

Newsletter

October 2026

Join the 200 club

Monthly cash prizes!!

Annual subscription £10

**Ten times a year
prizes of £30,
£20 and £10**

**Twice a year
prizes of £100,
£50 and £25**

**Details of how to join are being sent
to your Secretary - existing
subscribers will be contacted
separately**

Chair's Notes

by Hazel Smyth web.nwyorkswi@yahoo.co.uk

Telephone 07495 362525



Do take time to at the very least flip through this newsletter - WHY?

You will find that your fellow members across our region have been engaged in supporting Yorkshire Air Ambulance, Archaeological finds display at York Museum, learning about climate change impacts, combining a historical walk with celebrating a forthcoming marriage, celebrating 40 years of a WI, spending an evening crafting or creating a fund raising calendar. Perhaps ideas for your programmes.

Your newsletter is our advertising & information sharing platform along with the website and Facebook to tell you what is coming up at Federation. If you don't read it, you may miss an opportunity to do something new or different.

I want on your behalf to say a very big thank you to **Sue Butters** who has decided to step down from the Board of Trustees and Membership Committee. She has given generously of her time, expertise, counsel and support both to fellow Trustees but more importantly - she has supported many WIs and members in all sort of ways. We wish her all the best and hope she enjoy being "just a WI member."

We have included in the mailing a booklet about the "Stay, Learn and Explore" weekend at Barnard Castle in July.

Hazel

PS The heating has been replaced at Skipton Church so we will be warm at the Carol Service.

Treasurer notes

by Helen Davison helendavison05@gmail.com



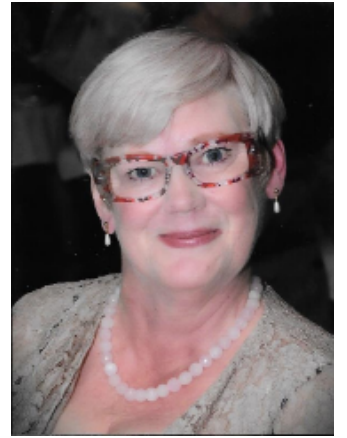
Can I encourage as many of you as possible to give Gift Aid on your subscriptions? It can be a valuable source of income for your WI, for our Federation and for National WI. If you are a taxpayer, please fill in the one-page Gift Aid form available from your WI Secretary. This can be used by your WI to claim back 25% of their share of your subscription from HMRC, provided the criteria are satisfied. The form will be shared with Federation and with National WI who can then claim on their portion. Even if your own WI does not make a claim, Federation and National WI can still claim on their portions. Please start the ball rolling if you are eligible.

Membership Team Update

by Sue Earl Armstrong sueearlarmwiadviser@gmail.com



Firstly, some sad news in that Sue Butters, fondly known by many of us as Blue Sue has given in her resignation and will be leaving the Membership Team. She has worked alongside me since 2021, has been an absolute asset to the team and will leave a huge gap! On a more personal note – she is a dear friend who will be sadly missed as she was by my side at most of our forums as we call them now. Thank you Sue for your dedication and work ethic. Even though she was tired at times with looking after her husband Sue still came to all the meetings she could until his health got worse.



Membership Report

Role of WI Committee

Although the purpose of your WI committee/team is to manage the day-to-day operations, finances and overall organisation on behalf of members, members still need to be consulted and have their say about decisions being suggested – not just be told that decisions have already been made without them being consulted. Members have paid their subscription to support their WI and therefore do have a say in what has been suggested by the committee/team.

Fundraising

Any funds raised are to go towards the running costs of your WI unless an agreement with members is reached for any monies raised to be donated to a local charity. If you are unsure of the process and would like clarification, please go onto MY WI and have a look under the Finances section as there is a great deal of helpful information available; too much to include in this newsletter. If you are still unsure, please get in touch with either Niki Rutland or myself - our information will be at the bottom of this report.

