

WELCOME TO YOUR FEDERATION



An Open Door to  
Fun, Friendship, Education  
And a lot, lot more.....

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### **The Federation Begins....**

We are most fortunate to have Reports and Minutes from the very beginning of the Essex Federation, when the first WIs formed in the summer of 1917 came together. It is from the first two years of these archives that the following passages are extracted:

***"As a result of a meeting held at Chelmsford in April 1917, which was addressed by Mrs Alfred Watts, a large number of Institutes were formed in the County of Essex. Those interested felt the necessity of calling together delegates for the purpose of discussing plans for the future. A meeting was convened for September 1st, 1917 in the Shire Hall, Chelmsford. Lady Petre was in the Chair."***



**First Chairman of Essex Women's Institutes 1917**



### **"A message from the Chair of the Federation of Essex WIs"**

A warm welcome to the WI, a non-profit charitable women's organisation, started in the UK in 1915, which focuses on Fun, Friendship and Education.

Being a member of the WI opens opportunities to join with other members to influence local, national and international matters, as well as widen your own horizons. From a couple of hours once a month meeting to group trips, various sub groups or holidays with other members the WI is what you make it.

Each WI arranges meetings and events for their members to enjoy, there are also many Federation workshops and events which you can attend, details of these and much more appear in the monthly magazine Essex WI News, on the Federation website [www.essexwi.org.uk](http://www.essexwi.org.uk) and via social media -WI Essex Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram.

This leaflet explains how the Federation works, the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, lists the sub committees and other information you may find useful as a member of the WI. There are plenty of opportunities for members to volunteer at Federation level as well as within their own WIs.

I look forward to meeting you at future WI events.

Jan Curtis



## What is the Federation?

The National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) is made up of 69 Federations, loosely based on the geographical areas of the Counties in England and Wales.

The Federation of Essex Womens Institutes (FEWI) is made up of 200+ Women's Institutes with approximately 8,500 members. We say approximately as these numbers fluctuate as members join and leave and new WIs are formed or closed. We are one of the largest Federations in England and Wales.

## How is it managed?

### Board of Trustees (WI Members)

The Federation provides a link between the National Federation of WIs and WIs in Essex. This is managed by a Board of voluntary Trustees who are elected every two years by members. Formal board meetings are held monthly to administer the affairs of the Federation

The Trustees are jointly responsible for running the Federation, although they can delegate certain responsibilities. They must also make sure the WIs in their Federation follow the guidelines of the Charity Commission

Trustees are responsible for:

- passing on information from the NFWI to members
- setting the federation's budget and overseeing its finances
- attending meetings (such as Board meetings, sub-committee meetings etc.) and engaging in discussion, debate and voting
- issuing an annual report and accounts
- organising events and activities for members

As the head of the Federation Board of Trustees, **the Chairman** manages all federation business and provides support and guidance.

The **Federation Treasurer** oversees the Federation's accounts and gives financial advice to the Board. She ensures compliance with charitable objects and makes sure the Federation follows legal and financial guidelines.

## **Equality & Diversity**

**Equality is:** the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.

**Diversity is:** understanding that everyone is unique and recognising our individual differences.

It is a legal obligation to protect against discrimination.

### **Transgender**

The 'WI' is fully compliant with all transgender legislation. Transgender is an inclusive, umbrella term used to describe the diversity of gender identity and expression for all people who do not conform to common ideas of gender roles. Anyone who is living as a woman is welcome to join the WI and to participate in any WI activities in the same way as any other woman

### **Young Women**

WI membership is only open to women who have reached the age of majority, which is 18 at the time of going to print.

### **Federation Complaints Procedure**

Complaints should be sent to the Federation Secretary in writing and will be dealt with by federation officers. A response will be given within 4 weeks of receipt. In the case of an officer being mentioned in the complaint, she will not take part in the meeting considering the complaint.

## **Sub-Committees**

Sub-Committees meet on a regular basis to help plan and manage the work of the Federation. They have a Chairman and members from WIs within the Essex Federation.

