



# Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes

November 2022

## WI supports the Warm this Winter Campaign

As we head into winter, the WI is very concerned that the UK's reliance on oil and gas for our heating and electricity is both putting bill payers under impossible financial strain, whilst also deepening the climate crisis. We need urgent Government action to rapidly move us further towards heating and electricity systems that are clean, green, ready-to-deploy and cheap-to-run, and a national programme of home insulation to keep our heat in and to lower our bills.

We are supporting the Warm this Winter campaign to call on the Government to put in place a package of measures to address the cost of living crisis and the climate crisis. The campaign is calling for immediate emergency financial support to the most vulnerable for energy bills, whilst also calling for action that leads us away from the UK's broken energy system towards cleaner, greener and cheaper forms of energy.

### We will be asking the Government to:

Give emergency financial support to vulnerable households

Develop and implement a nationwide energy efficiency programme that includes home insulation

A roll-out of onshore wind generation

An end to offshore oil and gas expansion

Take action- the Warm this Winter campaign

### Sign the petition on the Warm this Winter website.

Use our template letter to write your MP to call for emergency and longer-term policies to address the cost of living crisis and the climate crisis.

Stay up to date with the WI's work with the Warm this Winter campaign by signing up to the NFWI Public Affairs digest.

### Sources of support

If you are struggling to pay for your energy bills, contact your energy supplier as soon as possible. The rules from energy regulator Ofgem state that your energy supplier has a duty to help you and can help to set an energy payment plan that you can afford.



200 Club Winner £10

62 – G Harness, Green Lane WI

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Don't forget to follow us on Facebook for regular posts and updates.

<https://www.facebook.com/WMFVI>



## Chairman's Address



### Hello Everyone,

The Scots have a quaint way of putting the approaching end of the month by saying "October is nearly away with the calendar" and all too soon the clocks will be going back and early darkness will be upon us. I don't know how you feel but I dislike the change over.

As a girl the local farmers would moan that the cows would be lined up ready for milking an hour early and would voice their displeasure very loudly at being kept waiting. (In Spring of course, they would complain that the cows were still all over the fields at the new milking time). I know that small children and pets find it hard to adapt to the new timings and even now I don't like waking up at 6.00am instead of 7.00am especially when my husband will be happily snoring away beside me!

My granddaughter Ella will be nine in a couple of weeks time and she has planned her special day with military precision. I have been given a timetable telling me what time train to catch into the City and when and where I have to meet herself, her mother and other grandmother and then follows a list of all the shops we will be visiting with timings plus when and where we will be having coffee and lunch stops and comfort breaks. I have a feeling that I shall be exhausted by the time we get on the homeward train. I love Ella dearly but I am not a shopper and so the day will be rather a trial as I watch her trying on different garments and choosing new shoes etc. However, I will be rewarded with a MacDonaldis meal which for her is the height of fine dining!

October is the month when the annual Mop Fair is celebrated on Kings Norton Green. This has been held ever since the 1600s and was originally a hiring fair when farm labourers would line up holding a pitchfork or scythe, dairy maids would hold a milking stool and house maids would hold a mop (hence the name) to denote their areas of expertise to the assembled employers. Many other trades would also be represented and there would be games and contests and stalls selling food and commodities like cloth or ribbons. It must have been an amazing spectacle. In modern times the event is still held but is simply a fair with rides like the Waltzers, and games where you used to be able to win a goldfish in a plastic bag.

This is not allowed now but there is still a pig roast and an atmosphere of enjoyment and the rather loud music can still be drowned out by the shrieks of children as they try to net a cuddly toy or whatever.

There is still Halloween to look forward to and of course the annual celebration of that wonderful idea some people had of blowing up Parliament and riding us of all the politicians of every variety. When our sons were little we always held a bonfire party in the garden with fireworks, baked potatoes and sausages for them and their friends. Nowadays it is rather an expensive event to host and many council run firework displays have been called off which I feel is rather a pity and is depriving children of a lot of innocent fun. I rather think that is me taking a trip down memory lane.

I hope to see many of you at the Federation Showcase at the BMI on November 2nd. There will be lots of your craft work on display for you to marvel at and it will be another occasion where we can all meet up with friends.

