

Window on Berkshire

Your regular update on what's coming up in the Berkshire Federation of Women's Institutes

Welcome to our first bulletin with a new Chair and a very much updated team of Trustees.

Your new Chair is Trish Kilgour, who is also President of Pangbourne WI. After university, Trish started her career as an accountant and then moved into business development. She has several years of experience in senior management in the construction industry, has taught in higher education and has run a great number of community groups.

Trish has grown up twins (boy & girl), a dog called Stan and a cat called Rosie, and lives in Upper Basildon, having moved to Berkshire from Cheshire when her husband relocated.

Lots of you have met Trish already and you will, we're sure, get a chance to meet her at one of the events or your meetings over the coming months.

Here at WI House we are conscious that many of you have not had much involvement with the Federation as a whole, and often even less involvement with our overarching organisation. We know that some of you have questioned how the Federation helps you: we hope that you will soon start to feel part of this much wider community in Berkshire and indeed across the country.

Trish will be emailing you in the next few days with a list of your new board of Trustees, including information on how those Trustees have been allocated to roles and committees. Please feel free to contact her or the Trustees about your successes, concerns, triumphs and disappointments.

This bulletin is being sent to the main WI email address for each WI, and also copied to Presidents: we'd love to know if you think the bulletin could also be sent directly to all members in the Federation, rather than having to be forwarded by you. Let us know! bulletin@berkshirewi.co.uk is the contact address.

Federation events for you



Sonning Glebe WI have kindly offered to host our Autumn Walk and Lunch on Wednesday 17th September. The walk will be through the village of Sonning and along by the river, looking at places and items of interest along the way, returning to the hall where the ladies of Sonning Glebe WI will be providing a Ploughman's Lunch.

We will meet at the Pearson Hall, Pearson Road, Sonning RG4 6UL at 11.00 am for the walk, returning to the Hall for lunch at 12.30. To help you find the hall look for the red telephone box outside the hall.

If you don't walk, then just come for lunch! This is a great opportunity to come to meet ladies from other WIs.

The cost of this is £12.50 payable by Bank Transfer (quoting WALK25 as a reference) or by cheque made payable to BFWI.

Please complete the Berkshire Events application form which is [on the Berkshire Federation downloads page here](#) and return it [by email to Nina Derrick](#) or post to WI House, The Street, Mortimer RG7 3RD. The closing date for booking is Wednesday 10th September. Nina can be reached at n.derrick@berkshirewi.co.uk, or by phone on 07752 912411 or 01635 862553.

Is Patchwork for You?

There are many different patchwork styles, and I am sure that many WI members across the county would like to try new techniques without having to produce a whole quilt!



With this in mind, we have come up with the idea of setting up a Patchwork Group where members will learn how to make a different block each month, alongside benefitting an area of our hospitals that misses out on the quilts donated by Project Linus. Neonatal units much appreciate that ongoing supply of quilts, but we have heard that every month, several babies arrive at Emergency Departments but do not live to be admitted to children's wards. How awful for parents to lose a precious child and how much worse if the parting cuddle is with the much-loved child wrapped in an old towel? We would love to support these families so we thought that perhaps we could combine producing quilts for these families with teaching patchwork skills to our members.

We plan to set up a monthly patchwork group in which every participant learns to make a block. The blocks will then be assembled into a quilt for donation to neonatal A&E departments. Attendees would be provided with the fabric, the pattern and instructions so that there is continuity across the quilt. Hopefully each meeting will produce enough blocks to make a quilt, and members will also have enjoyed learning new skills and meeting new people. Perhaps they could then pass the skills on in their own WIs? Emergency departments would be so appreciative, and I am sure that it would make a world of difference to bereaved parents.

Meetings will probably be on the first Monday morning of the month at WI House. If you would be interested, please contact marionscottbaker@yahoo.co.uk for further details.

Train as an IFE

We're looking for members who would like to add another skill by training as an Independent Financial Examiner (IFE): IFEs examine the accounts of many WIs at year end and we can only offer this service to WIs if we have enough IFEs to meet the need! Have you ever taken on the role of WI Treasurer, or worked in a finance related post, or are you simply interested in number solving puzzles or in financial matters? You are probably the person we're looking for! Or if you know someone who might be interested, let them know we are on the hunt. Examining a WI's accounts is not too

onerous and tends to need to be done in the first few months of the year – January to April: and WIs pay £30 to the IFE for the work undertaken.

