February 2024

Dear President and your Committee/Team Members

The attached documents have come from National to be issued to all WIs within the North Yorkshire West Federation. The Policy is compulsory as stated in the documents. Most of you will be aware that we at Federation have always had a strict Health and Safety Policy because we have a Duty of Care to you, our members.

To help you with the implementation of this policy I have written some basic guidance to help you understand some of the requirements.

One of the most important aspects is that you and your committee, and we appreciate that you are volunteers, but you do have a Duty of Care to your members to ensure their safety at all your meetings and events. I would suggest that at your first committee meeting on receipt of this policy you appoint a Health & Safety Co-ordinator to oversee the requirements of the policy (plus a Deputy)

**Guidance on Understanding the Policy**

* **Risk Assessments**

You are required to make a Risk Assessment at all venues that you use. You must keep a record of the assessment using the form provided – work through the dummy form NFWI have completed to make it easier, you will need to print some forms from the attachment. These forms are the same as federation uses. Consider the fact that the assessment will vary depending on the type of activity the meeting is taking.

* **Offsite Assessments**

These are required for any outside events, trips, visits.

**Fire Safety**

* The owner/landlord of the premises you use has a responsibility to provide a Fire risk assessment which they are required to share with you.
* This will include-
1. An emergency evacuation routes, and fire exits with the Fire Assembly point.
2. It is their responsibility to provide all the correct signage.
3. If your WI owns the premises, it is your trustees’ responsibility to provide all the above.
4. It is the owner/landlord responsibility to make sure that all electrically testing is carried out and either a dated sticker on each plug or a certificate detailing all tested equipment.
5. Electrical Testing may be known as P.A.T which is Portable Appliance Testing – this must be done on a yearly basis on all equipment over 1 year old.

 **What responsibilities a WI at every meeting/workshop/event**

* **All electric equipment brought to your meeting /event or**

**workshop either by the speaker or a WI member must comply with 4 & 5 listed above.**

* Please ensure that all fire exits are kept clear, all present must be made aware of them and all evacuation procedures.
* A list of all attendees must be recorded and made available to the H & S

co-ordinator in the event of a fire, to do a head count after evacuation.

**There is a legal responsibility for all venues to have Public Liability Insurance, and their certificate should be displayed.**

**All WI’s are responsible for providing their own correct insurance cover.**

**First Aid**

* All WI’s must ensure that there are correct First Aid boxes and check where the nearest defibrillator is sited.
* If there is no First Aid equipment provided, it is the responsibility of the WI to take one with them.
* Have a fully charged mobile phone in the case of an emergency call is required.
* All accidental injuries incurred during the meeting/event/workshop must be recorded in an accident book.
* Please study the National Guidance Health & Safety Policy under Item 6 second paragraph regarding external trips/activities or external events.

As well as studying the H & S Policy please be aware of the First Aid Guidance Cover for all WI Meetings /Trips /Events. This is a separate document.

It does all sound very daunting, but it is straight forward. We must remember we have the Duty of Care to all present at our WI meeting/event/workshop.

If you have any concerns or queries, I can be contacted on hjstoney48@gmail.com or if you prefer telephone the office and Helen will pass a message across to me. I am here to help you steer your way through this.

We are running a basic First Aid Course by First Aid Skills UK – Trainer Gloria Cooke, at Alma House on Wednesday 15th May and Thursday 16th May, cost £60, but we are subsidising this amount to £30 for one member per Institute. This is a basic First Aid course by Qualsafe Awards which includes a First Aid Book. Places are limited. Please note that members would be expected to be able to kneel on the floor to perform CPR.

Regards to all,

Heather Stoney

Federation Chairman