Lynn

## News

### ACWW

On a beautiful sunny Autumn morning 17 WI ladies went a fantastic walk around Bournville led by Sheila O'Shaughnessy (and Lottie). Sheila gave a very interesting history of George Cadbury and Bournville.

Thank you to the ladies that came and the generous donations to ACWW.

I attended the European ACWW Conference held in Glasgow with representatives from 9 European countries also South Africa and Australia. The Conference was hosted by the Scottish Women's Institutes Federation with interesting speakers and information of the changes in ACWW regarding projects. There will now be less projects and continue annual spending at the same level focusing on Climate-Smart Agriculture, Rural Women's Health and Community Development

Apologies to Arden WI their donation of £10 at the Annual Meeting was omitted from the list of donations

Pamela

**ACWW Coordinator West Midlands Federation**

## Over to you

**Boldmere WI** had an inhouse competition with red/white and blue as its theme, The Walking Group enjoyed a walk in the park and during August some members met up at the Deli to enjoy a tea or coffee. Also we did two toppers for the Triathlon.



Hope you all have enjoyed the Summer and all the athletics etc. At our September meeting we had Francesca who is a Paediatric Nurse and worked in a Children's Hospice, also a fund raiser and a long distance cyclist. Francesca had raised money for Chat UK by cycling 3,350 miles, around all the Children's Hospices. The Hospices care for families with children who have limiting conditions. They help them make the most of every moment by having fun and making precious memories. They support and care for parents and siblings when a child dies. I enclose a picture of Francesca.



**Judy Holmes Boldmere WI**

**Monkspath WI** had a very enjoyable day recently on the Four Ashes Adventure Golf Course.



The location was really beautiful and the weather glorious. We had a fun packed day trying to avoid the many water features and other obstacles that were in our way. Some did better than others!



The eventual winner who quite appropriately received a carton of tea as her prize was Janet Ball.

**Sue Cowley, Monkspath WI**



**Streetly WI** congratulates Mary on completing 40 years as a member.

Her continuous support for the WI has been outstanding.

**Nola Boulger, Streetly WI**



**Streetly Evening WI** members spent a relaxed and most enjoyable walk around Walsall Arboretum in September. This really is a beautiful park venue, so much so the ladies have decided to repeat the walk to experience the changes over each of the seasons. Coffee at the end of the walk was most welcome.



**Nola Boulger, Streetly Evening WI**

**Castle Bromwich WI** members had a lovely day out travelling by steam train from Cheltenham Racecourse to Broadway and then a visit to Broadway Village for a stroll around and refreshments. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



**Marion, Castle Bromwich WI**

**Walsall Wood WI** went to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire on 12 July 2022 for our summer trip.



We took the Land Train around the site and after lunch continued to look at the memorials.



It's an awesome place to visit with memorials not just to those who lost their lives in war. Memorials for Evacuees, Police, The Fire Service, Land Girls, Miners. Rail Workers The list is endless.

We found the WI Bench which was built by WI women and is in an S shape.



A thoroughly enjoyable day

**Sue Laws, Walsall Wood WI**

## Public Affairs

**Reminder:** don't forget to sign up for the No More Violence Against Women event on Wednesday 23rd November at 7.30pm when Simon Foster, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner talks to us on Zoom.

Other speakers talk about our legal rights and about surviving abuse.

To book: details are on EVENTBRITE:  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/virtual-event-for-women-from-across-the-west-midlands-16-days-of-activism-tickets-417081751747>

The 16 days of activism against gender-based violence runs from 25th November – 10th December.

More information is available online at [thewi.org](http://thewi.org)

**Resolutions:** In line with the most recent resolution, NF Public Affairs have organised two webinars,

1. ADHD on 21 October which is ADHD Awareness month
2. Understanding Autism on 11 November.

You can sign up for either or both on My WI. Recordings of both will also be available.



**Dickens and Forshaw Heath WI** celebrated the **Great Big Green Week** with a guided walk round Earlswood Lakes and Clowes Woods which also contains heathland and wet meadow habitats.

The walk was led by local wildlife expert Tony Philp, who provided members with a great deal of information to help promote and spread their knowledge within their community to encourage and protect local green spaces and nature.

