can make their selection and vote in all their WIs Here are the five choices:

Accessible public toilet facilities to promote dignity, health, and social inclusion

This resolution is a call for accessible, clean, free public toilets which are fundamental to inclusion and wellbeing, especially for women, older people, disabled individuals, parents and carers. It invites WI branches to take meaningful action—through advocacy, partnership, and community engagement—to support local authorities and civil society in reversing the closure trend and ensuring dignity for all.

Action on women's homelessness

The NFWI echoes the calls of homelessness charities and urges all levels of government to take action to reduce women's homelessness, reduce the number of women at risk of homelessness, and improve the quality of temporary accommodation. We call on WI members to support homelessness organisations in their communities and campaign to ensure that all women have a place they can safely call home.

Every child needs a friend

We call on all WI members, the care system, and government to raise awareness of the independent visitor system for children in care in order to increase the number of volunteer Independent Visitors and the children in the care system who are befriended by them. We want every child in care to be offered the opportunity to have an adult figure in their life who chooses to spend a few hours a month with them.

Love Your Vulva – Self checking is your best defence against vulval cancer

Self-checking your vulva is important in ensuring the earlier detection of vulval cancer and to enhance survival chances. We call upon WI members to work together to raise awareness of the importance of self-checking and seeking medical advice as early as possible and, to help highlight this rare cancer to GPs to promote prompt referrals to medical specialists when needed.

Nearer to Nature

There is a growing body of evidence that getting closer to nature is of great benefit to physical and mental health as well as to the environment. This is called 'green health'. We call on WI members to work locally to improve access to local green spaces and support others to access it too. We call on health promotion services to increase public awareness of the use and benefits of 'green health', and health and care commissioners to support 'green social prescribing' in every GP practice.

The overall winning resolution which is usually one, but occasionally when the voting results are very close can be two National resolutions. In the first round, the result of the highest number of votes from members within each WI. Each member makes their selection and casts their vote within their WI for the resolution they support the most. The results are totaled by your WI and the resolution result with the most votes is sent onto West Kent Federation to collate and send onto the NFWI. **Further resources, including PowerPoint presentations and quizzes, will be available on My WI from 4 November.**

The final stage of voting in April / May is a personal individual voting choice either For or Against the resolution(s) made by all members individually.

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE

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Information about the first stage results is available in the November issue of WI Life and also on “My WI” under Public Affairs / Resolutions or by using the search bar (see below). There will be a page that gives more detailed background information for members to view if they want it. Please would all WIs make sure that your members have the opportunity to vote on this first round and later the final round in April/May. Resolutions 2025-26.

In addition, WI members are invited to apply to participate in the Resolution Selection Shortlist Meeting each year. This is usually put on as a link on the WI home page between now and until 31 July each year. If accepted, you will be a full participant in the shortlisting process, which normally now takes place online

Whilst you are considering this year’s resolution choices, some of you may be considering proposing a resolution of your own for next year. You now have plenty of time to prepare your proposal. Every year members from every Federation are invited to submit resolution proposals on issues that are topical to the current time.

All resolutions that meet the criteria will be considered and submitted for final discussion at the Resolution Submission Shortlist Meeting. All submissions are discussed blind, so those involved have no idea of either the authors or the originating WI who submitted them; it is judged on the resolution and content itself.

Before sending your resolution to the Federation, it must be supported by your own WI members in the first instance as a good proposal to go on behalf of your WI.

It can be a good idea at an early stage to contact one of your Resolution Coordinators to discuss the idea, its content, and presentation to ensure your vision is in line with the NFWI criteria and to discuss any supporting evidence and references. We can send you a resolution proposal submission form for 2025-26 or you can download the form yourself directly from the Home page Search bar on My WI / “Resolution Submission Form”.

It is also worth watching the online presentation on “How to write a Resolution” webinar which is an article under the Public Affairs NFWI News& Actions heading, and if you are further interested, in doing the WI online “Resolution Co-Ordinator” training which will provide more helpful information on what the NFWI and Federation Resolution Coordinators are looking for in a successful viable proposal for submission. This is an interesting useful and not onerous exercise and does not take too long.

As your Federation Resolution Coordinators, we are here to help and support you when you need us. Whatever you are thinking of proposing please do check that any proposal would apply to the whole of the UK as several resolutions discussed in 2024 could not be moved forward because the changes asked for would not apply across the whole country. The devolved governments of Scotland, Wales and the Islands often do things differently from England.

