

September 2025

Dear WI Secretary

Welcome back, and I hope you all enjoyed the summer break.

LFWI is celebrating its 105th birthday this week, and many of our members have been into the offices to view the archive displays. If you're attending the Birthday Party at Barton Manor this evening, I hope you have a wonderful time.

LFWI Annual Council Meeting Saturday 11th April 2026 – Our ACM will be held at the Lowther Pavilion Theatre on Saturday 11th April 2026 from 1 pm – 4.30 pm. We are following the same procedure as the 2025 meeting in that we are asking WIs to reserve their free delegate ticket in advance. Each WI is entitled to send a delegate to the meeting. If your WI cannot provide a delegate, we ask you to send in apologies by email, as these are recorded at the meeting. **Please book the delegate ticket for your WI using the online booking system on our website, rather than email. If anyone needs assistance with this, please let me know.** Delegate tickets can be reserved from 1st October. Once we know how many delegates are attending, we can establish how many observer tickets we can offer for sale. I would be grateful if you could reserve your delegate ticket, or provide apologies by the 20th November. **More information about the meeting and how to purchase observer tickets will be included in the November mailing.**

We will once again be holding a Makers Market at the ACM. If you would like a stall at the market, please email your request to officeadmin@lfdwi.org.uk. We will have 7 tables available. The cost of the table is £10, plus the price of your ticket, which will also be £10. You will be invoiced for these nearer the time. Stalls are for arts, crafts, jams and preserves.

Diaries and Calendars – A reminder that we have a designated collection day for diaries and calendars, which is Friday 10th October between 10.30am and 12.30pm. If you're unable to collect at this time, please telephone me at the office, and we can arrange another time. Alternatively, if anyone is attending the office for a workshop or meeting in the near future, they can be collected at that time.

Fun Quiz 2026 – The quiz will be held on Monday, 23rd March at various venues. The flyer for this will come to you separately next week, as we've had to make a couple of late changes to the venues.

Calendar of Events – Included with this mailing is a list of proposed events for 2026. The list gives the month the information will come to WIs in the mailing, and the date they will be available to book on our website. This will be updated regularly,

and we hope it will help members better plan the events they are interested in attending.

Charity Make 2025 – Earlier in the year, our Chair Heather Williams invited WIs to make some charity items and donate them to your chosen local charity. Suggested ideas were chocolate orange covers, knitted or crocheted hearts in pairs, premature baby hats etc. This is a reminder to send in details and photographs of your donations to Heather using the email chairman@lfw.org.uk Heather would be grateful if you could send these in by 31st October.

It's the start of the new 200+ club year and number allocations will be emailed to WI Secretaries in the next couple of weeks. Members can join the 200+ club at any time during the year.

200+ Club Draw

September

Not publicly disclosed.

Diane Jenkins

Federation Secretary

Enclosures

Flyer – Slow Stitching Day

Flyer – Treasurers Workshop

Flyer – Fun Quiz (will follow week commencing 29th Sept)

NFWI – 5 pledges information

Proposed Calendar of Events 2026

Addition to approved speaker list



Membership Team

Treasurer Workshop - 2026

Wednesday 21st January 10.30 am - 3 pm

or

Saturday 24th January at 10.30 am - 3 pm

Please come and join us for an informative training session that will assist you in this specific role within your WI. Also suitable for those members who are considering being a Treasurer in the future and want to see what's involved, and for those who are assisting the Treasurer.

You may be new to the role, have unanswered questions, want a refresher, and want to know how to prepare and present the Financial Report at your Annual Meeting?

Please note that both these sessions will be held in the LFWI Offices.

4/8 Croston House
Lancashire Business Park
Centurian Way
Leyland
PR26 6TU

We have extended the length of the sessions into the afternoon to allow plenty of time for our Advisers, Jane Jackson and Rosalind McEntee, to thoroughly explore the role of Treasurer and the completion of financial records.

