

The Women's Institute

The Women's Institute was originally formed in 1915 with two clear aims: to revitalise rural communities and to encourage women to become more involved in producing food during the First World War. Since then our aims have broadened a little and we are now the largest women's organisation in the UK. We currently have 205,000 members and 6,800 WIs.



The National Federation of Women's Institutes (the NFWI) plays a unique role in providing women with educational opportunities and the chance to build new skills, to take part in a wide variety of activities and to campaign on issues that matter to them and their communities. Current campaigns range from ending violence against women, reducing food waste to improving the environment for future generations.

Some key facts



The WI started in Anglesey in 1915.

Membership is open to all women and meetings are held in workplaces, village halls, pubs and other venues in cities, towns and villages.

Members include HM The Queen, HRH The Princess Royal and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

The NFWI is a founding member of 'Keep Britain Tidy' and the Fair Trade Foundation.



The NFWI has been campaigning since 1918 on issues that include domestic violence (1975); AIDS (1986); equal pay (1943); oil pollution (1927); breast cancer screening (1975); renewable energy (1977) and family planning (1972).



Structure

Each WI is self-governing within the framework of the WI constitution and rules and belongs to one of 70 federations – each with a regional office. The WIs and federations make up the National Federation.

Each level of the organisation is run by a committee of elected members. The NFWI Board of Trustees is democratically elected every two years by WI members. The national headquarters is in London; the NFWI-Wales office is in Cardiff; and the WI's adult education centre, Denman College, is in Oxfordshire. The NFWI employs around 70 staff, headed by a General Secretary.

Campaigns

Members democratically decide all campaigning issues. Each year members submit resolutions to a selection process where the most popular suggestions are put to the vote at the AGM. If members support these resolutions, they become mandates and form the basis of campaigning activities in the years ahead.

Denman College

The NFWI owns a residential, adult education centre, Denman College, in Marcham, Oxfordshire. It offers members and the public a wide range of courses from cookery and aromatherapy to photography and painting. Other courses give members the skills needed to run a WI, such as leadership skills and public speaking.



Funding and WI Enterprises

The majority of NFWI income comes from the annual subscriptions. Other sources of revenue include grant-making bodies, educational trusts, commercial sponsors and investments.

WI Enterprises Ltd is the trading company of the National Federation of Women's Institutes. It exists to raise revenue for the NFWI, provide benefits for members and generate funds for federations and WIs.

For more information on the WI please visit our website www.theWI.org.uk or phone us on **020 7371 9300**.

