

January 2024

Happy New Year! At least the rain has stopped, the sun has come out and it's beginning to dry up a bit. The beginning of the year is the time when we have to vote for the NFWI Resolution we feel is most important. There are four this year.

The very first WI Meeting took place in North Wales in 1915 and for over 100 years they have been campaigning to improve the lives of women. Some of the resolutions passed at the NFWI Annual Meeting have been on housing (the first one in 1918), women in jury service, women in the police force, equal pay, cervical screening, smoking and HIV and AIDS awareness to name a few.

If you missed the resolutions in the Nov/Dec issue of WI Life, page 22, they are (this is a short precis of the article):

1. **Dental Health Matters** – there is a chronic shortage of NHS dentists and people are suffering health issues as a result. The NFWI calls on the Government to increase investment in the training and retention of dentists and to review the current inadequate NHS contracts in order to ensure everyone can access an NHS dentist wherever they live. **Further information:** British Dental Association: bda.org. Healthwatch UK: healthwatch.co.uk.

2. **Impacts of Poor Housing Conditions** – Poor housing can have a deleterious effect on human health and wellbeing, safety and quality of life and can disproportionately affect the most vulnerable groups in society. The NFWI calls on the UK Government to boost housing standards and regulations, increase funding for housing renovations, increase the supply of affordable and secure housing and strengthen collaboration with local authorities, housing associations and other relevant stakeholders to develop strategies that address local housing challenges. **Further information:** Shelter UK: shelter.org.uk. Generation Rent: generationrent.org.

3. **Say "No" to Gambling Advertising** – Harm caused by excessive gambling is a global problem. Some countries are already addressing this by banning advertising. The NFWI calls on members, the Government, regulators, the NHS, educationalists and gambling charities to work together towards achieving a complete ban on gambling advertising. This will reduce gambling harm, save the NHS money, protect family relationships and decrease the number of suicides, around 400 per annum at present. **Further information:** GamCare: gamcare.org.uk. Coalition Against Gambling Ads: caga.uk.

4. **Improving Outcomes for Women in the Criminal Justice System** – There is an urgent need to radically reform decision making in respect of women in the criminal justice system and in particular, pregnant women and women with children. We urge cross-government collaboration to deliver on the 2018 female offender strategy by setting goals, robust governance and performance measures to reduce the number of women who have committed non-violent offences from being imprisoned. **Further information:** Women in Prison: womeninprison.org.uk. Prison Reform Trust: prisonreformtrust.org.uk.

There are some spare voting forms on the table if you know which one you would like to vote for but, if you want to investigate them further please email Helen with your decision or bring your voting slip to the February meeting. We will add the votes up and send our decision to GFWI by 11th February.

Liz

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tues 16th Jan AWI running the Community Café

Tues 30th Jan Incinerator Tour, Javelin Park. Please fill in online form (link in Helen's email of (06.01.24) Lunch at La Campagna, Stonehouse Let Helen know if you want to join lunch & your menu choice (email 06.01.24)

Wed 31st Jan 7.15 Skittles practice session at the Social Club. Just turn up & have a go!

Tues 6th Feb Walk from Pike Lock (GL10 3RT) on the canal to 'The Badger' at Eastington for lunch. Meet 10.30 Avening for lifts or 11am at canal side car park by Pike Lock. Dog friendly pub; non-walkers are welcome to join in for lunch at 12.30

Wed 21st Feb 2.30 Book Club 'High Wages' Dorothy Whipple. Venue to be advised
Tues 27th Feb AWI running the Community Café
Wed 24th April Walking Tour of Bath (details to follow)
Sat 25th May Westminster Abbey visit (details to follow)

NEXT MEETING FEB 8TH

**In the wake of Scott and Shackleton
Sue Davies**

**Flower of the month
Raffle
Refreshments: Hilary P & Sandra**

Avening WI President:
Liz Knowles

Treasurer:
Wendy Jennings

Secretary:
Helen Haiselden

Website:
[http://
aveningwi.wordpress.com](http://aveningwi.wordpress.com)



Avening WI

meets in the Memorial Hall
on the
second Thursday of every month

visitors are always welcome!

Skittles Gwyn
'Revenge' tour of 2024
Once again we have put AWI forward for the GFWI skittles tournament. In preparation for the first round, which won't be held until Spring, we have decided to have a couple of practice sessions at the Social Club. All being well we will have our first session on 31st January. Please come along and give it a go. If you decide it's not for you I promise that no pressure will be applied to join in the competition! Absolutely no experience is required. It would be good to see some new faces and you may even enjoy yourself.



Christmas Party 2023

Shirley's 'Card Bingo'

Liz presenting a cheque for £300 to Rosa Barratt of Allsorts, Glos

We had a quiz...thank you Shirley, cheese identifying game...thank you Liz...and a lovely buffet.

'Bite to eat'

Full Christmas lunch being served and enjoyed by people from The Beeches. They loved it so much they want a repeat next year!

Cotswold Way Walkers by Shirley Hand

We must pay tribute to our wonderful band of hardy walkers who have completed the first half of their project to walk the 100 miles of the Cotswold Way (supported by their canine companions).

It all started when secretary Helen expressed a wish on the Bucket List to have a go at walking the Cotswold Way from Chipping Campden down to Bath; several ladies thought they would like to join Helen in the challenge. To give Helen her due she has masterminded the arrangements, providing detailed itineraries for each section of the walk, working out where to leave the cars, where to go (!) and even where to have a rest.

But come on ladies, this is not 'a walk in the park' this is the extremely hilly Cotswolds during a year that has broken records for being wet and windy. Some dates had to be rearranged because of the atrocious weather but they soldiered on, up steep inclines to the top of hills (Cleeve Hill was the highest point at 1083 feet) and challenging descents, some down narrow muddy paths through the woods. In spite of the hardships – one stage was 8 miles – it has been described as uplifting and exhilarating, with the most incredible views. In fact plans are afoot for some stages to be done again for the benefit of members who missed out the first time.

Well it's onward and upward, hopefully not quite so 'upward' to start again in the Spring to get down to Bath and perhaps a dip in the spa pool for those aching muscles – the dogs are up for it anyway!

2023 Book Group Report It doesn't seem 2 minutes ago that we met for our January 2023 at The Bear, Rodborough, for our annual New Year lunch. Our first book of the year was **The Old Ways by Robert McFarlane**, with whom we travelled the ancient pathways of Britain. In February we moved over the pond to read **Barbara Kingsolver's latest**, a challenging read covering drug addiction in the USA. April saw us in Australia with **Exiles by Jan Harper**, a real page turner, and then back in the UK for May's **The Dictionary of Lost Words** which was set against the first print of The Oxford Dictionary. Over to Ireland for Celia **Ahern's The Marble Collector** and then we were in London for **The Foundling by Stacey Hall**. Some of us have been inspired to visit The Foundling Museum after reading this book. Our final read of 2023 was **Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell**. This beautiful book tells of the childhood death of Shakespeare's son. As well as our annual New Year lunch, we hope to visit Persephone bookshop, Bath, in April 2024. If you need anymore information about book group please do not hesitate to speak to me. New members are most welcome.

Sue Swan

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JANUARY BIRTHDAY GIRLS

Cas Jean C Sarah Peggy Maisie Maureen Andrea Jean W