Tea and coffee will be provided throughout the sessions, but please bring your lunch

**These sessions will be available to book on the LFWI website from
Wednesday 1st October**

www.lancashirewi.org.uk



Make and Create Team
A Day of Slow Stitching
Tuesday 20th January 2026 - 10 am – 3 pm

LFWI Offices, Croston House, Leyland, PR26 6TU
With tutor Linda Colclough
£20

Come and spend the day enjoying the art of Slow Stitching. Slow Stitching is a mindful, creative approach to needlework with the emphasis on relaxation and the process of crafting. Using simple hand stitching techniques, Linda will guide you in creating a piece of stitched work using materials in a sustainable way.



The stitched piece will be created using a background of calico. The piece will be created using fabrics, embroidery, reusing perhaps a favourite fabric or lace, buttons, and embroidery. It will be a day where you can use your creative freedom, with Linda guiding you to use different materials, stitches, and designs.

Once completed, the design can be used as you would wish, perhaps to back a book, sew into a bag, or begin a stitched journal. The ideas will be your own.

Linda will bring to the day many years of creative experience and expertise to help you be creative, but also to enjoy the mindful experience of letting your needle create something beautiful and sustainable.

Linda will provide a kit including the calico, wadding, and access to many scraps of materials, laces, buttons, embroidery threads etc. This will be £5 and payable to Linda on the day. Also, bring your favourite fabrics from home that you might like to include, perhaps from a favourite or sentimental piece.

Bring your sewing kit, including scissors, needles and pins etc. This workshop is suitable for all, even beginners.

This workshop will be available to book on the LFWI website from Wednesday 1st October.

www.lancashirewi.org.uk



LFWI PROPOSED CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2026

The flyers will always include the date the events will be available to book on the LFWI website, but an approximate guide is included below. Anyone who needs assistance with booking, please ring the office and we will be happy to help.

The events below are proposed for 2026, but some may be subject to change.

Mailing month	Event	Available to book
September 25	JANUARY 2026 Tuesday 20th January Slow Stitching Workshop at LFWI Office, Leyland Wednesday 21st January Treasurer Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland Saturday 24th January Treasurer Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland Monday 23rd March LFWI Fun Quiz Various Venues (not booked online)	1 st week Oct. for all
October 25	FEBRUARY 2026 Wednesday 18th February Secretary Workshop via Zoom (Evening) Saturday 21st February Secretary Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland Tuesday 24th February Beetle Drive and Supper at Halewood WI Hall	1 st week Nov. for all
November 25	MARCH 2026 Friday 6th March Beginners Watercolour Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland	1 st Week Dec. for all

	Wednesday 18th March Presidents Workshop via Zoom (Evening) Saturday 21st March Presidents Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland	
December 25	APRIL 2026 Early April Date TBC Have a go at Archery Session – Thornton Cleveleys Saturday 11th April Annual Council Meeting, Lowther Pavilion, Lytham Tuesday 28th April Avant Garden Centre, Leyland - Grow and Create Pots (includes lunch)	1st Week Jan. Details TBA End Jan. 1st Week Jan.
January 26	MAY 2026 Early May Visit to RSPB Leighton Moss, Carnforth Thursday 14th May ACWW Afternoon Tea & Fashion Show, Midland Hotel, Morecambe	1st Week Feb. for all
February 26	JUNE 2026 Proposed Coach Holiday early June (To be confirmed – not booked online) This will be sent out in October 25 mailing. Monday 1st June Pearls Lunch at Farington Lodge, Leyland Thursday 25th June Goldwork Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland Tuesday 30th June Orienteering Event, Lancaster	1st Week March for all
March 26	JULY 2026 Saturday 4th July Glass Fusing/Stained Glass Workshop, Milnrow Tuesday 7th July	1st Week April for all

	International Day (Denmark) at Mere Brow Wednesday 15th July Membership Workshop via Zoom (details to be advised) Saturday 18th July Membership Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland	
April 26	AUGUST 2026	
May 26	SEPTEMBER 2026 1st to 3rd September – Red Rose Residential Trip at Higham Hall (This will be sent in the October 25 mailing) Saturday 5th September Calligraphy Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland Wednesday 9th September Membership Workshop via Zoom (details to be advised) Saturday 12th September Membership Workshop, LFWI Offices, Leyland	1 st Week June for all
June 26	OCTOBER 2026 Date TBC Visit to Bridgewater Hall or Bridgewater Pottery	1 st Week July For all
July 26	NOVEMBER 2026 Friday 27th November Lancashire Day Celebration (details to be advised)	1 st week Sept.
September 26	DECEMBER 2026 Wednesday 2nd December Winter Flower Arrangements with Lynn Stott, LFWI Offices, Leyland	1 st Week Oct.