#### **THE ARTS & LEISURE COMMITTEE**

Arts and Leisure covers events and workshops, including the theatre, photography, poetry, literary lunches and Christmas Carol concerts to name a few. They also organise our Inter WI Darts Tournament, Inter-WI Quiz Tournament, walks, relaxing and informative days out and occasional sporting activities.

#### **THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Public Affairs is concerned with informing and inspiring members to make a difference in their Communities. This Committee also supports members in turning their concerns into resolutions which may be taken forward as mandated national campaigns.

#### **COOKERY AND CREATIVE CRAFTS COMMITTEE**

Cookery and Creative Crafts organise day courses and demonstrations in all aspects of Cookery, Flower Arranging and a wide variety of Crafts, to appeal to as wide a cross section of members as possible, in line with the WI ethos to offer opportunities to gain skills for life.

#### **MEMBERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Membership Advisory Committee is made up of WI Advisers, who have undergone training provided by the NFWI and Federations which enables them to help and support members/WIs in every aspect of their WI life. Through MAC, WI Advisers seek opportunities to obtain new members for existing WIs and open new WIs. They offer help and guidance wherever they are needed, whether it be chairing an Annual Meeting for a WI or helping to overcome problems and issues. WI Advisers occasionally have to close WIs.

#### **Joining a Sub- Committee**

If you are interested in the work of any of these Committees please contact the WI Centre at Hatfield Peverel to arrange a date to observe, you will be made very welcome.

**The Yearly Calendar**



**Trustees**

The Board of Trustees meet on a regular basis and the Sub-Committees meet quarterly.

**Events**

Events and workshops held at the WI Centre are open to all members and are published in the Federation magazine 'Essex WI News' which is sent to the WIs Secretary with the monthly mailing.

There is a regular Craft drop in session, held at the WI Centre, further information is available on the website.

**Training**

A variety of training opportunities are delivered by the Federation. These include half day workshops for Officers roles within the WI (Presidents, Treasurers and Secretaries) to workshops for all members which include Speaking with Confidence, Press Publicity and Programme Planning and many more. A schedule of training events can be found on our website and is provided to WI Secretaries.

**County Annual Meeting (CAM)**

The County Annual Meeting is held in March at our preferred venues across the county. This is an informative, fun and entertaining meeting that brings together the work that has been done by Federation and WIs throughout the year, this meeting is open to all members.

**Visiting the WI Centre**

If you would like to arrange a visit to the WI Centre at any time, please contact the staff at the WI Centre to make arrangements.

**Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW)**

WIs are affiliated to this charity and ACWW hold regular events throughout the year to raise funds for projects to support women and Communities Worldwide. <https://www.acww.org.uk>

**National Federation of Womens Institutes (NFWI)**

Check the NFWI website for details at <https://www.thewi.org.uk>

**Denman College**



Named after Lady Denman, the first National Chairman of the WI and situated a few miles south of Oxford Denman College is the WI's centre for learning. It offers a wealth of opportunities to learn new skills on day schools and residential courses in the field of cookery, craft and lifestyle.

Federations originally helped to furnish and equip Denman, and still sponsor and look after all the residential rooms. Look out for the Essex Federation room when you visit.

There is a dedicated cookery school which has been named one of the top 10 in the UK, which is situated in a purpose-built facility within the grounds. Craft courses still fill about half of the programme, with lifestyle courses and more unique subjects such as dance, singing, fashion history, Tai Chi and yoga. Tutors come from across the country to teach at Denman.

Full details of courses, which are open to all adults, members and non-members can be found at [www.denman.org.uk](http://www.denman.org.uk) or by telephoning the College direct on 01865 391 991



### Keeping you informed

#### WI Mailings

Information from Federation is sent to your WI Secretary each month.

NFWI send mailings in April, July and September to your WI Secretary.

### **Website**

The Essex Federation website <http://www.essexwi.org.uk> contains local and national WI news together with information on campaigns and events.

### **Social Media**

We use Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to keep you informed with all Events that we are running, last minute availability, photos from events plus lots more. Please feel free to send us a message or picture. Details on the back cover.