Tony Philp: (Twitter: [@TonyPhilp@earlswoodwild](https://twitter.com/TonyPhilp))

Report by Hilary Close, Climate Ambassador, Dickens and Forshaw Heath.

Looking after our Wildlife. Have you gathered together any wood you've found lying around and made a safe shelter for hedgehogs to spend the winter in a quiet corner of the garden? The birds will welcome you topping up their feeders and leaving them a water supply that doesn't freeze now that the weather's getting colder.



Aquatic Habitat. It's a great time to think about making a small pond in your garden. If you're not quite sure where to start, go to [www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)

How to Build a Pond. There are clear illustrated instructions which are easy to follow and you'll introduce frogs, toads, newts and many other aquatic creatures into your garden.



Save our Bees. Don't let's forget the pollinators. Seed catalogues are everywhere at the moment – perhaps you've received them from countless different firms as I have but October's the month to get those orders off, however small and plan to provide some food for the bees come spring and summer. You'll find tips to guide you to their favourite plants in most catalogues.

Thinking sustainably for Christmas

The shops are full of toys, gifts, wrappings and decorations and pressure on our time and our pockets makes it increasingly difficult to take the time to check the labels and make sure that what we're buying is from a sustainable source and made of sustainable materials. We'll soon be buying cards, presents and paper to wrap them in, so let's make it an opportunity to choose natural materials and protect the environment and wildlife. More about this next month!

**Thinking Ahead to Show the Love.** Keep up to date on our climate campaigns by subscribing to the Public Affairs Digest online and it's time to start planning ahead for your actions in the Show the Love campaign next year on 14 February 2021.



## Entertainment

Autumn has come in with a riot of colour and change. With it, our thoughts turn to colder and longer hours of darkness. Alongside of that there are opportunities out there for you to experience new things, theatre trips, meals out, concerts, dances, bonfire and Halloween craziness.

To this end we have decided to identify and tell you about events in and around the West Midlands that you might like to get together with WI members or friends, or family to enjoy.

There are still seats available for the Nutcracker trip on the 1st of December at 2.00pm at The Hippodrome and for the outing to Cardiff Christmas market on Thurs 22nd November.

Here's just a few other things, your appetite.



### Around Birmingham:

Nov 11<sup>th</sup> Town hall – Horrible histories – Horrible Christmas

Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> Symphony hall - The police Orchestra Proms night Spectacular for CLIC

Sergeant Childrens cancer charity

Dec 21<sup>st</sup> Symphony Hall – A swinging Christmas with CBSO

Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony Hall – Christmas At The Movies

Nov 25<sup>th</sup> Sutton Town Hall – Festive Party Night

Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Sutton Town Hall - The Carpenters Legacy

[www.bmusic.co.uk/symphony\\_hall](http://www.bmusic.co.uk/symphony_hall)  
[www.suttoncoldfieldtownhall.com](http://www.suttoncoldfieldtownhall.com)



### More to the West:

Nov 4<sup>th</sup> Halesowen Cricket Club - Bonfire and Fireworks

Dec 14<sup>th</sup> - 16 th Arena theatre – Dark Tales In Winter 2022

Dec 15<sup>th</sup> Wolverhampton Race course – Christmas Party Night

[www.grandtheatre.co.uk](http://www.grandtheatre.co.uk)

## IMPORTANT CHANGE TO YOUR CALENDARS



It is with regret that following lengthy discussions in committee, we have decided to cancel the Christmas Carol Concert which was due to take place on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December at St Martins In the Bullring this year..

We are looking into ways of making this event a more family orientated and inclusive date in all of our calendars, for next year..

St Martins does have a whole host of carol concerts throughout Decemeber.

Information can be found on their website [www.bullring.org](http://www.bullring.org) or 0121 600 6020

## What's On

### Dates for your Diary

02.11.2022	Federation Showcase at BMI
22.11.2022	Cardiff Christmas Outing
23.11.2022	No More Violence Zoom
01,12,2022	Nutcracker
24.04.2023	Spring Outing Stamford
09.06.2023	Quiz
21.06.2023	Summer Outing Skegness
13.07.2023	Croquet Kenilworth
25.07.2023	Croquet Kenilworth
19.09.2023	Autumn Outing Melton & Oakham
25.09.2023	Annual Meeting
00.11.1023	Christmas Outing Hyde Park