

FAQs Denman – October 2021

When was the charity commission scheme granted?

The scheme was formally granted on 8 September 2021 and we were notified the following day. Since that date we have been working with the Charity Commission and our solicitors to understand what the next stages would look like and how we could proceed so that we could share the full information with you.

Is Denman up for sale?

This latest development is simply the authorisation from the Charity Commission for the Denman Trust to sell the estate. The estate is not yet up for sale, or sold. In the coming weeks and months the Denman Trust will decide on how to proceed with the sale and members will be kept informed with any further developments. We have appointed a surveyor to support any future sale, in line with charity law and they will advise the Trustees. We wanted at this stage to let you know simply of the change of status of the Charity Commission scheme as we know many of you will have engaged with the process and we are grateful to those of you who shared your feedback with us and the Charity Commission.

What will happen to the proceeds from the sale of the estate?

Any proceeds from the sale of the estate will ultimately return to the Denman Trust but will be restricted for use towards the Denman Trust's educational charitable objects.

However it is to be noted that since the start of lockdown in March 2020 Denman estate costs have largely been covered by a loan made by the NFWI and any additional costs incurred from this point onwards continue to be managed in this way as the Denman Trust has only a residual level of income from educational activities and rental of properties on the estate. As such, the total amount paid by NFWI to support Denman during lockdown, any costs during the consultation period, the cost of refunds, and any costs incurred from the management of the closure and sale of any part of the estate, will ultimately need to be repaid from the proceeds of the sale. This money will be covered by a formal interest-free loan agreement between NFWI and Denman to comply with accounting requirements and charity law.

Outside of the funds used to repay the loan made by NFWI, any other monies will be restricted and held by the Denman Trust for use in the delivery of its charitable objects and we are about to commence a consultation activity with all members to understand how you would like us to make best use of this money to deliver educational activities.

How will we maintain the legacy of Denman?

The purpose of the Denman Trust has always been the delivery of education to WI members. Whilst we will no longer retain the physical college and reference to the college has been removed from the charitable object, we remain committed to the delivery of education and the spirit of Denman. The educational needs and wants of women have changed dramatically since 1948 and so we will continue to adapt and be flexible to meet the needs of members now and in the future. You will be invited to participate in a consultation

this autumn which will help identify what you want the Denman Trust to deliver and how we can keep the spirit and legacy of Denman going for the future, so we would strongly encourage you to take part in this and have your say.

Why are we doing the member consultation on the future of the Denman Trust?

Without asking you what you want the Denman Trust to deliver in the future we can't ensure we are getting the educational model and approach right for you and your fellow members. The aim of the Denman Trust is to deliver a broad range of accessible educational opportunities at a time and place that suits you. The consultation will look at learning styles, educational methods, location and pricing along with a range of other factors. The data from this consultation will help us shape the new Denman offer and ensure it offers something for all members.

Why is the member consultation online only?

Surveys are very expensive and while the Denman Trust initially opted to have an online and offline option, the cost and resources needed were not feasible for the Denman Trust. We have therefore decided to produce this survey online. As it is important that only WI members complete this survey, there will be a validation gateway which is simply a verification process to confirm that you are WI member and more information will be provided in the survey invitation email.

What will happen to our funds or bursaries restricted to Denman?

You will be aware that in order to release these funds held at federation and WI level we were waiting on confirmation of the changed charitable objects. This stage is now complete with the finalised Charity Commission scheme. We will now be liaising with our solicitors regarding what can be done with funds and bursaries restricted to Denman and will be in touch with federations when we have more information on this as soon as we know.