I hope these suggestions are helpful. Our best wishes to any of you preparing to put forward a Resolution for next year. If I or Thushara can be of any help, please do not hesitate to contact one of us, ideally with plenty of notice before the deadline submission date.

Rosemary Tidby or Thushara Kasturiratne - West Kent Federation Co-Ordinators

Email: resolutions@wkfw.org.uk

Tackling Two WI Resolutions in one go at CONEY HALL VILLAGE WI



At our October meeting we were joined by Julie Whitehead from the London Ambulance service, who gave a talk and demonstration about CPR and the use of defibrillators in improving the chances of survival from a cardiac arrest outside of hospital. Many of our members were able to give CPR a try.

We also had a collection of toothpaste, toothbrushes and other toiletries in the attractive bags made by some of our members. These were donated to Bromley & Croydon Women’s Aid.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Woodville
Woodville Place, Gravesend DA12 1DD

Wednesday 18 March 2026
10.30am to 3.45pm (doors open at 10.00am)

PRESENTATION: Annual Report & Accounts for 2025

SPEAKERS

Melissa Green, CEO of NFWI

Melissa has a professional background in the third sector, with senior leadership roles in a number of national membership and volunteer-led organisations and with a focus on children, families and communities.

As Chief Executive, Melissa's role is to lead and support the NFWI staff team and work in partnership with the Board and Officers in supporting members and ensuring the continued strength and ongoing development of the organisation.

Schoolreaders

One in four children leave primary school unable to read to the expected standard. This means they are unable to fully access their secondary education which will have a life-long impact on their opportunities.

Schoolreaders is a national child literacy charity that recruits volunteers to go into local primary schools to listen to children read. The more people our children can read to, the better. It increases their confidence, their self esteem and their fluency.

Judith Holder

Judith has spent most of her career making peak time entertainment programmes and has produced some of the most talented names in the industry – Victoria Wood, Billy Connolly, Lenny Henry, Dame Edna, and Clive James to name a few – which is code for she has never really had a proper job.

In the last few decades, Judith has concentrated on writing and performing comedy about growing older, notably the internationally successful TV series Grumpy Old Women which was then turned into four sell out stage shows and six books. She is currently podcasting weekly with Jenny Eclair Older and Wider (note wider not wiser) which they explain is the podcast for people who don't really know what a podcast is. They have had 2.8 million downloads so far and have been nominated in this year's podcast awards.

Judith recently spent a year as Visiting Research Fellow at Oxford University's Institute of Population Ageing where she looked at the phenomenon of later middle age and spent a lot of time in the Bodleian pretending to be 18 again. Her hobbies include lockable Tupperware and liquorice all sorts.

DELEGATE TICKETS ARE FREE however you still need to complete and return the Ticket Application form and provide a name. The Delegate WI will be printed on the front of your ticket and **Delegates are free to sit anywhere in the hall.**

NON-VOTING MEMBERS TICKETS – Admission will be by ticket only at a cost of **£15.00 per ticket** and WI Reps should apply to the Federation Office for these by **Friday 13 February.**

However, we are offering an 'Early Bird' booking price of **£13.50 per ticket** if received in the office by **Friday 30 January.** Please note there is a **maximum of 10 tickets per WI.** If the event is oversubscribed, we will go to ballot and let you know your allocation after the second closing date.

Please complete the Ticket Application form and email to Tickets@wkfw.org.uk or post to the Federation Office. All ticket applications, whether received by email or post, will be acknowledged. If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact the office to check we have received your request. As always, your WI will be invoiced for tickets after the event.

**ADMISSION TO THE MEETING WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED ON PRODUCTION OF A
TICKET
TICKETS ARE SOLD ON A NON-RETURNABLE, NON-REFUNDABLE BASIS**

MEMBERS WITH LIMITED MOBILITY

Please indicate on the Ticket Application form if a reserved seat is required for member(s) with limited mobility. Seating will be at the end of a row and space is limited, but we will do our best to accommodate you. There is also limited space available for wheelchairs, so please let the Federation Office know if wheelchair access is required. Please note if you bring a rollator or mobility scooter to the event, these will need to be stored in the Kent Room.

HEARING IMPAIRED

The main Auditorium has an infrared hearing system which is available for those sat in rows D to P in the stalls. Please let us know your requirements when booking your tickets.

STALLS AND BASKETS will be situated in the Kent Room which is up the stairs on the right.

