

A WI Guide to Raising Funds for Projects, Causes or Appeals

Introduction

In today's world, everyone is only too aware of the needs of our world – locally, nationally and internationally. Newspaper, television, postal and internet appeals bring disasters home to us all and touch our hearts. The immediate reaction tends to be '*what can I do?*' or '*what can my/the WI do?*'

This document provides guidance on how WIs can respond to causes/appeals using their charitable funds. It focuses primarily on:

- WIs and charitable status
- The charitable objects of the WI
- Considerations to make before supporting a project/appeal
- Legal aspects of fundraising
- Raffles as a way of fundraising

WIs and charitable status

Each WI is a charity, governed by the model constitution and rules for WIs. The assets of a WI, including any funds held by the WI, must only be used for the charitable objects set out in the constitution or to support charities of the same objects.

The charitable objects of the WI

- a) to advance the education of women and girls for the public benefit in all areas including (without limitation):
 - i) local, national and international issues of political and social importance;
 - ii) music, drama and other cultural subjects; and
 - iii) all branches of agriculture, crafts, home economics, science, health and social welfare;
- b) to promote sustainable development for the public benefit by:
 - i) educating people in the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment and the prudent
 - ii) use of natural resources; and
 - iii) promoting sustainable means of achieving economic growth and
 - iv) regeneration;

- c) to advance health for the public benefit; and
- d) to advance citizenship for the public benefit by the promotion of civic responsibility and volunteering.

'Sustainable development' here means development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

The WI organisation seeks to give women the opportunity of working together through the WI organisation in their communities, of developing their capacity and skills, and of putting into practice those ideals for which the WI organisation stands.

Every WI, Federation and the NFWI has the power to raise funds for and donate funds to causes/appeals that further these objects, and carry out activities furthering the charitable objects themselves.

Considerations to make before supporting a project/appeal

Given their charitable status WIs are required to consider the following before supporting a project/appeal:

1. Does the project/appeal fall within the objects of the WI?

The WI objects are flexible and do not restrict the WI to running and raising funds for its own programme of events. There are many types of projects, causes or appeals that fall within the WI objects. Examples include:

- Raising funds for bursaries or scholarships to study arts, crafts and sciences associated with both rural and urban life.
- Improving or otherwise supporting a village or community hall or other facility for the benefit of a local community.
- Raising funds for an events day where women are given the opportunity to carry out arts and crafts activities, and attend talks and workshops on culture and citizenship.
- Providing facilities or equipment at a local hospital which will avoid the need for patients to make long journeys.

- Raising funds for and organising a home economics and health and safety summer school.
- Raising funds for an appeal to rebuild a local community centre that has been damaged by flooding.
- Raising funds for local efforts to tackle global health issues (e.g. Covid-19).

These are examples of ways of advancing education or improving conditions of both rural and urban life. WIs may support these projects by raising funds or donating funds to them, or by carrying out activities to support or further such projects themselves.

What kind of projects/appeals can WIs *not* support?

There are many projects, appeals or causes that WIs cannot support because they do not further their charitable objects, and supporting them would cause the local WI to not comply with the rule all charities must comply with (to only act in furtherance of their charitable objects). The types of projects/appeals WIs cannot support include:

- A project to create better facilities for animals or prevent cruelty to animals.
- A generic appeal to financially help refugees.
- Raising funds to help an individual rebuild her house which has been damaged.
- Raising funds to help an individual pay for hospital treatment.
- An appeal to help rehabilitate soldiers injured in action.
- An appeal to send parcels or provisions to soldiers abroad.

While charities with different objects than the WI may have a section of their operations dedicated to educational activities, they cannot be supported by the WI because their main objects are not in line with the WI objects.

Acting as an individual

There may be causes that WI members want to support but which are outside the scope of the objects. There is nothing to prevent a group of WI members, acting as individuals, from organising fundraising events for the purpose of providing funds, support or assistance. However, they must do so as individuals and not in the name of the WI. They should not use any WI or NFWI trade mark in relation to such projects, and there should be no costs to WI funds.

2. Does the project/appeal benefit the local community?

The local community is broadly defined as the area where the WI operates and where its members are located. The charity that a WI wishes to donate to, can be located elsewhere, as long as the local community of the WI is the direct beneficiaries of the project/appeal. For example, if the local WI is based in Fulham (south-west London), and a WI wishes to fundraise for a charity based in Central London but their project predominantly benefits the Fulham community, it would meet the charitable objects even though the actual charity is not based in Fulham.

A project/appeal would not be considered to benefit the local community of the donating WI, if for example a WI in Kent supports a flooding victims' appeal in Wales.

