



## *BEDFORDSHIRE WI NEWS*

### *JUNE 2025*



Welcome to our June issue! See above, our excellent Climate Banner incorporating all your green hearts. The banner was unveiled in April at our Annual Meeting at Kings House and will be on show again at our WI Day event on 16 September, see P4. A new venture for us is our Concept to Catwalk show in October, featured on P3; it will showcase much talent and we hope something our many crafting members will support. There's lot more inside, so happy reading!



### Bedfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes

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**Facebook :** Bedfordshire County WI

**Opening Hours:** Members welcome to visit the office between 10.00 to 12.30 and 1.30 to 3pm Tuesday & Wednesday, and between 10.00 to 1.30pm Monday & Thursday. Office is closed 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  
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**Cover Pic:** Elizabeth Cochrane

**Advertising:** To advertise in Beds WI News please contact: fedsec@bedfordshirewis.org.uk

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### FEDERATION FLUTTER

**ACM Draw: April 2025**

**No: 98, Margaret Grummitt**

**Bedford WI: £20**

**No:104, North Beds Mills WI: £10**

**May 2025: No.62**

**Gt. Barford WI £50**

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS: Knit , Sew & Craft, WI House, 10.30 to 2..30pm, £3. Ring office for dates**

**Wed 04 June** NFWI Annual Meeting, Gravenhurst

**Sat 14 June** Speaker Showcase, Barton le Clay VH

**Thurs 19 June,** Three Counties Quiz Final, Flitwick

**23rd June 5 days** BCFWI Holiday to Yorkshire

**Wed 02 July** Floral Demo with "Miss Dorothy" Ampthill

**Thurs 10 July** National Arboretum coach trip

**Friday 25 July** Wine Tasting Supper, Wilstead V.H

**Mon 04 Aug** Coach trip to Hunstanton

**Sunday 10 August** Fun Walk, Priory Park Bedford

**Tues 16 Sept** WI Day events Jordans, Nr Biggleswade

**Friday 26 Sept** Musical Evening, Kings House Bedford

**Mon 29 September** Jigsaw Challenge, Kempston

**Sat 11 Oct** Concept to Catwalk Wilstead VH 2 - 4pm

**Wed 15 Oct** Meets & Entertains, Houghton Conquest

**Tuesday 21 Oct** Crazy Bag Whist, Gravenhurst

**Sat 29 Nov** Christmas Craft Fair, Flitwick VH

**03-07 Dec** Christmas Tree Festival, St. Paul's Bedford

WI Duty Adviser for June 2025

**SALLY BALL**

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Please contact the duty adviser with WI related issues

For anything urgent, please ring

WI House on 01234 359538

### June Quiz

**Can you identify the sweets and/or biscuits from the clues?**

1	Group of Stars
2	Place for the Upper Class
3	Edible Fasteners
4	100% Precious Metal
5	Speaks Quietly
6	Fallen Fruit
7	Mother's Local
8	Endurance Test
9	Big Bus
10	Twice as good in France



Hello everyone, summer is upon us and everyone is thinking Holidays! So, whatever you do during the summer with fingers crossed, have a sunny and happy holiday whether at home or abroad.

WI News.... Coffee, Cake & Chat, the President & Secretary workshops, I understand went well with the WI Advisors travelling around the County, answering questions from WI members as well as imparting WI knowledge.

This old record has been found at WI House along with one or two more together with some slides. The title on the record says it is a recording of "Jerusalem" sung at the Albert Hall in 1948!!!

Does any member have a record player that we could borrow to play these records. If so please let me know via my email address and we could make any necessary arrangements. If this works out, we will endeavour to take records and player to all our meetings for members to listen to. I do hope we are lucky enough to achieve this. One of the other records is of the actual meeting. I think a visit to Peacocks may be called for!!