COLLECTION

We will be collecting for Gravesham Food Bank and would be grateful for any non perishable donations. If your WI would like to make up **one** bag of items – a strong bag for life could be used, maximum size 18 x 15 x 8 inches. This is a voluntary collection and WIs can participate if they wish.

RHS WISLEY DRAW

As a Federation we are Associate Members of the RHS which entitles us to 50 tickets for a visit to RHS Wisley. Remember, this is for a **one** group visit of up to 50 people and you are welcome to include members from other WIs to use all the tickets.

BURSARIES

(1) Three Bursaries for Individual Members

These are not subject specific and can be used for any course chosen by the member as long as it meets the WI charitable objectives. The course can be residential, non-residential, or online.

- a) Each bursary will be for a set figure of £200. If the course costs more than that then the member should pay the balance.
- b) Winners will have two years to take up the bursary.
- c) Winners will need to check with the Federation that the course meets WI objectives.
- d) If possible, the Federation should pay the provider direct. If not, we will refund the member on production of confirmation paperwork.

Members will have to apply for entry into the individual bursaries using the application box in either the October, November, and December/January West Kent News, or email or write in with your details.

Please note members can only apply once and winners will be chosen by draw.

Please also note that if you have won a bursary within the last five years, you are not eligible to enter.

(2) Two Bursaries for WIs as follows:-

NFWI Raffle

One bursary to be funded from the proceeds of the NFWI Raffle.

Memorial Bursary (formerly the Denman Memorial Bursary)

The winning WIs can decide whether to use these bursaries to book a specialised tutor/workshop that would be open to all its members to attend, or hold a draw for an individual to have a chance of winning the bursary.

All WIs will be entered automatically for these bursaries and winners will be chosen by draw.

CLOSING DATES

Friday 30 January 2026

‘Early Bird’ ticket applications and
Applications for the RHS Wisley Draw and Bursaries

Friday 13 February 2026

Ticket applications and
Stationery orders to be received in the office for collection at the AGM

RHS Wisley Draw

As a Federation we are Associate Members of the RHS which entitles us to 50 tickets for a visit to RHS Wisley.

If your WI would like to enter into the draw for these tickets, which will be held at the AGM on Wednesday 18 March 2026, please complete the entry form.

Remember, this is for a ONE group visit of up to 50 people and you are welcome to include members from other WIs to use all the tickets. The tickets will show the 'shelf life of the offer' usually the current year and you will have to arrange your own transport. This would be deemed an educational item and your WI could pay transport costs.

Applications can be submitted either by using this form or by letter or email.

Please make sure that all the information requested on the application box is included: WI, Contact Name, Address and Postcode, Tel No and Email.

West Kent Federation of Women's Institutes

WISLEY TICKETS

Please submit only one WI application – thank you

WI

would like to be included in the annual draw for tickets to visit RHS Wisley

No transport is included in this offer

Contact Name

Address

..... Postcode

Tel No

Email

Apply to: FedSec@wkwfi.org.uk

or to the Federation Office at Ethel Hunt Lodge
clearly marked 'Wisley'

Closing Date: Friday 30 January 2026

WEST KENT FEDERATION OF WIs

2026 Annual Bursary for Education in any subject

Please submit only one personal application – thank you – either on this form, or by email or letter

WI

Contact Name

Address

..... Postcode

Tel No Email

Apply to: FedSec@wkwfi.org.uk

or to the Federation Office at Ethel Hunt Lodge clearly marked 'Bursary'

Closing Date: Friday 30 January 2026

Please note if you win a bursary at the 2026 AGM, you will not be eligible to enter again within the next five years.

This year's Resolution, "Bystanders can be Lifesavers" was a timely one for **CHIPSTEAD WI**, as some of our members had already taken part in a First Aid course, learning to do CPR. We now feel confident that there will always be someone at our meetings who could step in if needed.

We also held a Pop-up Café, serving soup, bread, cakes and hot drinks in the village hall, as well as having stalls for more cakes, preserves and books. This was very popular, and our efforts, along with some donations, raised £900 towards a defibrillator for the village.

Janet Sharp





Green Team

greenteam@wkwfwi.org.uk

In September the first Tunbridge Wells Climate and Nature Fair was held, and **West Kent Federation Green Team** were there! Despite the monsoon type rain, the Team were able to show a side of the WI that many members of the public don't see and that is a campaigning force to be reckoned with!! The stand was also visited by local councillors who talked about how they were tackling climate change in their area. It was a great day and one that the Green Team hope to attend again next year!



