

A very Happy New Year to everyone ...

Tetbury WI finished 2023 with our Christmas social: games, a quiz, mince pies, a little 'fizz' and a challenge to match up the newly elected committee members with their childhood photos. We're still not sure if it's good or bad that nobody successfully paired our 'then' with our 'now'! Nevertheless, everybody enjoyed themselves and there was a lot of laughter, especially over the game of Handbag Bingo.

2023 has been a very busy year both at our monthly meetings, with speakers' subjects ranging from owls to textiles and from food banks to ukuleles, and through the various groups. The Needlework group has been working on several projects, most recently making hats for newborn babies at Stroud Hospital. The Craft group's creations have ranged from Fimo poppies for Remembrance Day to Tyvek art and Suffolk Puffs.

The Garden group started the year with snowdrops and finished with Christmas wreaths and are meeting this month to plan their 2024 programme. The Walking group meet regularly on a Thursday morning, even if the recent terrible weather has limited some of the walking to just coffee at the Trouble House.

The Book group is thriving and the Gin group goes from strength to strength.

The whole membership came together to stock our stall at the Tetbury Christmas market and our selection of crafts, jewellery, mince pies and snowmen cakes contributed to the £500.00 we raised for Tetbury Hospital.

Every year the Women's Institute campaigns on a current issue that has been selected from the many proposed by members across the country. Once these have been short-listed each WI Group is asked to discuss these Resolutions and submit their choice firstly to their local Federation and then to the National one. The final choice is adopted at the AGM and is formed into a campaign by the Public Affairs Department of the NFWI.

The four Resolutions for 2024 range from concern over the lack of availability for dental treatment through the NHS, the impact on society of poor housing, advertising for gambling and the need to improve the outcome for women in the criminal justice system.

At our first meeting this year, each Resolution was presented in full and President Linda Sheen, who participated in a Zoom meeting with other Gloucestershire WI groups, outlined the background and intent of each subject. There was a frank and fair exchange of views to contribute to the debate and, by an overwhelming majority, the fourth Resolution 'Improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system' was endorsed as our choice to go forward.

The meeting ended with one of our newer members, Marketing Consultant Sindy Foster, introducing herself through a 'Meet a Member' presentation and describing her varied and impressive career to date.

The next monthly coffee morning is at 10.30am at the Snooty Fox on Monday 26 February. Come along for a coffee and a chance to catch up.

The next full meeting is at the Goods Shed is on Monday 12 February at 7.30pm with a presentation entitled '1 man, 1 horse, 2700 miles and 30 cathedrals' - an intriguing title.

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