

Your Weekly Update From Your WI Federation

Dear W.I. Secretaries – Please ensure you pass this to all your members,

The Federation Board of Trustees are continuing to work behind the scenes to ensure we come out of this terrible situation in the best possible position, both financially and ready to launch events and workshops for you, our members, at the earliest possible date.

Cancelled Spring Council Meeting: Sadly, the Majestic Hotel cannot transfer our March 2020 booking to the Autumn 2020. However, as you know, we always need to book such events so far in advance and we do therefore already have a booking for Tennants in Leyburn that was to be our Autumn Lunch. We are now utilising this booking and are planning to hold an Autumn Council meeting at this very popular venue and will return to the Majestic in Harrogate in the Spring 2021.

Virtual Monthly Meetings:

Some WIs have already met the technology challenge and successfully held their W.I. meetings and Committee meetings using an online conferencing software such as Zoom, Skype or House Party with a live link to their Speaker. Access 'My WI' for the latest advice. Please see the following useful hints from Hazel at Malham WI who have already held a virtual meeting.



1. Give detailed instructions to all members on how to set up on Zoom if necessary. Encourage them to recruit family members to help.
2. Give plenty of notice of the meeting and try where possible to stick to usual times. At Malham we altered the day due to a clash with a local Response Meeting, so sometimes flexibility is important.
3. Distribute the Meeting ID and a password carefully. Ensure that this is not put on social media which may be open to the public in general.
4. Remind people that this is not a confidential space.
5. Accept that some members will not want to use it. Keep in touch with those who cannot access it as well, by phone or email. It is important that no members feel excluded by using video conferencing rather than a face to face meeting.
6. Keep it light-hearted where possible! Life is serious enough at present so any opportunity for a laugh is good.
7. The host needs to still welcome people as they enter the virtual meeting room. It is important that everyone there is recognised and spoken to. It can feel daunting if you cannot see everyone on the screen and maybe feel "invisible". Welcome new members in the same way as always.
8. Zoom can never replace our usual meetings, but it is much better than not meeting at all when social contact is limited.
9. There is a short time limit on basic Zoom (ie free) for meetings so use time wisely! We organised it as two meetings to allow for a toilet break and a top up of wine and/or food between the business meeting and the speaker. If members can only join for one or other of the meetings, it didn't matter. The important role of this was to keep in contact, to carry on entertaining and educating as we always aim to do in the WI.

10. Keep members informed of the next meeting or make it clear if this was a one-off. Trying to keep to a routine helps many of us. Once the WI meeting is in the calendar, it matters less whether it is Zoom or a usual meeting than it is a monthly meeting with chat, talk, laughs, updates and a shared experience at a time of crisis.

Many WIs are already planning '**Come Back**' events to get back together, some will be holding 2 meetings a month instead of 1 when social distancing is relaxed.

Virtual 200 Club Draw: The March draw was done using an on-line random number generator and 3 Trustees as independent verifiers.

Refunds Update: These were dispatched last week to members and delegates that had booked for NFWI Annual Meeting. Other refunds are underway for all events to middle of July. Once the deposit monies are received from Denman, full refunds will be issued.

How can the Federation help? If there is anything you need to know please email the office.

How can the W.I. help? Sewing Scrubs for NHS: We are awaiting the delivery details from both Harrogate and Airedale Hospital and also the information relating to sourcing material. For anyone who would like to help by sewing these please see the link for the pattern.



<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1U24En45BeM0xGacJ3Sa4IVFgzJbNbM12?fbclid=IwAR1IcnqFdOYFcsFd7jJOZxvEtBog8rDHxghWQhSflvsiUduerCbX4Cvzbqo>

Harrogate and Airedale Hospital are both requesting knitted or crochet red hearts as per the pattern on last week's update. Again, we are now waiting for the delivery address but please start knitting now.

Staying in touch & Lockdown Tales: tell us how you are communicating with your members and what you are doing, email us at NYWFnews@gmail.com

If anyone needs help, is lonely, is feeling isolated, or simply sad, tell us we want to help. Call or email the office on nywfw@btconnect.com.

We know many members are anxious about loved ones working on the front line, working and caring for us in this crisis. Also very, very sadly, we are hearing of members' friends and family who have contracted this dreadful virus and passed away. Our thoughts and heartfelt sympathies are with you at this awful time.

Stay safe, stay well.

Julie