New Year Resolution ideas from the Green Team

As we enter 2026 here are a few individual New Year resolutions for you that may be developed into your WI meeting programme or adopted into your daily routine!

- **The "Unplug & Save" Challenge:**

- **Resolution:** Identify and eliminate "**phantom energy**" (electricity used by devices when switched off but still plugged in) by unplugging unused electronics or using smart power strips.

- **Action:** Dedicate one hour each week to auditing household appliance usage and switching off or unplugging non-essential items.

- **The Plastic-Free Four:**

- **Resolution:** Successfully replace four common single-use plastic items in the home with reusable or biodegradable alternatives (e.g., cling film, plastic scourers, liquid soap bottles, or sandwich bags).

- **Action:** Keep a running tally of "plastics avoided" to see the impact.

- **The "Eco-Swap" Month:**

- **Resolution:** Dedicate one month of 2026 to purchasing **only second-hand, borrowed, or swapped items** (excluding essential groceries and toiletries).

- **Action:** Organise a WI clothing, book, or plant swap with local WIs

- **The Sustainable Shopping Commitment:**

- **Resolution:** Research and commit to supporting **three local businesses** (farmers, artisans, refill shops) over three large online retailers for non-essential purchases throughout the year.

- **"Green Advocacy" Corner:**

- **Resolution:** Dedicate a regular portion of WI meeting time (e.g., 5-10 minutes) to discussing and taking **collective action on an environmental issue** (e.g., writing to a local councillor, signing a national petition, or promoting an existing WI campaign such as the fight against plastic soup).

- Action:** Appoint a "Green Champion" to lead the discussion and track progress.

If every member committed to just one of these resolutions think of the difference it would make!!

Merry Christmas from the Green Team and a Happy New Year!

Two members of **CROCKENHILL WI** went to support Joydens Wood WI's evening of 'A Night at the Musicals'. We feel that it is increasingly important to support our fellow WIs and we are pleased to see that members of Hextable and Swanley Village WI were also there. It was a very pleasant evening with Erith Operatic Society providing a collection of songs from The Sound of Music, The Greatest Showman, West Side Story and others. A delicious selection of home-made cakes with tea and coffee were served. Pat Wells



Frittenden WI is proud to report that member and former President **JILL ASHBEE** was nominated by the Mayor of Tenterden to attend a reception in recognition of her voluntary work at Tenterden's Social Hub and Dementia Centre. She has been a Voluntary Assistant since the day the Centre opened in 1980. The nomination was approved and she was invited to attend a reception held on 10 July at Walmer Castle where she met King Charles! A well-deserved fantastic memory for Jill to treasure, we are very proud of her.

Carol Campbell **CROCKENHILL WI** Treasurer and Climate committee Representative organised a WI & Community CPR evening event at the village Hall. James Lang from Kent Fire Rescue Services provided a first-rate CPR demonstration. A member said he delivered the event with humour and in a way that everyone would remember what to do in an emergency. We had 29 people attending. We were shown how to apply CPR on babies, children and adults. Plus, how to use a defibrillator. James brought with him the famous 'Annie dummies for everyone to practise on and we paired up to practise. James even brought a baby and child Annie dummy too. He was an excellent instructor and very entertaining while delivering a very serious subject. Our WI members supplied refreshments. An excellent evening.
Cheri Yeates

BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA WI ladies welcomed Mario Creatura who gave a very interesting, illustrated and entertaining presentation on 'Life at No 10'. The competition was "A limerick about Parliament". President Amanda read out the entries which caused great hilarity. This is the winner by our Secretary Marilyn:

Westminster in charge? My, oh my,
Their ideas are just pie in the sky
They should all be thrown out
Of that there's no doubt
And hand over to the WI

Anthea Springett

It was summer and it all started with such a small question, 'Do you think we should refresh our poppy display?' And so, the **BURHAM AND WOULDHAM WI** poppy project was born and with the blessing of the parish council, donations of wool (thank you, Mrs. Saunders), and the help of friends and supporters, we created a new tribute to the bravery of those who died to preserve our freedoms.