Another fact I learnt this morning is that prior to Adelaide Square, WI House was previously in St Cuthberts Street. As ever, moving house brings out long forgotten treasures, photos and interesting paperwork. In relation to this project, I have one more question for you ladies, if you become aware of a suitable place whether in an office, old pub, retail centre, or bungalow with ground that could become a carpark, wherever in the County, we would love to hear about it.

Best Wishes to you all

*Elizabeth*

### Bedfordshire County Fefeeration of WIs

## CONCEPT to CATWALK

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2025**  
Doors Open from 1.30 pm

**Wilstead Village Hall,  
Cotton End Rd, Wilstead, Bedford MK45 3BX**



We're thrilled to be partnering with Bedford Arts & Crafts Centre to bring you a fashion show like no other!

Join us for a unique showcase where talented students will not only reveal their stunning, handcrafted garments- but also take you behind the scenes, sharing the journey of how their ideas came to life, from first sketch to final stitch.

There will also be a small number of stalls for you to peruse.

**Cost: £10 per person to include non-alcoholic bubbles and nibbles. Family & friends very welcome**

**Closing date for applications:  
Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**Tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis  
Application forms have gone out to your Secretary in the WI mailing**



**Wine Tasting & Supper Evening Friday July 25<sup>th</sup> 2025 7.00 for 7.30pm at  
Wilstead Village Hall, Cotton End Rd, Wilstead, Bedford MK45 3BX**

Sommelier Nigel Strofton, with Wines from Spain & Portugal  
Tickets £28 per person Friends & Family Welcome.

**Last chance to book for this event Ladies !**

**Closing Date July 1st**

Note : we will be at Wilstead Village Hall due to  
refurbishments at Westoning  
Tickets to be purchased via [bedfordshirewis.org.uk](http://bedfordshirewis.org.uk)



**Walking for Fun & Friendship Sunday August 10<sup>th</sup> 2025 at 10.30 am**

Our annual walk will as usual, take place at Priory Park, Bedford MK41 9DJ  
Please remember to check in & out at the Federation Stand which will be on  
the mound near the restaurant.

Walkers may walk the lake as often as they wish!

**JORDANS MILL, Southill Road, Broom, Biggleswade SG18 9JX  
10.30am to 3.00pm**

**"110 years of Women's Institutes September 16<sup>th</sup> 2025"  
DISPLAY OF BANNERS**

Jordans have kindly allowed us use of their rooms on the second floor to  
celebrate this momentous occasion! We would like all our WI's, if you  
have a Banner / Table Runner, to send it in to WI House by July 31st  
We will display all Banners / Runners received, together with all the  
Scrapbooks and Tea Cosies received for the Scrapbook Challenge  
and the Margaret Smart Trophy.



**Bedfordshire County Federation of WIs**

**MUSICAL EXTRAGAVANZA**

**Kings House Amptill Road MK 42 9AZ  
Friday September 26<sup>th</sup> 2025  
Doors Open at 7.00pm**

**The Kings House Bar area will be open prior to the  
Concert & during the Interval**

**The Theme this Year is**

**"The Best of British Music & Celebration of VE Day 80"**

**Bedford Town Band Concert Brass will entertain us for the Evening  
With lots of Audience participation! Red, White & Blue encouraged  
along with FLAGS!**

**Raffle will be in Aid of our Charity of the Year Sue Ryder**

**Tickets available through your WI at £25 per person with Friends & Family  
VERY WELCOME**

We are having a slightly quieter patch just now after a busy few months. Activities have included the truly excellent day trip to Guildhall and the Livery Hall of the Worshipful Company of Barber-Surgeons with Murray Craig in March and more recently, all the organising required for the trip to the National Arboretum in Staffordshire in this, the 80th year since VE Day and all that this has meant for so many. We thank you for supporting the team's events and look forward to presenting more in the months to come!!

One date in 2026 we will be marking is **International Womens' Day** which as always, will be held on **8th March**. We are formulating plans for our Federation to participate more fully and we encourage you to watch this space!