Forums

In the New Year, we will be holding more forums which will include breakout sessions as requested by members. As the Membership Team covers such a large area, we will ensure that we deliver the Forums in the three areas of our Federation to make it easier for members to get to an area nearer to them. As soon as we have some dates, we will let you know.

Would you like to join our team?

We are looking for more members to join our team to help us help our 71 WI's. In the first instance, we really recommend that you join one of our membership meetings which are held on zoom so that you can observe what we do and have more of an idea of what being on the team entails. So, if you feel you could make time to come to a membership meeting please do get in touch. We would love to hear from you!

If there is anything else that you think the Membership Team can do to support you or your WI please don't hesitate to get in touch. Sue Earl-Armstrong – sueearlarmwiadviser@gmail.com and Niki Rutland – nikirutlandwi@gmail.com

Thanks from Sue and the Membership Team. Heather Stoney, Moira George and Hazel Smyth.

Activities Update

by Sara Baldwin-Cole sarabaldwincole@outlook.com



Join us for our annual
CRAFT DABBLE DAY
Thursday 5th November
10am to 4pm



Gargrave Village Hall

Choose two crafts from a
selection of four

£30 All materials
are included*



Food and Flowers

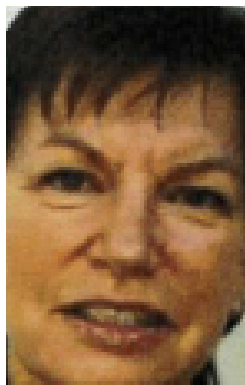
featuring 'With Christmas in Mind'
cookery demonstration with Julie Clarke
& 'It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas'
floral demonstration with Alex Gracey

Wednesday 18th November

Memorial Hall, Darley HG3 2RP

Soup and sweet lunch

Booking details with your secretary
and on our website



North Yorkshire West Federation Digital/Scrapbook History

We are looking for members who are interested in WI history or social history in general who would like to take part in archiving and compiling a document - online or physical - of the history of the North Yorkshire West Federation over the last 15 years. We have archived records on the Federation website which can be accessed remotely online.

We realised that since 2012 we don't have any scrapbooks/records of events and milestones in our recent history and we would like to remedy this. As many of you will know, we have an extensive range of scrapbooks and books as well as the Memorial Book at Alma House. Members are always welcome to visit Alma House during opening times to look at these items at their leisure.

If you are interested in taking part, you could help as an individual or part of a group. It is important that we continue to document Federation activities to not only provide a flavour of what WI life was like in the early 2000s but also to preserve a record for future generations of WI members.

In addition to this, we are always looking for members who would be willing to help with other tasks at the Federation - this does not mean that you have to be a Trustee to take part in committees or just help out with other tasks.

Please contact the office on 01765 606339 or nywfw24@gmail.com if you are interested. Thank you.



The Queen Elizabeth Digital Memorial

8th September marked the anniversary of the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. The Cabinet Office is creating a Queen Elizabeth Digital Memorial. It wants to map local history across every corner of the UK, such as street parties, and personal moments that defined the late Queen's 70-year reign.

The Queen Elizabeth Digital Memorial would love to hear the stories of Queen Elizabeth from your communities, to map the key moments in the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth, as a permanent record for future generations. WI members don't need to have met the late Queen in person, whether it's about past Jubilee, a memory of a royal visit to your area, or simply a story of how the WI community came together.

This isn't just an archive; it's a living map of personal memories, stories, and moments. Share your memory of Queen Elizabeth at **www.queenelizabeth.com** and help put your area on the digital memorial map.