## **More Federation Resources**

### **Shop**

We have a small well stocked shop at the WI Centre, selling WI branded goods, cards and gifts.

### **Federation Archives**

Essex Federation has over 100 years of archives held at the WI Centre along with the records of many WIs which are held at The Essex Records Office, other local museums and libraries around the county.

The copies of minutes, scrapbooks, registers etc. form a huge social record of life during these years and are used by ourselves, members and others as a research resource. The changes over this time make interesting reading and the pictures tell a wonderful story of trends in fashions, formality and past events.

The archive team are always happy to help with any enquiries that members or others may have about a particular WIs history or the history of Essex Federation. After all our history paves the way for our future so by preserving and using it we recognise and acknowledge those in whose footsteps we follow.

### **Essex WI News Magazine**

The Essex Federation produces an excellent monthly news magazine, Essex WI News. In this way we can inform members of all forthcoming



Federation events and report on those that have taken place. Reports from individual Institutes and Groups are also included.

It is essential reading - no WI member should be without it! There is no doubt that "Essex WI News " is an excellent medium for informing members of all that goes on within the Federation of Essex Womens Institutes outside of their own WI monthly meetings.

### **WI Life Magazine**

NFWI produce The WI Life magazine which is published especially for WI members and delivered directly to your door eight times a year, with articles and news stories showcasing their wide-ranging interests and activities.

## **Today's Women Working for Tomorrow's World**

The WI offers opportunities for all women to enjoy friendship, to learn, to widen their horizons and together to influence local, national and international affairs.

Formed in 1915, the WI has a long history of campaigning on a wide range of issues. WI campaigns are about changing things for the better and tackling the issues that matter to members. Members are at the heart of the WI and they play a central role in bringing issues onto the WI's national agenda through our public affairs and campaigning.

From equal pay to climate change, from gaps in the midwifery workforce to the plight of the honey bee, WI members have embraced a diverse set of challenges and built a reputation for the WI as a practical and ambitious organisation that doesn't shy away from tricky issues.

Our Resolutions and Mandate process means every campaign starts within our membership. Read more about the wide range of WI Campaigns and recent successes, and see our campaigning history through snapshots going back to 1926 on the NFWI website

<https://www.thewi.org.uk/campaigns>

## **Values**



Fellowship  
Truth  
Tolerance  
Justice



### “WI Jargon!”

**A Member** - Membership is open to all women upon payment of the current subscription. A WI member is a member of the County Federation and the National Federation. The WI is affiliated to the Associated Countrywomen of the World (ACWW) so she has an International Membership as well.

**AM** - Annual Meeting. Any NFWI/Federation Meeting when it is usual for each WI to send a delegate and WI Annual Meetings usually held in April/May .

**Associate Members** - this scheme is open to any woman wishing to be an Associate of the National Federation of Women's Institutes and of her local county Federation of Women's Institutes but finds herself unable to attend Institute meetings. She is entitled to attend Denman College and to take part in all activities open to WI members at the WI rates.

**ACWW** - Associated Countrywomen of the World

**Convenors** - are the selected Secretaries of the Groups. They are responsible for booking the speaker and generally organising the Group Meetings.

**CAM** - The County Annual Meeting is held in March, at which Federation Committee Reports and Accounts are presented. Each WI may send a delegate and all members can attend as an observer.

**Delegates** - Appointed by WIs and the Federation to represent them at

Council and National Meetings.

**Dual Members** - When joining her main WI, a member will pay the full subscription which entitles her to play a full part in that WI by taking office, should she choose to do so. This will allow her to have full voting rights on all issues and at all levels or act as a delegate. If she chooses to join a second or several WIs she will receive dual membership and will pay any additional WIs the reduced fee, entitling her to participate and vote at the meetings of each WI but only on the matters of that WI. Votes on Federation or National matters can only be made at her main WI. A WI may adopt a byelaw to permit a Dual Member to stand for election as an Officer or Committee member.