*Elizabeth*

## COMBINED ARTS & SPORT

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A very sunny hello to you all! It's currently a really hot, dry patch . . . which reminds us of sunny days and our summer coach trip to Hunstanton on **Monday 04 August**. The details have gone out in a previous mailing but booking can be thorough the office. **Only £35.00** per person  
Pick ups: Flitwick – opposite Village Hall MK45 1HP 8:30 am, Bedford Park & Ride MK42 9XF 9:00 am and recently added, Skinners Hill, Rushden. Friends & Family welcome.

This leads nicely to autumn and the very popular Jigsaw Evening on Monday 29 September in Kempston to include a light supper to help the frenzied competitive spirit!

The Crazy Bag Whist is on at Gravenhurst on 21st October. Supper not included this time but there is usually a fish & chip van in the car park on the night. If you've not seen this completely mad event in action, now is the year to join in!

*Sally*



### John Rutter's Christmas Celebration (Matinee) Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025

"There's no better way to enjoy the festive spirit than attending John Rutter's popular Christmas Celebration!"



Conducted and presented by John Rutter, and performed by the world-famous Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, this classic festive favourite, features numerous sing-along carols, all in the magnificent surroundings of the Royal Albert Hall.

The concert starts at 3.00pm and it is expected to finish at 5.00 pm

The cost for this event is **£68** per person for concert ticket & coach travel.  
N.B. Programmes are not included in the price, but can be purchased at the venue.

**Please ensure you book early, as in the past tickets have sold out incredibly quickly!**  
Closing date for applications is **FRIDAY 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2025**

Tickets are awarded on a first come first served basis.  
Due to popularity, there is no guarantee that all applications returned by the deadline will be successful.

Hope you enjoy this dessert, it's very quick and easy to make.  
You can use a mixture of berries.

Enjoy! *Liz*

### 3 Ingredient Berry Clafoutis

50g Plain Flour  
500g Fresh Chilled Custard  
250g Mixed Berries

Preheat oven to 180° / 160° fan.

In a large bowl, whisk the flour, custard and 50 ml of cold water until smooth and combined.

Pour into a shallow 1.5 L ovenproof dish and sprinkle over the berries.

Bake for 35 minutes or until slightly risen and golden.

Serve immediately.



Pic Liz Potter

### MARGARET SMART TROPHY



Thank you all for the entries we have received so far. You still have time to contact us if you would like to receive a copy of the schedule with the rules to enter. All your hard work will be on display at our



WI Day event at Jordan's Mill, Broom, Biggleswade on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September, when the Margaret Smart Trophy and certificates will be presented.

Good luck !

*Liz*

### ANSWERS for Quiz P2

1	Galaxy/Milky Way
2	Quality Street
3	Chocolate Buttons
4	Terry's All Gold
5	Wispas
6	Pear Drops
7	Mars Bar
8	Marathon
9	Double Decker
10	Bon-Bon

### GARDENING

- ♦ Regularly deadhead roses in borders & beds; clip back straggly little branches on rose bushes. A general fertiliser applied now will retain their good condition into autumn; some roses may well repeat flower.
- ♦ Enhance patio areas with scented plants in containers. Keep on top of the watering in very sunny positions.
- ♦ To keep continued flowering of summer bedding, regularly deadhead, water & feed. Water more in prolonged dry periods.
- ♦ Propagate from softwood stems by layering. Select a low stem, make an upward cut just below a stem or shoot. The cut should open the stem to about the middle, place in contact with the soil. Peg down, piling soil over it and firm down well. The outer end of the shoot beyond the cut should be trained upward. Once this layering has rooted, cut away from parent plant and pot up or plant out.
- ♦ Lift spring bulbs. Clean away soil & dry them off. Store in a cool dry place until time to plant them out again over the autumn.
- ♦ Before harvesting onions & shallots, bend the tops over to prevent seeding and to allow the onions & shallots to get maximum sunlight. After lifting, spread them out under cover to dry completely before either carefully storing them in boxes or roping them together.



