



BEDFORDSHIRE WI NEWS *FEBRUARY 2025*



Annual Council Meeting

Kings House, 245 Ampthill Road, Bedford MK42 9AZ

Saturday 12th April 2025, Doors open 11.30pm for 12.30 start

Each WI is invited to send a delegate free of charge

Observer tickets for members will be £12.00 each

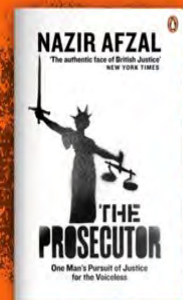
Our Keynote Speaker is the truly inspiring Nazir Afzal OBE

Talking about his work on women's safety and rights and other groundbreaking achievements from a dizzying 30 year career



Get your ticket and come along to our Annual Council Meeting and celebrate our incredible achievements of the past year too! Our great lineup of speakers, includes Jeryl Stone, NFWI Chair, a fascinating talk on Climate Change, and Lewis Kaler from Sue Ryder St John's Hospice, our Charity of the Year. Plus, we'll be unveiling our new Climate Change banner – a highlight of the day! Don't miss out on this exciting and engaging event – we'd love to see you there!

**THE MAN WHO
PROSECUTED THE
CRIMES THAT DEFINE
MODERN BRITAIN**



As mentioned above we are planning to unveil our brand new Banner which is to highlight the very important subject of Climate Change. We hope to receive a Green Heart from each WI across the County. If you are still decorating yours, to include your WI name across the heart, please do try to get it in to WI House as soon as you can; this gives our wonderful ladies as much time as possible to include it in the project.





Bedfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes

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Opening Hours: Members are welcome to visit the office between 10.00 to 12.30 and 1.30 to 3pm Monday & Wednesday. Office is closed Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

Parking is available at Queen Street Car Park first 2 hours free.

Secretary: Catherine Bentley

Newsletter Editor: Hazel Wade

Content to: WInews@bedfordshirewis.org.uk

by: **01 March 2025**

Next Mailing : Wednesday 26 February 2025

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Advertising: To advertise in Beds WI News

please contact: fedsec@bedfordshirewis.org.uk

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: Knit , Sew & Craft, WI House, 10.30 to 2..30pm, no booking needed £3. Ring office for dates

- Thurs 13 Feb (Adult) Panto with lunch, Brick Lane**
- Mon 24 Feb County Quiz, Addison Centre Kempston**
- Friday 07 March Guildhall & Livery Hall London**
- Thurs 13 March Energy Champions, Flitwick CC**
- Sat 22 March Speaker Showcase, Barton le Clay VH**
- Sat 12 April Annual Meeting, Kings House, Bedford**
- Wednesday 04 June NFWI Annual Meeting**
- Monday 19 June, Three Counties Quiz Final, Flitwick**
- 23rd June 5 days BCFWI Holiday to Yorkshire**
- 02 July Floral Demonstration with "Miss Dorothy"**
- Thursday 10 July National Arboretum coach trip**
- Friday 18 July Wine Tasting Supper, Westoning**
- Monday 29 September Jigsaw Challenge, Kempston**
- Tuesday 21 October Crazy Bag Whist, Gravenhurst**

FEDERATION FLUTTER

December 2024: No.7, Henlow WI £50

January 2025: No. 60, Heath Barn Birds WI £50

There's still time to buy shares if you'd like to support your Federation further. Please contact the office!

WI Duty Adviser for February 2025

Sally Ball

Is.ball@btinternet.com

Please contact the duty adviser with WI related issues
For anything urgent, please ring
WI House on 01234 359538

VALENTINE'S QUIZ

1	Name the Greek God of Love
2	If you were born on Valentine's Day what would your birth sign be?
3	Who invented the first heart shaped chocolate box?
4	In which country are St Valentines Keys given to lovers?
5	Which birthstone is said to attract love?
6	Which romantic comedy film starred Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan?
7	"It must have been love, but it's over now" is a lyric from a song, sung by whom?
8	Name the Beatles' debut single
9	True or False – the custom of sending chocolates, flowers and gifts originated in France
10	The Guinness World record for the longest marriage was 89 years, 364 days. True or False?

**BCFWI 2025
FEDERATION HOLIDAY**

As per the weekly Presidents & Secretaries email, we confirm that the holiday is going ahead in June. It's great value for money; 3*Hotel; Half board; Blue Badge Guides in Harrogate, York & on N.Yorks Moors Steam Railway to Whitby; York Minster; Houses, Gardens; & more! Some entrance fees included. We are taking bookings for a while longer & hope more members will join us! Please contact the office for more details.