**Federation Officers:** The Chairman, Treasurer and three Vice-Chairmen are elected annually by the Board of Trustees.

**FEWI** - Federation of Essex Women's Institutes.

**Group Meetings** - approximately five neighbouring WIs are grouped together informally and meet during the year. Groups can arrange outings, demonstrations and many other events providing a greater opportunity to mix with other members. They have their own Group Committee.

**Links** - A Link of 4 WIs is formed for the purpose of attending NFWIs Annual Meeting. In turn a delegate is selected to represent the Link for voting on any proposed resolutions.

**Mandates** - resulting from Resolutions passed with the required majority at Federation or Annual Meetings. Once the National Federation has a mandate it can take the matter up with the Government or other bodies to which the resolution is addressed.

**Members Communication System (MCS)** - NFWI's database of all WIs individual membership details.

**My WI, the dedicated area for WI members (available from NFWI web site).**

Find everything you need to get the most from your membership on this site -from **essential information** and advice for **running your WI**, to **campaign action packs** and **special interest projects** for you to try

**NFWI** - National Federation of Women's Institutes to which all WIs in England and Wales are affiliated.

**MAC** - The Members Advisory Committee is the WI Advisers Committee and is concerned both nationally and in the County Federation with the running of the movement. At County Federation level all WI Advisers are members of this Committee.

**Pennies for Friendship** - are collected each year from members to help fund ACWW and selected projects. Foreign coins and used stamps are also welcomed.

**WI Adviser** - Selected and put forward for training by the Members Advisory Committee (MAC). Formal training is provided by NFWI, after the proposed WI Adviser's working in the field with Mentors. Following completion of their formal training they are appointed by NFWI. WI Advisers are available to help with any WI queries, problems, formations and suspensions of WI's.



**Who's Who  
Board of Trustees 2019**

Chair

Jan Curtis



Treasurer  
Vice- Chair  
Vice- Chair  
Vice-Chair  
Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee

Sheila Gunson  
Moyra Jackson  
Sue MacEwen  
Andrea Neale  
Jane Bird  
Fiona Cattermole  
Lesley Evans  
Kay Lodge  
Lindsey Peters  
Hazel Ridgwell  
Stephanie Smith

### The WI Staff

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**Administrative Assistant** Isobel Ashcroft [tickets@essexwi.org.uk](mailto:tickets@essexwi.org.uk)

**Accounts** Tony Pay [accounts@essexwi.org.uk](mailto:accounts@essexwi.org.uk)

### **Editorial Team - Essex WI News**

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### **Media Team**

Sue MacEwen  
Jane Miles  
Isobel Ashcroft  
Jan Curtis

### **County Chairman for the Essex Federation**

1917	Lady Petre
1921	Lady Rasch
1924	Mrs. G. Buxton

1926	Mrs. F. S. Tabor
1929	Miss D. Christy
1933	Miss T. Buxton
1936	Mrs. Llewellyn-Marriage
1941	Mrs. E. F. M. Hollis
1947	Mrs. C. Round
1952	Mrs. O. Farquharson, OBE
1958	Mrs. D. Russell-Walker
1963	Mrs. V. Stobart
1968	Mrs. A. Legge
1972	Mrs. H. Stewart
1975	Mrs. A. Speakman
1980	Mrs. P. Midwood
1985	Mrs. P. Jennings
1988	Mrs. Judith Rose
1991	Mrs. Dwin Hendry
1996	Mrs. Joyce Watson
1999	Mrs. Anne O'Riordan
2002	Mrs Barbara Ball
2006	Mrs Julie Alen
2010	Mrs June Ward
2013	Mrs Patricia Pratley
2016	Mrs Kay Lodge
2019	Mrs Jan Curtis

### **The WI Anthem**

#### **Jerusalem**

And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?

And was the Holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark satanic mills

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire  
Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!  
Bring me my Chariot of Fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.



**Notes**





The WI Centre,  
Whitelands  
Terling Road  
Hatfield Peverel  
Essex  
CM3 2AG  
Tel: 01245 382233

[www.essexwi.org.uk](http://www.essexwi.org.uk)

Registered Charity no: 1014445

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