If you are interested, contact Anita West on a.west@berkshirewi.co.uk

Come and see what's going on in other BFWI meetings!

We can't list every meeting every month but will try to give you a good selection each time

Winnersh WI are having a garden party meeting with tea, cake and chat, on 1 July at 2.15 pm at St Mary's Church Hall, RG41 5NA. Please book in if coming:

winnershwi@berkshirewi.co.uk

Pangbourne WI will be hearing from Sophie Fryer with her talk on "Hats off to Millinery". Their meeting is on 8 July at 2.00pm in The Pangbourne Club, RG8 7LP and there will be hats to try on. No need to book in.

On 9 July at 7.30 pm **Beenham WI** have a speaker, Karen Wiles, who will be talking about 1940s Women's Fashions. Beenham Community Room, RG7 5NN – no need to book in.

Also on 9 July at 7.30 pm **Calcot Evening WI** have a block printing demo and workshop led by Cat Chapman. Kennet Valley Free Church, RG31 7YT. No need to book in advance.

On 10 July at 7.30 **Thatcham WI** will be welcoming Jean Hill with her talk on The Rhyme of our Lives - Poetry to make you laugh and cry. Come along to Catholic Church of Our Lady of Assumption, RG18 3AG



Let us know what you've got coming up – if you have your whole year planned already, let us have a copy of your programme, or else email us on bulletin@berkshirewi.co.uk to flag up your next speaker, or your next outing or your next fundraising stall. Let us have any other relevant information such as whether you need people to book in, or if numbers will be limited, if there is any specific instruction about eg parking or if you need to know dietary needs.

Support WIs at charity fundraisers

Thatcham WI is taking part in the Thatcham Family Fun Day with their own stall: there are lots of wonderful stalls and activities, so come and support Thatcham WI and bring the family – and the dog, and your dancing shoes... Find details on Facebook on the ThatchamFamilyFunDay page.



Redlands WI will be holding a stall at Reading Pride on Saturday 30 August: this is a regular fundraiser for Redlands WI and is hugely successful, raising a massive amount of money every year. Come along and support them, enjoy the event, and contact Redlands WI if you can offer extra help.

Help us to get it right

Berkshire News, your newsletter, continues separately from this bulletin: the last Berkshire News from the last year is winging its way to you, and the first one from the new set of Trustees and from Trish will come out in two months' time. Berkshire News reflects on achievements and what we've been doing, while this bulletin looks to the future, talking about what's coming up. Do let us know if you find this division helpful: the bulletin can be produced quite quickly and so we can be more reactive, whereas Berkshire News has a long lead time by going through the publishing system.

We have heard from a number of members that the current system of booking into events is slow and unwieldy. We are looking at using an event booking system such as Eventbrite, which has been used by other Federations to allow event bookings: this does mean a small cost on the bookings but it also means that bookings can be made more easily, with a simple payment system, and it means that events can also be

offered more readily to other non-members (and perhaps convince those non-members to join!). Could you let us know if you have any views on using any of these systems? Have you tried booking through other Federations? Have you set up events yourself with a booking system, or have you booked into events yourself? Let us know.

BFWI Competition: our Yearbook cover photo

We are hoping to offer regular competitions, with the prize of a voucher to take part in any of the BFWI courses.

For our first competition, we are calling for photos of your neighbourhood: the winning photo will be used on the front of the Berkshire Federation's Yearbook and Speakers List. Every WI is given two copies of the Yearbook and Speakers List, but the winner will also receive their own copy.

The rules are fairly simple:

- Photos have to be your own work in digital format (not printed)
- It must be a photo taken within Berkshire
- Photos should preferably be in landscape format
- Photos must not include any recognisable human faces
- Photos cannot include any property where we might need to request permission from the owner(s)
- You may submit a maximum of 2 photos
- Photos must be of a high resolution for printing purposes
- The competition is open to any member of a WI which is within the Berkshire Federation

In submitting your photos, you are giving consent for us to use them in the competition for judging purposes and also in the final yearbook, where you will be credited.

Send your photos in to bulletin@berkshirewi.co.uk: entries close at 5pm on Wednesday 23 July. The winning entrant will be contacted in the week of 28 July, and the winning photo will be sent to the publishers at the end of that week.