NORTH YORKSHIRE WEST FEDERATION OF WIS

Federation Carol Service

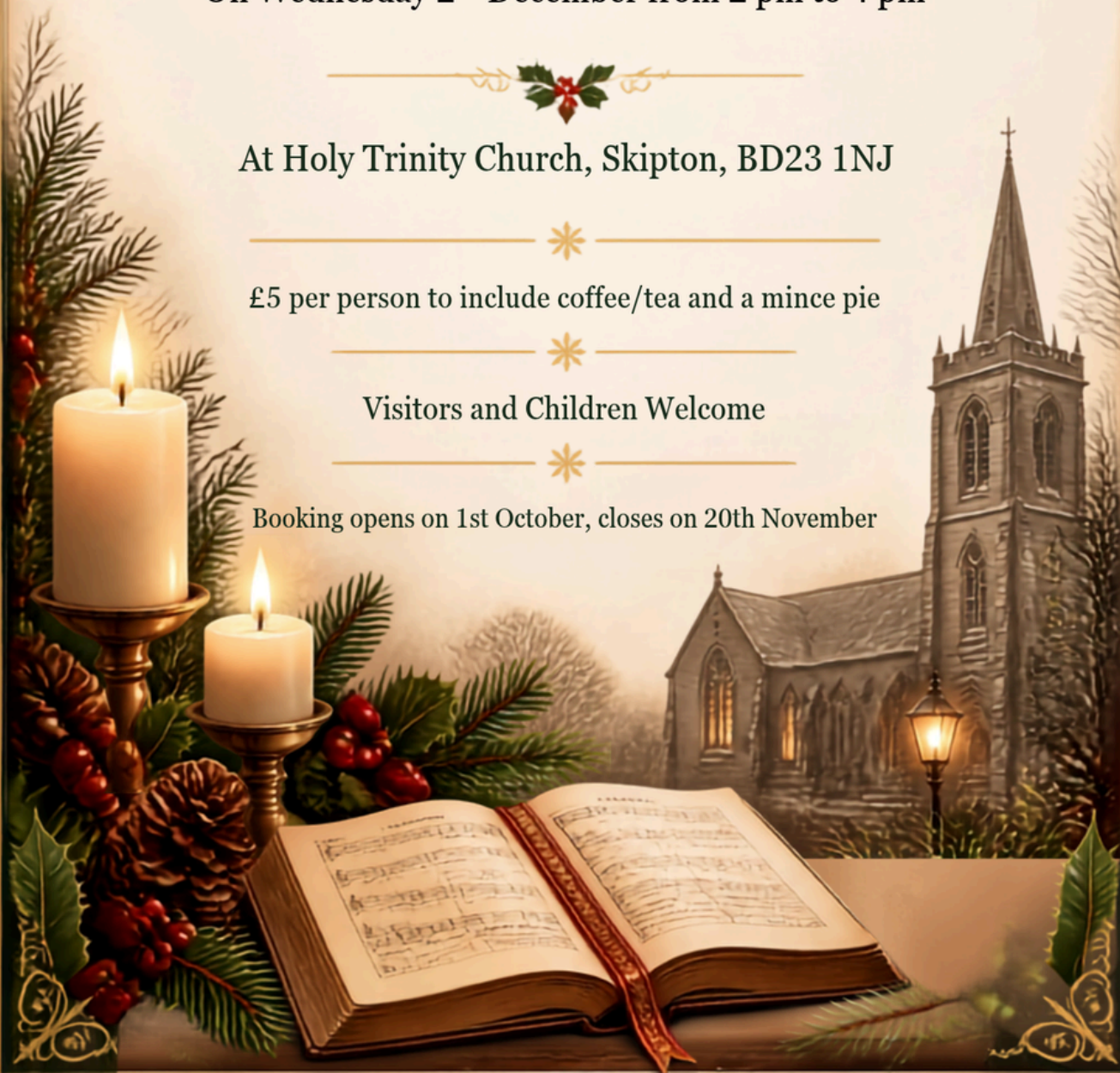
On Wednesday 2nd December from 2 pm to 4 pm

At Holy Trinity Church, Skipton, BD23 1NJ

£5 per person to include coffee/tea and a mince pie

Visitors and Children Welcome

Booking opens on 1st October, closes on 20th November





Around the WIs

Harrogate Bloomers Celebrate Upcoming Wedding with Historical Plaque Walk

To cover as many of Harrogate's historic brown plaques as possible within an hour, the group chose a unique starting venue for this special event: St Robert's Club. This location provided the perfect base for our walk and a wonderful space to celebrate Kitty's upcoming September wedding.