Ed's own garden



**Haynes** supplied this superb pic of a post box topper which formed part of their contribution, along with lots of cakes, to the village VE80 Day celebrations. Fantastic job!



**Studham's** April meeting had Adam Smith, a former museum curator, as guest speaker and his topic was 'Ashridge through the Ages'. Members were interested to hear about the history of the house from its origins as a monastic community, seized by Henry VIII in the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s. The house then belonged to his daughter, later Queen Elizabeth I, and then King James I, before it was sold to the wealthy and aristocratic Egerton family, in whose possession it remained until the 1920s. Adam also talked about the extent of the Egerton's estates around the country. A very interesting speaker.

**Wilstead** heard about Adult Services and Social Care in Bedfordshire, covering mental health issues, loneliness, digital isolation and care standards. And in May, to celebrate 80 years since VE Day, members were requested to wear red, white and blue. Our president read a lovely poem in remembrance of VE Day. We enjoyed several games of 'Biscuit Bingo' with packets of biscuits for prizes. The game provided a lot of laughter!

In April, at **Caldecote** we started our new year with a talk from Nick Cooke on the Great Train Robbery. The robbery took place near Ledburn in Buckinghamshire in 1963. Many of us remembered the reporting at the time but we didn't realise the robbery took place on Ronnie Biggs' birthday and the value of the robbery was £2.5 million (approximately £50 million in today's money)! Nick was a very enthusiastic speaker. We also had the opportunity to see our entry for the WI scrapbook competition – it is looking great. Thanks to all the members who have contributed and all the hard work of the scrapbook committee.



**Leighton Buzzard Riverside** saw our creative evening in April. Wonderful weather and a brilliant turnout for our new WI year, Glen Henry from Leighton Buzzard WI, came to help us make Easter chicks; an enjoyable session with a variety of chicks made. We also had our special Easter raffle, a chocolate quiz, our Silent Auction and a sale of Easter goodies. Janene Archer made up the superb Easter raffle prizes to reflect the theme. We also presented Phyl Szuca with a certificate thanking her for all her efforts as 'Catering Organiser' on the committee. We are really pleased that our membership has remained steady in this our renewal month. We are looking forward to a busy, positive year with a range of activities for all.



In **Cranfield** our speaker was Jonathan Cox, author of the 'Nostrils' novels. Jonathan explained that he had served 30 years as a police officer, in various roles. He had used his experience to write the fictional 'Nostrils' series of books which takes the reader through the life of PC Chris Pritchard, also known as 'Nostrils', from the character joining the Met in the 1980's. Jonathan also told us some amusing stories from his time serving in the force.

**Clifton** shared an entertaining afternoon with speaker Sarah Harrison. She brought much hilarity with a selection of her verses, delivered with her distinctive, saucy wit. We had over 50 members attending this meeting so our tea ladies had their work cut out! We've finished knitting and crocheting poppies for our church VE day display and between us managed to provide a substantial amount. We look forward to seeing the finished project. Alongside our monthly meetings we enjoyed a lunch at a local pub and have plans arranged for two theatre trips to Milton Keynes.

On a sunny Sunday, **Clapham Belles** & guests enjoyed a very interesting talk by Adrian at Friends of Bedford Cemetery on stories of Bedford men and women lying peacefully within the cemetery grounds, the graves & history. The lovely volunteers provided us with tea/cake after.



**Houghton Conquest** enjoyed Evan Willison's second part of his tales from the auction room. He is a very good speaker and kept us amused all evening with the funny stories that happened during his 30 years with an auction house.



In April, **Warden Hill** welcomed 38 members to their meeting, to celebrate the Carnival season. The members showed their creative skills to the fore, by producing a fabulous array of colourful masks, choosing from an abundant selection of glitzy and feathery adornments. They also learnt 25 fun facts about carnivals around the world. Some of the fabulous creations can be seen in the photos. A great opportunity to chat, whilst having creative fun. An entertaining evening was enjoyed by all.