The poppies were knitted and crocheted in sitting rooms and on car journeys, on beaches and the French countryside, with patterns shared in the Canary Islands. They differ in size, colour, and design and are as individual as those men and women they commemorate. Amid much light hearted discussion, we estimate there are around 2,000 in the display, representing about 750 hours of stitching – that's the time it would take to play 300 football matches, or to watch every episode of Downton ten times over! We have enjoyed quiet solo crafting as well as the camaraderie of our Craft and Conversation sessions and are immensely proud to have had this opportunity to add to the community Remembrance commemorations. Thank you to everyone who helped us do that.

Many **CROCKENHILL WI** members joined fellow committee member Shirley Abbott, who laid the WI Wreath this year, at a very large gathering at the Village War memorial. The service was taken by the vicar of All Souls Church and the Swanley branch of the British Legion.

Cheri Yeates



HORSMONDEN MORNING WI are particularly proud of two members – **Margaret Ashworth** and **Alison Adams**. Alison, as an ex-RAF nurse and midwife, marched in the Cenotaph parade on Remembrance Day. Margaret, who joined the new Horsmonden Morning WI after Collier Street WI closed-down in 2008, has been a wonderful helper both in our WI and in our adjacent village. Recently she was presented with the Weald Community Award "Community Hero of 2025". We congratulated her and gave her flowers at our recent meeting.

Caroline Davis



BASKETS FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year we're again inviting all WIs to donate a basket filled with 'goodies'.

Theme ideas could be seasonal – springtime or summer, and don't forget Easter is just round the corner.

A good place to find a basket is the local charity shop; it can be big or small with a handle or without. YouTube has plenty of ideas if you're looking for inspiration.

Please price your basket at £5, £10, £15 or £20. Money raised will go towards contributing to cover the cost of the day.



We are sure you will think of some lovely ideas and will enjoy seeing and buying an unusual gift either for yourself or a friend.

Please bring your WI basket with you on the day.

Murder Mystery 2 - All the Presidents Women

On 22 October **CATFORD WI**, with colleagues from the College Park Players, presented their new Murder Mystery event All the Presidents Women.

Written and directed by Committee member Kay Gobins, it follows on from last year's Murder at the Annual Meeting.

'The board of Deepest Kent Federation find themselves plunged into chaos when fellow member Katerina Nocoblocov is killed in a hit and run incident. But this no accident and DI Franky Marbles of Royal Tees police, supported by PC Justine Case are on the case'.

The cast had great fun performing to a very appreciative audience. The subject was murder but that didn't mean it couldn't be entertaining.

A big thank you to all the cast members, Shirley, Joan, Jo, Lesley, Justine, Debbie, Jacky, Fiona and Kay as well as Alyson and Hazel as narrator and prompt.

The question at the end of the evening was ... should we do it again?



REPORT OF A RECENT EVENT



The recent **LIFESTYLE DAY** held at Ditton started with the Chair, Sarah Sudlow, introducing the day and the first speakers who were Stephan and Lucy. They were physiotherapists employed by our local NHS Trust. Their message to us was 'Keep Moving!' and they explained why this is important. They showed us some exercises to do and explained the difference between osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. We had the opportunity to ask questions and, later, try the grip monitor to test the strength of our grip.

Our next speaker was Bob Ogley, who was very entertaining. He wrote a book about the effects of the Great Storm of 15/16 October 1987. He both took, and collected, local photos of the results of the storm and his book of photographs of this event was republished numerous times. He then produced similar books for other places in the country. Bob went on to write various other books on subjects of interest to local people such as 'Biggin on the Bump'. Again, we had the opportunity to ask questions.

After a break for lunch when we could also purchase items from the stalls, buy raffle tickets and stretch our legs, we had the last speaker who was Chris Murphy. He runs The Repair Café held once a month in Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells. It grew out of his realisation that so little gets repaired these days. The Café has gone from strength to strength, and repairs about two thirds of the items brought in. He was also a very interesting and entertaining speaker. After answering some questions, he helped Sarah with the raffle.



Sarah thanked all the speakers again, her fellow committee members for helping to put the Day together and their assistance on the day, and Matt, Stephan and Lucy for their first aid input when a lady fainted during the first talk. Altogether a very enjoyable and informative day. Thank you, Lifestyle Committee, for your hard work

Alison Whittle Nevill WI

REPORT OF A RECENT EVENT PALS WHIST DAY

Although it was a very wet and windy day this didn't deter members. It was lovely to see so many familiar faces and welcome ladies who were attending for the first time.