Hello everyone, as I write . . . the festivities are well and truly over, and we look forward to the New Year ! The Year goes by so quickly as we move through our seasons. Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, together with all the individual occasions such as Pancake Day, Mother's Day, just a couple of those incidental events that are part of the Calendar year. Then we have the WI Year!

We ended 2024 on a high note with our "Sing Along" presentations at Gt.Barford & then at Tilsforth & Stanbridge. These events were well received by the members, and it seems that they will become an essential date in the WI calendar!!

Another event that is held annually is our Craft Fair at Flitwick and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all who helped on the day in any way and a special thank you to the ladies who helped on our stalls and to those who made cakes; it is very much appreciated by the Board of Trustees.

To commence 2025, the Trustees held a "Meet the Team" coffee morning at Frosts Garden Centre at Willington. This was a fantastic success and with many members from all over the county joining current and past board members.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the Burns night event, before we became embroiled in cancellation charges! But we do still have our Panto visit to Brick Lane in February to look forward to.

February also brings us the County Quiz, followed by the 3 Counties Quiz which Bedfordshire are hosting, in June. March heralds the first of our Speaker days. April brings the Annual Council Meeting at Kings House followed by the NFWI Annual meeting in June. These are the more formal aspects of the WI Year.

I do hope all WI's have found members able to make a Green Heart for our Climate Change Banner. We have not received many at the time of writing! We anticipate unveiling this at the Annual Council Meeting and I would hope that we receive a "Heart" from each of our WI's!! There is a rumour that there could be a display of Banners held later on. Watch this space! I wish you all A Happy New Year and look forward to meeting many of you at the various events that will be happening during 2025!

Best Wishes *Elizabeth*

BOOKING FOR EVENTS

We are making a slight change to our booking system to address some initial teething problems. We are still using TicketSource as our booking platform, but our events will no longer be visible in the public search area on the TicketSource website. Instead, the full list of events will be on our website at bedfordshirewis.org.uk.

Each event has a "**Book Now**" button, which will take you directly to the relevant booking page on TicketSource. To ensure a smooth booking experience, please make all bookings through our website. Note that we will no longer be creating application forms or issuing invoices for event bookings. We will continue to provide information sheets for each new event, which you can share with your members at your meetings.

Email received from a very happy WI Member !

Bedfordshire Federation Trustees

Today, 13th January, I have spent late morning and afternoon with the Trustees at Frosts Garden Centre Cafe. It was well supported by members of the WI, which was great to see. As it is the beginning of the new year, with plans for events and activities already in hand, organised by the Trustees, I feel it is important that all of us are reminded that the Trustees are **all volunteers** at the Federation. They give up their time freely to ensure Bedfordshire WI Federation continues to be our port of call, enabling us to use their wealth of knowledge, expertise and experience to support individual WIs. I'm sure they won't mind me saying that many are well over the retirement age and where they get their energy from, I do not know! There is only 1 paid position in our Federation and that is the Federation Secretary. I would like to thank them all for giving up their time and being so committed to Bedfordshire Women's Institutes.

Julie Price, Biggleswade Evening WI

PS. These 'Meet the Trustees' events will be happening again, look out for the dates in the magazine. A chance to ask questions and get answers immediately.

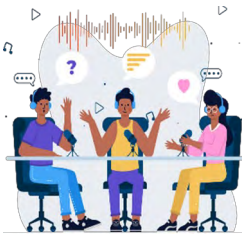
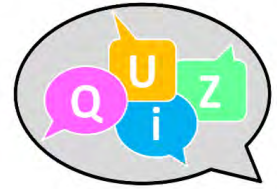
**The County Quiz Monday 24th February 2025
Addison Centre Kempston MK42 8PN 7.30pm**

We have extended the closing date on the above event in the hope that now we are into the New Year and Christmas is behind us, we will receive a further response from our WI's!!

Teams to consist of 3 members and entry is **£13 per team**

The eight winning teams from the County Quiz will go forward to represent Bedfordshire Federation in the Three County Quiz which will take place in June here in Bedfordshire as we are hosting the event this year.

Team and supporter tickets to be booked through our website: **bedfordshirewis.org.uk**



**Speaker Showcase Day
Saturday March 22nd 2025 Barton Le Clay Village Hall
Doors open 10 am for Tea/Coffee & biscuits.
Speakers from 10.30 am to 4.00pm**

The Speaker Showcase gives WI's an opportunity to hear from speakers on a variety of subjects to assist in giving your members an interesting programme for the coming year. It also enables those that get voted for, the opportunity to be placed in the Speakers Directory.