If your WI is considering supporting a national charity, guarantees would need to be sought from the charity, to ensure your WI's donation would go to a specific local project/appeal.

3. Is there a public benefit to the project/appeal?

It is important to remember that in all projects, appeals or causes supported by a WI, they must also benefit as wide a section of the public as possible i.e. a **public benefit**. WIs should not support projects or causes that only benefit one individual or unnecessarily prevent groups of people from benefiting.

If you are still uncertain about supporting a project/appeal, you should contact the Finance Department at the NFWI who will be able to help you with your query.

Legal aspects of fundraising

WIs can raise funds for its own programme of events and also to support other charitable activities that are consistent with the WI objects. There are a number of legal rules that apply to different types and aspects of fundraising. WIs must as a minimum apply the current fundraising guide from the Charity Commission, [CC20: Charity fundraising: A guide to trustee duties \(2016\)](#).

It depicts from 6 fundraising principles for trustees to apply:

- plan effectively
- be open and accountable

- protect your charity's reputation and other assets
- supervise your fundraisers
- comply with fundraising law
- follow recognised standards

Apart from the full document, a useful checklist to help trustees evaluate the performance at suitable intervals against legal requirement and good practice is available [here](#).

The Fundraising Code of Practice

The Fundraising Regulator is the independent **regulator** of charitable **fundraising** in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their Code of Fundraising Practice (the Code) is a key document for all fundraisers in the UK. It features both fundraising standards and rules.

The NFWI is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and adheres to the Code. By doing so, the NFWI aims to help promote best practice and demonstrate compliance with the law. WIs and federations are encouraged to apply the Code in their fundraising to enrich this work and increase the WI organisation's reputation in the sector.

The Fundraising Code of Practice outlines the following:

- Behaviour when fundraising
- Responsibilities of charitable institutions and those who govern them
- Processing personal data (information)
- Processing donations

Further information about the Code can be found [here](#).

What information should I give members of the public if I am raising funds for a cause or project?

Legislation applying to charities requires any registered charity with a gross income in the preceding financial year of £5,000 or more to state that it is a registered charity on all notices, advertisements and other documents inviting contributions to the charity whether in cash or in kind, and also on all cheques, orders, invoices and receipts. Gross income includes subscriptions, interest from investments and proceeds from fundraising activities.

Using the NFWI Trademark

Before using any NFWI trademarks in your fundraising activities, you should first consult our [Trade Mark Guidelines](#) which are available to download from My WI.

Raffles as a way of fundraising

Organising a raffle is a common and useful way for a WI to raise funds. It creates awareness of the WI in their local community and gives individuals the opportunity to support a good cause who would perhaps normally not donate to charities.

What is a raffle?

A raffle is a form of lottery where individuals buy a chance to win a prize. Different lotteries have different rules which apply although most WIs raffles are likely to be small lotteries. Raffles normally have a range of prizes available, which are awarded by chance. The ticket sales and raffle draw tend to happen as part of the same event.

The Charity Commission guidance on raffle for charities contained in their document [CC35: Trustees Trading and tax: How charities may lawfully trade](#)

'**Small lotteries**' are explained in the Charity Commission's [CC35 document](#). They form part of a **section 3 lottery** and do not need a licence or registration with the local authority, provided they abide by the following conditions:

- the raffle must be held as part of an event or 'exempt entertainments', such as fêtes and bazaars
- the total value of the prizes can be no more than £250
- the proceeds of the lottery must not be used for private gain
- no cash prizes may be given
- the sale and issue of tickets and the announcement of results must take place during the entertainment and at the event location

Society lotteries, are either [small](#) or [large](#) depending on if the tickets sales exceed £20,000. They are also known as a **section 5 lottery**. They are more tightly regulated and the general public can be invited to take part. This type of lottery can only be arranged by an organisation or group registered with the Gambling Commission, or with a local authority, depending on the size of the lottery business. Charities and trading subsidiaries can apply to register with the Gambling Commission.

Considerations to make before organising a raffle

Plan your raffle

Planning is an essential part of your WI's raffle. From a financial point of view, this is necessary to avoid financial loss and to have consistent control throughout the process. A budget needs to be set, with the planned expenses such as the cost of printing tickets, hire of equipment and prizes.

Further advice

If you are unsure what type of raffle you would be organising, please contact your local authority for further advice.

Corporation tax

Profits made from a charity's raffle are exempt from corporation tax as long as the lottery is organised and promoted in line with either section 3 or section 5 of the Gambling Act 2005; and the profits from the lottery are only used to meet the charity's aims. The proceeds from the raffle can be split between the WI and a nominated charity.