After 16 games we took a break from play to have a very tasty ploughman's lunch and cake provided by members of the PALS committee- most enjoyable. We played a further 12 games and the scores were added up. The raffle was drawn and the winners announced. The two Pams—Bissenden and Lindon from the Farleighs with a score of 205. Runner up was Lyghe WI with 193.

A big thank you to Gill Brown Chair PALS and all the committee members that made the day such a success... and of course Sheila Miles for keeping us in order !

Looking forward to the next Annual Whist Day and encourage new members to come along and enjoy the day.

Anne Stephenson, Loose WI





National Federation of WIs

Annual Meeting

Thursday 4 June 2026
Online

NFWI Annual Meeting Details

As with the 2025 NFWI Annual Meeting, this event will be held online. The linking list will remain at a ratio of 1 in 4.

We have 36 Delegates. If no one in your WI is able to act as the Delegate for your Link Group, please let the Federation know as soon as possible. This will allow us to contact the next WI in line without delay. If someone is able to take on the role, please let us know before the closing date.

Even if your WI is not first in line, please do discuss within your WI whether anyone would be willing to act as a Delegate, in case no one from the first WI is able to attend.

We will email the WI Mailbox if the WI in front of you cannot send a Delegate. Please look out for this email.

The First Notice, Linking List and Application forms were emailed to the WI Mailboxes on 8 October.

WIs have until **Friday 30 January** to inform the Federation who the Delegate is. While most WIs notify us promptly, we will email you after your WI meeting to check if anyone is willing to take on the role.

Once again, WIs need to vote on the Resolution following their May meeting. Please inform Federation how your WI wishes to vote via email **fedsec@wkwfi.org.uk**.

We will then inform the Delegate so they are ready to vote on the day.

The Link Delegates for this year are:

Ash & Ridley
Badgers Mount
Barming
Bearsted & Thurnham
Chipstead
Chislehurst Village
Christ Church Tunbridge Wells
Cobham & Luddesdown
Crockham Hill
Cuxton
East Malling
Eltham Palace
Eynsford
Gillingham
Greenslade
Hextable & Swanley Village
Highgate Hawkhurst
Honor Oak
Hucking
Iden Green & Benenden
Ightham
Leamington Ladies
Lyghe
Madginford (Bearsted)
Maidstone Chocolate
Nashenden
Nuxley Village
Petts Wood Evening
Ravenswood (West Wickham)
Shorne & Thong
South Park
St Georges (Beckenham)
St Mary's West Wickham
Sutton Valence
West Peckham
Wilmington

The full Linking List can be found in your WI Mailbox.

ART AND CRAFT



Paula Bates

artcraft@wkwfi.org.uk

INTRODUCTION TO PEN AND INK AND WATERCOLOUR WASH tutor Victoria Wainwright

Thursday 19 February 2026 at Ethel Hunt Lodge, Pembury TN2 4AG
Friday 20 February at Townsend Hook Bowls Club, Snodland ME6 5DP
Saturday 7 March at Westerham Hall, TN16 1BJ

10 am to 3:30 pm, doors open 9:30 am

Cost of ticket members £29.00, non members £34.00, Priority to members.

Kit charge £5 per person to include all materials required

Please bring a packed lunch and a mug for coffee

DOODLING, SPLATting, INKY TREES & BOATS

We start the day with some messing about with mark making and colour and looking at the different types of ink. We then move on to some still life, colouring outside the lines, loosening up before tackling two actual pictures, one birch trees with quink and cocktail sticks and a lot of splatting and chucking of inks and then to finish a nice bit of boat. This workshop is aimed at any level so is very mindful and will give you some key sketch-booking skills and some ideas that you can try again and again.



Closing Date Friday 23 January

Ticket information on back page

Please note : new dates added this month

In October some members of **WATERINGBURY WI** went on an outing to Great Comp Gardens - Autumn Bulb Fete. The weather was good and there was still lots to see in the amazing gardens. And of course, a stop at the tea shop for lunch



Also in October saw the start of our Winter Workshops. two of our Members came along and taught us how to do needle felting. We all started by making a felt ball with a sharp needle and decorated them in different designs. It was great fun and we have more crafting activities arranged for the winter months. Sharon Goshawk— President



SOUTHFLEET WI had a guided tour at Highgate Cemetery. We had a fascinating day with lots of tales about some of the people buried there, including Karl Marx & George Michael. We were locked in the catacombs (spooky). Afterwards we enjoyed a pizza at Citro Italian Restaurant. (Highly recommend) Pam Smith



HIGHGATE HAWKHURST WI were proud to be a part of the Remembrance Sunday parade on November 9. We numbered fifteen on parade with others joining us in church and at the War Memorial. Banging the Big Bass Drum kept the march in step, Rachel read the lesson, Rosanna laid our wreath and Cathy carried our banner. *If anyone knows where we can acquire more sashes (the WI shop no longer stock them), we would be grateful!*

HONOR OAK WI celebrated its 15th Birthday on 4 November with a scout hut party. Our 10th Birthday party was cancelled because of Covid so it was a particularly special event.