This is an all-day event, and we ask that WI Members can be present all day although members can make changes at lunchtime if necessary!

We also recommend that members bring a packed lunch, tea & coffee will be available. WI's can send a maximum of 3 members at a cost of £7 per person

Tickets to be purchased through our website **bedfordshirewis.org.uk**

CLIMATE AMBASSADOR

anniepalmer@hotmail.com

In the quieter days after the New Year, I actually got around to reading something that I'd been meaning to read since it was released on the 12th December 2024. It has eighty-two pages and it was hard going. You may be thinking, from the number of pages, that it's a Short Story of some kind but no, it's not – and I can safely say that it certainly wouldn't come under the literary genre of 'Romance'. If anything, it would come under the ones of 'Horror', 'Crime' and 'Psychological Thriller' (or 'Killer'). The publication I read was the Government's updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It's taken eighty odd pages and around thirty thousand words to tell us that developers are going to build what they want, where they want and that economic growth is so much more important than nature (the thing that gives us life). Gosh, all that time, effort and money (ours) trying to deceive us when they could have been open and honest and said what they plan to do in about twenty words. "Tricks and treachery are the practice of fools that don't have brains enough to be honest" (Benjamin Franklin 1706 – 1790) and "Some liars are so expert they deceive themselves" (Austin O'Malley 1858 – 1932). I do like a good quote.

The NPPF is a masterclass in deception, manipulation and control. It tells us that "planning policies and decisions should (a weak word) contribute to and enhance the natural environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils" (Section 15, Paragraph 187). 'Protect' means "shield from danger, injury, change, capture, loss" (Chambers Dictionary). Going onto a greenfield site with a ruddy great digger and removing the fragile topsoil (N.B. around 50% of the planet's biodiversity is in the soil) is not protecting it; it is destroying it ('loss'). To then go and pour tons of concrete on the site is blatantly obviously going to totally alter it ('change'). Every greenfield site has immense landscape, biodiversity and geological value and these three are interlinked. The powers that be say they're protecting and enhancing nature and talk of Biodiversity Net Gain. They're lying to themselves and they're lying to us. Ian Fleming's 007 had a "Licence to Kill". Government's NPPF has a "Licence to Build" which is going to kill. 007 is the good guy; NPPF is the nutter that wants to destroy our world. There isn't an 007 in us, the members of the WI, but there is a Wonder Woman and she is needed now. The Time is Now for WI members to stop being "sleeping tigers" and to become "roaring tigers" (the late Claire Rayner at a WI event some 15 or more years ago - she asked why we weren't a 'roaring tiger').

THE GUILD HALL A STUNNING MEDIEVAL BUILDING IN THE HEART OF THE CITY OF LONDONFriday March 7th 2025

Murray Craig, Clerk to the Chamberlains Court at the City of London guides us on this visit to the Guildhall in the morning and a Livery Hall in the afternoon. Coach pick-ups: at **Three Star Coaches Sundon car park LU3 3BP at 7.40am, Bedford Park & Ride MK42 9XF at 8.15am and Flitwick MK45 1HP at 8.35am.**

THIS EVENT IS NOW FULLY BOOKED !**Come and Meet the Energy Champions:****Thursday March 13 2025 Flitwick Cricket Club 10.30 am £8 per person**

We have accepted an opportunity to hold an informative presentation by the "Community Energy Champions". They will give out impartial advice for free! They have an assortment of handouts on a range of topics and will also arrange a home visit if that is deemed necessary or required by any of our members.

We have designated this as a "Bring your Own Mug" event, to avoid trustees having to bring china cups & saucers from WI House! Purchase tickets for this event through our website: bedfordshirewis.org.uk

**Visit to The National Arboretum Staffordshire****Thursday 10th July 2025**

The Arboretum welcomes over 300,000 visitors to the site each year, including over 20,000 young people for formal and informal learning visits. Visitors can enjoy discovering over 400 memorials nestled amongst some 25,000 trees, experience riverside walks and participate in a wide variety of daily activities, guided walks, land train tours, memorial talks, exhibitions and buggy tours.

Each year around 250 events take place on site, from small intimate services of Remembrance to set piece events like Armistice Day, Remembrance Sunday, a summer proms and Armed Forces Day.

The Chapel of Peace & Forgiveness is on Heroes Square near the Remembrance Centre and holds a service of Remembrance at 11.00am every day. We will arrange to arrive for 10.30 am so that members can attend should they so wish.