**Maulden** welcomed Kate Dimmock from Harlington Hedgehogs (Harlington Hospital) to their April meeting who described the fascinating work she carries out in caring for injured, sick and underweight hedgehogs, preparing them for return to the wild. It was a most engaging and inspirational talk with lots of questions from the floor and a variety of information available from the British Hedgehog Preservation Society to take away. It was a thoroughly entertaining and informative evening but as our native hedgehog is now on the UK Red List of species threatened with extinction, a sobering thought for the future of this endearing mammal.



**Kempston Rural's** booked speaker cancelled at short notice, so Stacey Sharp, a local hairdresser with two salons, stepped in. Her presentation consisted of a question and answer session on hair problems. The ensuing discussion was informative and entertaining. April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Mystery coach trip.

**Library Walk** We very much enjoyed listening to Daria Bilan, who spoke about Ukrainian customs and showed us samples of beautiful embroidery and clothes for Ukrainian special occasions. Daria demonstrated decorating an Easter egg using wax heated by a lit candle.

**Northill & Ickwell** April WI meeting turned out to be a really interesting and amusing evening with Mike O'Keefe talking about being the custodian of the official Royal Image Library for HM The King and HM The Queen. This was a hugely enjoyable talk about how he came to have the job and that he had worked there for 40 years and one week! He told us about various royal souvenirs that had been made and then sold, for which they had not been given permission, and about the various photographers that had taken official photographs of the royal family. He also passed round various items for us to look at. All in all, a most memorable evening.

Over the last two years **Wootton** have held Sausage and Mash Bash where the committee cooks a meal for members. This has proved to be a very sociable evening so we have decided to keep it as a regular on our programme. We also had our Annual meeting and were lucky enough to recruit a new member onto the committee along with the current members. We would like to thank Sue Pestell, our County Advisor, for joining our meeting to oversee re-election of the committee and president. After all the general business was done, we had a slideshow of all the activities we had taken part in over the year and members had a chance to see our scrapbook before it goes to County for display at Jordan's Mill. A very sociable meeting in all.

In March **Dunstable** celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with a party at Dunstable Golf Club, which 22 members attended. The meal was delicious and enjoyed by all. Afterwards there was entertainment by the Ukelele Group, which included old songs that most of the members could relate to. Coffee, tea and cake, together with the raffle concluded the party and the day ended in glorious sunshine.

### MyWI . . . Your Go-To Resource for All Things WI

This is a truncated version of the printed info sent out in the recent mailing - concerning the comprehensive member hub which is designed to keep you informed, inspired, and supported in every aspect of WI life. We encourage you to take a look & see!

#### Getting started with MyWI is easy!

Go to the Log In Page:

Open your internet browser and type in: [mywi.thewi.org.uk/welcome-to-my-wi](http://mywi.thewi.org.uk/welcome-to-my-wi)

#### Log In:

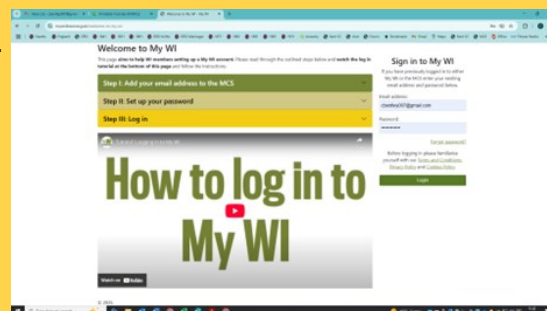
Your username is the email address that's listed on the WI membership database (MCS).

Not sure which email is on file? Just check with your WI's MCS representative—they'll be able to help.

#### Set Your Password (First-Time Users):

If this is your first time logging in, you'll need to set up a password. Look for the button that says "Step II: Set up your password" and click the arrow at the end of it. This will take you to the page where you can request and create your password.

If you have not logged on before you will need to setup your password. At the end of the "step II set up your password" button is an arrow/ Click on this to request a password.



There is also this YouTube video on the page to help you.