We welcomed old and current members and recruited two new ones too! It's amazing what prosecco and pistachio cake can do! Bridget Rogers



West Kent Federation Annual Poetry Competition 2026

Members are once again invited to compose a poem—the title this year is **NEW LIFE**.

Please interpret this how you wish in 12 to 24 lines - perhaps the birth of a long awaited new addition to your family, thinking of plants breaking through the winter soil in the spring, your interpretation of AI, rekindling an old skill or past-time. Let your imagination run riot as you interpret this fascinating theme.

Please supply two copies - one with just your poem, the other with your poem and also your name, WI and contact details.

You Can Post to:
Annual Poetry Competition
West Kent Federation of Women's Institutes
Ethel Hunt Lodge
4 Hawkwell Business Centre
Maidstone Road, Pembury, TN2 4AG

Or email to: FedSec@WKFWI.org.uk

Closing Date Friday 30 January 2026

The winner to be announced at the WKFWI AGM 2026 and will be presented with a trophy (to keep for a year) and a certificate.

The winner will be offered the opportunity to read their poem at the AGM.

REPORT OF A RECENT EVENT

At the Annual Art & Craft Day we were given a warm welcome by Committee Chair Mrs. Paula Bates and the members of Art & Craft were introduced.

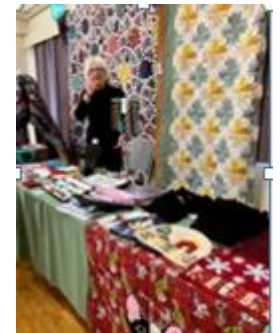
Our first speaker, International Floral Designer Wendy Andrade, with the aid of the screen and some pictures from one of her books, showed off the variety and skills of her jewellery making. Wendy shared her story of becoming a published author and a brief demonstration of making her wire jewellery pieces. Her display included beautiful necklaces, bracelets and headdresses ideal for weddings and special occasions.



Philip Brent-Day, despite stepping in a short notice, gave a full and fascinating insight into the work of the artist James McNeill Whistler and how he used structures and colours, visible within his compositions, and his interactions with his contemporaries including the pre-Raphaelites and the writer Oscar Wilde.

Curtis Tappenden gave us an unconventional presentation on The Art of the Circus. Athletic, engaging and with a great sense of humour and vitality Curtis told us about the history of circus and used the screen to exhibit some of the pictures that he drew whilst interacting with circus performers added to his book. Clown faces showed pathos and he was able to catch the motion of trapeze artists flying through the air. His pictures appeared to be a true extension of his personality and his sense of joie de vivre. He finished with an art demonstration of a circus character filled with energy and movement.

There was an excellent selection of retail stalls for members to browse and the usual Bring & Buy filled with bargain fabrics and art & craft supplies.



Joanna M. Cole Neville WI

VISIT TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, KEW



On 3 September a group from the **CHISLEHURST WI (EVENINGS)** visited the National Archives. We were guided by John and Aimee who entertained, informed and amazed us on a tour that lasted 90 minutes. We were astonished that they have so many records/files that the surplus is stored in a salt mine in Cheshire! Also, you can order on-line any files you wish to review and these will be ready upon your arrival for copying or researching. There were so many interesting facts and we departed, after a stop at the café, with a better understanding of the importance of their work. Overall, everyone agreed it was a

thoroughly good visit. Cheryl Forde

BEARSTED & THURNHAM WI organised CPR training for members and for other local WIs with the St John's Ambulance trainers. It was very useful and informative and members came away more



confident in providing CPR and using a defibrillator. This was our contribution to "Bystanders can be Lifesavers" campaign.

Valerie Keeler, President



JOIN THE WKF DREAM TEAM!

Are you ready to LEVEL UP your WI journey?

We're on the lookout for passionate, creative, and driven WI members to join our Federation teams and help shape the future of WKF!

