

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF
WHITLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

2023

Annual Report



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

2023 Committee Annual Report

Our current membership is 56 paid up members. Over the past year we have held **12 monthly meetings**, including a summer outing and Christmas party.

At our last AGM we were entertained by Frankie Connor with his Merseybeat sound.

Last December we held our Christmas party here at the Village Hall. We had a buffet meal organised by PS, and were entertained by a local young dance group. We all received a Primula plant as a Christmas present.

Our January speaker was Sarah Darlington. She gave an insight into the history of the Jam and Chutney making business. We tasted her lemon curd.

In February, Karen Hodgkins from Pets Pantry in Stockton Heath talked to us about starting her business and her recent sabbatical teaching English at a school in Laos and working with elephants and turtles in Thailand.

In March we held a Welsh evening. JW gave us a slide show of Welsh landmarks, JB gave us an historical talk of Llewelyn the Great and Princess Joan. CJ gave us a cultural talk about Welsh Love Spoons. Afterwards we had Bara Brith and Welsh cakes with our tea.

In April, surgeon Peter Sykes taught us what Laparoscopic surgery entails, assisted by AO'B.

In May, Richard Ortyl from The Cheshire Wildlife Trust told us about initiatives being undertaken to support wildlife. It was rather disconcerting to hear of snakes in the compost heap however.

June was our Flower Festival event. Members brought flowers from their garden. The garden group held a plant sale, and Melanie Farrow from Smellanie's Garden Flowers talked about setting up her flower farm during Covid lockdown. Refreshments were a Strawberry Cream Tea.

In July our speaker was Eddie Tarry, the Community Engagement manager at Styal prison. We learnt about the efforts made to rehabilitate women offenders; including the Clink restaurant, the Recycling Project and entering an exhibit at the Tatton Flower Show.

Our August outing was a visit to meet and learn about Llamas at Hillview Farm, near Frodsham; followed by a meal at the Hanging Gate, Weaverham.

Stephen Shakeshaft, gave us a virtual tour of Chester at our September meeting.

In October we had a Members' Night meeting. Acting President was HH and we were entertained by The Earl of Stamford Morris Dancers, followed by tea and cakes.

Additional events arranged by the committee included an 85th Whitley WI birthday tea party. The birthday cake was made by AO'B. The sandwiches and cakes were home made by committee members.

Our May outing was organised by JW. We went by coach to Chester and had a boat trip with afternoon tea on the River Dee, followed by free time in Chester.

In June the winner of the garden group quiz, SC, enjoyed a trip to Bridgewater gardens in Salford with quiz master AM and 2 other competitors.

AC held a Garden Party at her home for the WI in August. Money was raised for MacMillan.

Some members joined Dutton WI in September for a holiday to Cambridge, Ely and Bletchley Park.

October saw Craft group members, led by AM, making a poppy display for remembrance day at the WI Sorbus Tree at the Whitley Nature Reserve.

We have a number of **sub-groups** who meet regularly for the benefit of members, usually monthly.

Group Activities include: Art, Craft, Baking, Book, Gardening, Scrabble, Walking and Lunch, Darts and Bowling.

Highlights included a visit to Smiths Nursery in Lymm by the garden group; leaning to crochet with JP, and learning Decoupage with PG at Craft group; CS and AC led Art group meetings painting camelias and animals, Baking Beauties made cakes for the village King Charles Coronation party, and went out for afternoon tea to Cabbage Hall. Walking Group walks have been in Marbury Park, Moore Nature reserve, Runcorn parks and quarries and Glazebrook through Windy Bank Woods, always followed by lunch. Members have knitted squares and blankets for Project Linus and raised money for charities while serving refreshments with drinks and cakes at monthly coffee morning events for Whitley villagers.

Village Group is a group of 6 local WIs, who get together to arrange slightly larger events. In March we enjoyed comedian Jamie Sutherland. There was a Spring Lunch in April and a one woman show by Alison Neil in October.

Cheshire Federation have arranged a number of events for members, including virtual meetings, theatre trips and craft workshops. A team from our WI won a Cheshire Jigsaw Race in March.

August had us scavenging for Summer photographs for a photo competition.

A number of members attended the Literary Lunch in July. The speaker was author Sally Anne Martin, who lives locally.

The **Cheshire Show** took place in June. Several of our members helped with the WI making cakes, serving refreshments, selling home made produce and exhibition stewarding. Thank you for helping. We had successes in the WI competitions at the show. SL with a first for decorated gingerbread biscuits, PS was second with her marmalade, AC came third with her watercolour of a Magical Land. PS came second. In the photography section for Beauty and the Beast AM was third and MB was highly commended. The craft group combined entry depicting Dick Whittington came second. PB won the Meanwood cup for her entry using recycled materials and judged by members of the public. Congratulations and thank you to all those who took part.