Pick ups Sundon Depot 7.15am, Flitwick 7.30am, Bedford 8.00am & Rushden 8.40am

Cost per person £35.00 friends & family very welcome

Purchase tickets through our web site: bedfordshirewis.org.uk

LIFESTYLE & LEISURE TEAM

ls.ball@btinternet.com

After a nice and busy 2024, that included trips to Winterbourne House & Gardens; Royal Albert Hall Film Music Gala; Aldeburgh and the Fishers Gin Distillery and of course, the wonderful John Rutter Christmas Matinee Concert . . . we are now busy planning more activities for 2025.

We have our regulars in place with the Jigsaw Challenge at Centenary Hall in Kempston on Monday 29th September and Crazy Bag Whist at Gravenhurst on Tuesday 21st October. We have other ideas we are looking into and suggestions have included a visit to the Chelsea Pensioners and other day trips.

If you have any venue ideas you would like us to look into, please do contact us, via Sally on the email above. Thank you for supporting our ventures!

ITEM FOUND!

Whilst clearing up after the very successful Sing-Along at Great Barford Village Hall on



Monday 09 December, a very pretty earring was found. It bears a very specific inscription and we're sure the owner would love to have it back. If you recognise and wish to claim the earring, please contact the office on

01234 359538 or by emailing fedsec@bedfordshirewis.org.uk

Wishing you a Happy New Year from the creative activities team.
 Hope you enjoy the recipe this month it will freeze well and also, you can use gluten free flour

BANANA and PEACAN LOAF

- 3 tbsp maple syrup
- 75 g butter softened
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 3 overripe bananas mashed
- 3 eggs beaten
- 250 g self raising flour
- 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- Pinch of salt
- 50g Pecan nuts toasted



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 160°, Grease or line a 2lb loaf tin
2. Beat the maple syrup with the soft butter in a large bowl.
3. Add the vanilla then mashed bananas then the eggs.
4. Beat until everything is well combined.
5. Slowly fold in the flour followed by the bicarbonate soda and salt.
6. Chop the nuts reserve a few whole ones for the top.
7. Pour into the tin and decorate with nuts.
8. Bake for approximately 40 minutes

KNITTING



We have been asked in the past about a day course on cabling. Many members enjoy knitting but find it hard following a pattern that contains an Aran cable. If you are interested in learning a little more please contact our office.



Margaret Smart Trophy - We will be announcing this year's competition soon - do look out for details! Best Wishes. Liz

ANSWERS TO QUIZ P2

1. Eros
2. Aquarius
3. Richard Cadbury
4. Italy
5. Amethyst
6. When Harry met Sally
7. Roxette
8. Love Me Do
9. False
10. False - it was 86 years, 290 days

GARDENING

The end of February is time to attend to most types of hydrangea, cutting back to a pair of buds. However if there has been frost or even icy snowy conditions, this is one job that could be left until after a prolonged thaw.

Now is the ideal time to look round the garden and move shrubs that are maybe growing in the wrong space - once moved, most shrubs then benefit from a light prune help them settle in to their new home! Now is also good for planting out bare rooted trees and roses.

As always if the weather is just too icy and cold for jobs in the garden, how about looking up and visiting local historic & heritage gardens, or National gardens to visit for the snowdrops - there are usually many very precious sites around.



It's time to cut back Wisteria if you have one, to maintain it's vigour. Also, removing large hellebore leaves, allow it to show off those gorgeous waxy flowers, they will generally bloom for weeks.



Hellebore & Galanthus Elwesii pics: Editors own garden

Meet the Team – Monday 13 January at Frosts, Willington

Oh my goodness! (I think that was the response of the staff too). So many of you turned up to meet us. It was lovely to see you all and we know that you enjoyed the opportunity to chat with members of other WIs, as well as chatting to us. There were certainly some contact details being shared. When we organise a get together like this, we have no way of knowing how many members might decide to join us, so we were delighted to see you all. Thank you to the staff in the restaurant for their very friendly and caring service.

Feedback on the day certainly suggested you would like a repeat, and given the success of our meet-up at Poplars Garden centre in Toddington last July, we are thinking that we will look to organise more of the same late summer/early autumn at both venues. Keep an eye on the Newsletter and President & Secretaries' information for news about when that will be. Thank you for joining us. We wish you and your WIs well for the coming year, and look forward to meeting up again later this year. *Dot*

Around The County Lots of reports of Christmas meetings, where members either enjoyed light hearted speakers, or entertained themselves whilst indulging in festive fare.



In November, **Caldecote WI** held a fun members' evening with no formal speaker, and it turned out to be a hit! Members brought along their craft projects to show others. We played games, including Beetle, which added to the laughs. It was a great chance to learn new crafts, chat, and enjoy some delicious cake together. A fantastic night of creativity and community!