Splitting into two groups our route covered the south and central parts of Harrogate, showcasing numerous fascinating historical landmarks, we covered 19 in all. We passed the house where Florence Nightingale stayed in 1852, and further down the road, we saw the Royal House, which became the Royal Hotel in 1848. Opposite Harrogate Station, we noted the plaque marking the old market site. Walking along James Street, we passed Ogdens Jewellers—founded by James Ogden, who famously accompanied Howard Carter on the Egyptian expedition that discovered Tutankhamun's tomb.

While we spotted the iconic Bettys plaque, members were strictly forbidden from stopping for refreshments just yet! Many members discovered Cathcart House for the first time; it was once a leading boarding house where the Tsarina stayed for many years before her assassination in Russia. The house also hosted a grand tea party in 1911, attended by global nobility, including Princess Victoria.

We then returned to St Robert's Club, which had been beautifully decorated with balloons, bunting, banners, and flowers. There, we enjoyed a delicious spread of both savoury and sweet refreshments. No celebration is complete without games, so members joined in a hilarious challenge to dress the bride-to-be and her stand-in bridesmaids using toilet roll. Naturally, Kitty won first prize!

We also organised a raffle with three fabulous prizes. Members were encouraged to buy multiple tickets, as all proceeds were dedicated to Kitty's wedding present from the Harrogate Bloomers. We were absolutely delighted to present her with a card and cheque exceeding £100. It was truly a remarkable, joyful, and memorable evening for everyone involved.

Gill Marczak



Ripon Belles WI

Members from across the Federation attended a screening of the People's Emergency Briefing hosted by my own WI. I wasn't sure what to expect but it turned out to be both an interesting and thought-provoking evening.

The briefing looked at how prepared we are for the impacts of climate crisis on society in terms of health, food, national security and the economy. The film moved the narrative from climate just being about the environment, to having a better understanding on how it will affect us in our daily lives and how inaction is no longer an option.

As an example, we gained a better understanding of how extreme weather events are already disrupting supply chains and driving up food prices; shockingly 1/3 of food price inflation is climate driven!

Maybe we hadn't appreciated the transition cost of net zero isn't actually a cost burden, it's an investment with significant returns and if we had transitioned to green energy sooner we'd all be much better off!

We now have a better understanding and appreciation that nature is critical infrastructure, it underpins food security, health and economic resilience and we need to do more to protect it!



Hard to watch at times, with a hopeful message that if we all work together, we can become a powerful force for change.

So, sign the petitions, write to your MP and look at ways you can do better in your day-to-day life, whether that's growing your own vegetables, looking at solar panels, recycling more, walking rather than driving, let's all do our bit. For more information visit: <https://www.nebriefing.org>

Liz Marshall

Melsonby WI

In June, four of our members — Jane Brown, Valerie Cook, Norma Ditchburn and Judith Stansfield — delivered the hanging we had created for the Melsonby Hoard, as part of the exhibition at the Yorkshire Museum in York. It's well worth a visit. We were delighted to have been asked to contribute something to the display. It turned into a wonderful day, rounded off with lunch and a little retail therapy.

Val Cook



Upper Nidderdale WI

Upper Nidderdale W I enjoyed a fun creative meeting in September. We crafted Babushka Lavender Dolls – both decorative and useful!

We were expertly and patiently guided through the creation by Sara Baldwin-Cole, negotiating using glue guns and the art of stuffing.

Everyone went home pleased with their lovely Lavender Doll, plus the pattern to make more at home as gifts. Many dolls are destined to be displayed and admired at first, with the benefit of lavender's relaxing perfume and then put to use deterring moths from wardrobes and drawers. Winners all round!