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From the NFWI to WI members: Five Practical Pledges

Yesterday was WI Day, marking 110 years since the first WI meeting took place at Llanfairpwll WI on Anglesey, and we were very excited to celebrate this occasion.

On WI Day 2024, we asked you, our members, to help us shape the future of the WI and share your thoughts about everything WI related, from subs, to meetings, to the magazine. The feedback has been brilliant. Thousands of WI members wrote letters and emails, hosted and attended discussion sessions and shared your views. The NFWI team visited hundreds of you, sharing some brilliant and inspiring conversations, which demonstrated to us how much pride we all have in the WI and that we want to pass this organisation on to more generations of women, stronger and better than ever.

We have used that feedback to launch step one of the new plan – our Five Practical Pledges from NFWI to you as members, reflecting the areas you want us to improve upon. Based on the feedback received, the NFWI Board is committing to the following actions over the next 5 years:

- 1. Review the percentage allocation of the annual membership subscription** to ensure that our WIs are financially sustainable and able to offer a vibrant and varied programme for their members. This will ensure they continue to thrive. You told us that with rising costs such as venue expenses, a greater percentage of the membership fee allocated directly to WIs is essential to help you give the very best experience to your members. We will focus on this in our annual discussion with National Council about the subscription to make sure you have the vital resources you need.
- 2. Review and extend the membership model.** We must build in options that work for women at every stage of their lives. We heard from you that the current model doesn't offer enough flexibility (for you or for the women you are trying to recruit). You also said that other organisations have more fluid membership models. We're going to undertake a fundamental review of the membership model and explore ways we can offer more flexibility to both existing and potential members. This is a huge piece of work, but it's essential that we get the offer right for women in the 21st century.
- 3. Launch a new approach to setting the NFWI's campaigning priorities (our 'resolutions process')**, ensuring that member voice and experience remains at the heart of it and offers all WI members the chance to have their say. In the consultation process we were honest and shared that the process no longer works perfectly for us nationally as a campaigning organisation and you were honest in your feedback that it really doesn't work for you either! The process feels burdensome and too fast, with new priorities and information coming out too frequently.

4. **Introduce a revised system for member data collection, storage and analysis**, to replace the existing MCS system and ensure NFWI can better tailor its services and products for members, while also supporting administration and communication. In our consultation, it was clear that many of you feel very strongly that the WI could be better at customising its offer for you (and be able to do this for each successive generation of members).

You also shared that sometimes the administration of your WIs is unnecessarily difficult and that you would like technology to support you to make it easier. As our current system (the MCS) heads towards retirement, we will ensure that a new system is designed and launched that better enables you to run your charities and better enables NFWI to know who you are and what you want.

5. **Undertake a comprehensive review of WI Life magazine** to revisit the balance of adverts and editorial content, while maintaining the high quality and cost-effectiveness of the magazine. We have heard from many of you that you wish to retain the magazine (particularly those who are less digitally active) as a way of feeling part of and belonging to the wider organisation and celebrating the achievements of fellow members. We also know many of you use the magazine as a recruitment tool in your communities. We remain committed to offering the magazine, but we have heard your thoughts on the content and advertising and will ensure this is reviewed and revamped to better reflect our members now and those of the future.

The second step will come at the start of 2026: the **Vision Statements and Strategic plan**. These will look at the aspects of our work which can have the greatest impact on our future strength, helping the WI appeal to new audiences of women. These statements will challenge us all to look differently at the work we do, try new things and consider the needs of women who aren't yet in the WI family.

In the meantime, you can continue to share your thoughts and views with us at vision@nfwl.org.uk. We enjoyed the discussions so much that we've decided to leave this email channel open indefinitely so we can keep the conversation going.