And In December, Caldecote WI came together to celebrate an extraordinary milestone—our 60th birthday!

This was a truly special occasion, made even more meaningful by the presence of some of our early members. Their continued involvement is a testament to the enduring spirit of our group. To mark the occasion, Jenny created a magnificent Christmas cake, and we all sang happy birthday to ourselves. The celebration didn't stop there, as we were entertained by David Tomkins, whose magic tricks amazed us, but it was his ventriloquism that had members in stitches. His cast of lively dummies brought a unique blend of humour and nostalgia to the night.



Sutton WI listened to David Longman talking about his experience of being on The Chase. David is an avid 'quizaholic' and being retired and having more time, he decided to apply to become a contestant on this quiz programme. Not world famous exactly, but a step in the right direction! His talk was about his journey of being a competitor and his actual experience when being televised. We found David to be a very clear, very entertaining speaker. The addition of slides and television excerpts made the talk more interesting for us.

Kempston Rural's meeting took the form of a fashion show presented by the vivacious Jackie.. Four of our members proved to be very capable models. There was a great array of clothing and accessories. A very popular evening.

Shefford's Christmas tree, for the Shefford Christmas Tree Festival at St Michael and All Angels Parish Church, was decorated to highlight and support the National WI campaign "Dental Health Matters". Members had a fun evening decorating bamboo toothbrushes for the tree and one member also donated some candy dentures to hang with them! We made three WI tooth fairies, one to be passed with a letter to our local MP; one for the top of the tree and one to stand at the base with a WI notice explaining the campaign.

Wootton had a very good speaker in Jean Fullerton, who is a published author of 24 novels about WW2. Jean spoke about the unsung heroes of the war in the form of the ARP and other emergency services such as the WVS (now known as the WRVS). Jean also does guest speaking on cruise liners and is an accomplished speaker.

Wrestlingworth - The creative juices were at work in November when members created a 'field of poppies'. Led by Jordan of "Brush Party", our tutor, who had supplied all the materials of canvases, paints and brushes (and even aprons!) we each attempted to copy a painting of poppies as he took us through each stage, background, leaves and finally flowers, so we each had our very own 'masterpiece' to take home. It was a fun social evening though I don't think the art world need worry about us as forgers.



Wharley End's November speaker, Jim Stebbings, travelled from Norwich to present his talk "Sentiments of Christmas". He opened by saying that he hoped his presentation would be "interesting, entertaining and thought provoking" and it certainly was! It covered a wide range of aspects of Christmas and was professionally and imaginatively presented. Jim also provided opportunities throughout for us to join in singing Christmas Carols and Songs. It was certainly a presentation with something to please and interest everyone.



At **Chalton**, we kicked off the holiday season with a festive in-house Christmas craft evening in November, masterminded by our talented members Nikki, Wendy, and Laura. This marked the second year of the event, and it's quickly becoming a firm favorite.

This time, we got creative, crafting charming Christmas hangers using fabric and embellishments, adding a personal touch to

the season's décor. In December, we continued the celebrations with a fun-filled Christmas party. Our members generously contributed to the buffet, and we added an extra touch of festivity with a wine tasting experience. We selected two bottles each of red, white, and rosé wines, and members sampled, compared, and voted for their favorite – a true test of taste! Looking ahead to January, we're gearing up for Chalton WI's 34th birthday! To celebrate, we've planned a delightful outing to the local Beefeater. We'll also be holding the annual resolutions meeting, where we'll gather over tea and cake for a lively discussion of the nominated short listings.



Wilstead's speaker, Tom Phillips, had travelled a long way in dreadful road conditions, with flooding in many places along the M1. He arrived safely however, complete with all his equipment, including many boxes, a microwave and a fridge! His subject was 'Chocolate'. Tom made it look very easy as he showed us how to make a snowman for a table centre, which he generously donated for one of the raffle prizes. He then made some individual chocolates. These were later enjoyed by each member!

Northhill & Ickwell Our November meeting was our 35th birthday and Lisa Garrity came and entertained us with her musical instruments and her amusing talks about her various exploits around the world over the years. She is an accomplished musician and played various well known songs on her saxophone and played other instruments during the evening.



Wymington & Podington had another very busy few months since last posting a report. In November we saw some early Christmas sparkle when the Craft Club produced these gorgeous Christmas wreaths.

Several members then attended the early December John Rutter Christmas concert at the Albert Hall. We finished the year with an excellent festive dinner at

John White Golf Club and started another busy new year programme with our regular January Fish & Chip supper and quiz night.