Opportunities Available

Board of Trustees

Lead the way! Help guide the strategic direction of our Federation

Advisers


Empower others! Share your knowledge and help members grow


Events Committees


Lifestyle | Art & Crafts | Performing Arts | Leisure & Sport
|Public Affairs - Be a voice for change! Champion causes that matter in
our community


Bring your ideas to life and create unforgettable experiences!

Why Join?

 Boost your skills and leadership potential

 Make a real impact in your community

 Connect with inspiring, like-minded women

 Build lifelong friendships

Interested? Let's talk!

Email us at FedSec@wkwfi.org.uk to find out more.

Kaye Moore Cup Art & Craft Competition

Works to be displayed at the Annual General Meeting
and judged on the day

Wednesday 18 March 2026

Theme: 'New Life'

Your Original Art or Craft work in any medium

Including paint, inks, pastels, sculpting materials, fabric or glass.

No computer art of any kind will be considered.

Any entry must be no larger than 10" x 8" or A4 including mount.

Works on paper to be presented in a mount. One entry per member.

Royalty free images for inspiration from Pixabay

Send your entries - addressed as Kay Moore Cup

To: West Kent Federation of WIs Ethel Hunt Lodge, 4 Hawkwell Business Centre,
Maidstone Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells TN2 4AG

Attach a label to the back of your work stating clearly your name,
telephone number and name of your WI. Closing date Friday 27 February
2026





OBITUARIES

Ravenswood (West Wickham WI)

is greatly saddened by the loss, surrounded by her family, of **ELIZABETH PATTERSON**. She was a former West Kent Chair, Treasurer and VCO; twice President of Ravenswood and treasurer for many years. Nationally Elizabeth was a Denman Ambassador and Director of WI books. Treasurer and staunch member of District until it disbanded, she was a member of many subgroups and choirs and was well known for playing piano for Jerusalem at our Federation AM. Elizabeth was a mentor and friend to so many, a fount of WI knowledge, an excellent organiser and IFE. We will remember her lovely smile, delightful accent, her kindness and generosity of time and energy and laugh, also remembering her dramatic performances and fantastic Dame characters. Now resting with her beloved Will.



Horsmonden

Morning WI is sad to announce the loss of another of our older members – **IRIS**

SWAN. Iris regularly attended meeting up until her short illness. At 96, she was always such a happy lady who had been a great “washer upper” in our early days but recently continued to love the variety of talks and meetings we held.”

Horsmonden Morning WI is sad to announce the passing of our founding president, **JENNIFER NAYLOR**. Jennifer had been a WI member since she was 18 and had just celebrated her 90th Birthday! She started our WI in 2008 with great enthusiasm and led us well for several years. Sadly, ill health took its toll and she moved away to live near her family.”

Halstead WI members were very sad to hear that their fellow member **ANN ROWLANDS** had died. She was a loyal long time member, and supported all WI events. She was very knowledgeable on plants and a great dog lover, and will be sadly missed.

WHO TO CONTACT

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Amanda Breach

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Tel: 01892 823813

FEDERATION TREASURER:

Rita King

Email: treasurer@wkfwi.org.uk

01892 354454 Weds or Thurs

CHAIRMAN OF WI

ADVISERS:

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ADMINISTRATOR:

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ARTICLES—YOUR EVENT

Articles, your events Please no more than 150 words and two photographs. Congratulations and Obituaries (no more than 40 words) . If possible email direct to **westkentnews@wkfwi.org.uk** If not please post to our Ethel Hunt Lodge address see top of page two.

Please only order tickets via your nominated representative. Should this create a problem, please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Please note: In the event that a workshop is oversubscribed/cancelled or there is a problem with the Tutor or venue the representative ordering the tickets will be notified. It will be the responsibility of the representative to notify the members wishing to attend the workshop/event. It is therefore important that the representative is aware of who is requesting tickets.

Ticket applications via email:

WI Reps Apply to: **tickets@wkfwi.org.uk** with your WI, Contact Name, Telephone number, event name, number of tickets required, date of event, and venue.

- Tickets are non refundable and non returnable.
- Places cannot be guaranteed until after the closing date.
- If an event is over-subscribed a ballot will take place.
- The Federation is not liable for additional costs or changes to a programme caused by circumstances beyond its control.
- Please apply for your tickets promptly, if an event is under subscribed by the closing date, the event may be cancelled.
- If open to non-members please state number required for members and non-members separately. Priority will always be given to members.