Lucy Tiffany



Bilton WI 40th birthday celebration

This August we had the honour of celebrating 40 years as a WI at Bilton in Harrogate. We were lucky enough to have 4 of our founding members present, Marjorie Critchley, Sue Newall, Joan Weirs our first President, and Marjorie Critchley who all received certificates for their dedication and companionship to our community, plus we had one other lady to receive the same certificate Audrey Kershaw who had not been available to attend on the day. These ladies were part of the driving force that got Bilton WI up and running.

The cake was cut by Joan Weirs and Sue Perry, our present President. The afternoon included a buffet tea made by a lady from one of our local businesses. We held a mystery raffle, accompanied by music from the 60's and 70's and a photographic presentation ran on a loop through the afternoon highlighting some of the memorable moments over the last forty years including activities, community events and trips away. There was much laughter to be had and much reminiscing through the afternoon looking back at fond memories and past friends.



The Follifoot WI Ladies in Leather Calendar 2027 is now on sale!

Please support fellow NYFWI Members having a lot of fun raising funds for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance, by purchasing a 2027 Calendar that we hope will make you smile every time you look at it.

The idea for doing a calendar came about over supper after a wonderful summer outing, when the conversation turned to how we could raise the profile of our WI and attract new members to join. The idea was greeted with huge enthusiasm from the members gathered, and the theme and chosen charity followed, and before we knew it there were 'Ladies in Leather' on wonderful motorbikes all over our lovely village.

Thanks to our very generous supporters and a fabulous photographer who donated his services, every penny raised from the sale of our calendars will be going straight to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. The A4 calendar costs just £10.00 and p&p for one calendar is £3.50. if you'd like to place an order please email: I_oldridge@yahoo.com

With thanks from the Ladies in Leather....





NOTICEBOARD



Annual Meeting of your WI

The forms to complete in respect of your Annual Meeting have been sent to your secretary. Please contact the office as necessary to invite your WI Adviser to your Annual Meeting who will oversee voting for your Committee/Team and President.

NYWFWI EVENTS AT A GLANCE

EVENT	DETAILS	BOOKING CLOSES
Federation Quiz Final 16/10/2026	Alma House, Ripon	Relevant WIs will be contacted shortly
Autumn Lunch 21/10/2026 12 noon for 12.30pm	Oakdale Golf Club, Harrogate	7/10/2026
Soap Making Workshop with Rachel Hutton 27/10/26 & 28/10/26	Alma House, Ripon	16/10/2026
Dabble Day 5/11/2026 10am to 3.30pm	Gargrave Village Hall	22/10/2026
Programme Planning Forum 14/11/2026 10.30am to 1.30pm	Alma House, Ripon	30/10/2026
Food & Flowers 18/11/2026 10am to 3.30pm	Darley Memorial Hall	06/11/2026
Carol Service 2/12/2026 2pm to 4pm	Holy Trinity Church, Skipton	20/11/2026

WINNERS OF 200 CLUB DRAW

Congratulations to the winners of the September draw.

225 - Andrea Ainley, Wharfedale WI - £30

197 - Jennifer Capewell, Richmond WI - £20

67 - Wendy Jakeman, Skelton on Ure WI - £10

The Federation Treasurer will be in touch about your prize

Please let us know what your WI has been doing. Send in your report (**maximum 250 words**) and a photograph (if more than one please ensure both are in same format ie portrait or landscape) to the Federation office - details below - for inclusion in future newsletters and on the website. Please note due to space limitations some articles may be edited or may only appear on the website.

**If you have any Safeguarding issues, please contact
Hazel Smyth on 07495 362525**

Office closure dates

There are currently no planned closure dates



Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/nywfw>



North Yorkshire West Federation has a new Instagram account
[https:// www.instagram.com/northyorkshirewestfederationwi/?g=5](https://www.instagram.com/northyorkshirewestfederationwi/?g=5)

Office Opening Times

Tuesday 9.00am-12.30pm, 1.00pm-4.00pm,
Thursday 9.30am-12.30pm, 1.00pm-4.00pm,
Friday 9.00am—12.30pm, 1.00pm—3.30pm.

Address

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01765 606339**

nywfw24@gmail.com

www.thewi.org.uk/northyorkshirewest