



STAPLEFORD WI
The Stapleford Roses

New member & visitor welcome letter

Hello and welcome to Stapleford WI, the home of the Stapleford Roses. We are so pleased that you have decided to join us or are thinking of joining us. Your membership can be as busy or as easy-going as you want it to be. We are still a relatively new WI (formed in 2014) with a growing membership and a dedicated and hard-working committee. We like to feel that we have our feet in the traditional roots of the Women's Institute but with our heads facing forward into the modern world around us. We hope that this letter explains a little of what you can expect at our meetings and how we organise our WI

Membership fees for 23-24 are by pro-rata to the quarter in which you join:

- 1-Apr-23 – 31-Mar-24 – £46
- 1-Jul-23 – 31-Mar-24 - £34.50
- 1-Oct-23 – 31-Mar-24 – £23
- 1-Jan-24 – 31-Mar-24 - £11.50
- Visitors pay £5 per meeting – visitors only have access to the meeting they pay for and not the full benefits or voting rights of a member

Your membership entitles you to 11 meetings (full year) plus access to all WI sub-groups, activities, and events. We are sure that you will find lots to interest you in our packed programme put together to entertain, teach, amuse, and provide thought provoking discussion. We do enjoy a wide variety of speakers, demonstrations and events. There are also courses and activities organised in the local area by the Nottinghamshire Federation and further afield by the National WI. In addition, as a member you will also receive 8 issues of WI Life magazine through the post

At every meeting there will be the main event as featured on the programme plus a fun and competitive quiz often set on a similar theme plus a fundraiser such as a raffle or a tombola. Everyone who has contributed to the fundraiser can pay £1 to enter and we really like it when everyone goes home with a prize! When you arrive the Treasury team will greet you and sign you in at the register and will take any monies for any subscriptions, tickets or events as appropriate

In addition to the fundraiser, we also make a collection of long shelf-life store cupboard staples in support of the food bank at Montrose Court Church, Stapleford. This is entirely voluntary. You will usually find a bag for the donations at the sign-in table

We want all our newcomers to feel welcome so whilst you're getting to know what's going on, members of the committee (who you will spot wearing purple lanyards) mingle to act as welcome buddies. No-one likes sitting on their own waiting to make friends and the buddies will be able to answer any questions. The current committee to 31-Mar-24 comprises:



Left – right: Heidi Platts, President, Lesley Bryan, Secretary, Maureen Darby, Treasurer, plus additional committee members: Janet Abbott, Sue Bexon, Annette Bryan, Beryl Jordan and Sheila Mayfield

The President will start the meeting by welcoming members and visitors and by inviting everyone to join in singing the hymn Jerusalem. The words are handed out on sheets and we've got some lovely voices amongst us! The hymn of the Suffragettes became the Women Voters' hymn and by singing Jerusalem we are recognising the struggle to win the vote for women and the WI's role in wider women's movements today. The President will introduce the evening's event and will cover any business/ matters arising

After the main event of the programme we break for refreshments tea/ coffee/ squash and a piece of cake or biscuits for £1. The cake is donated each month by a rota of home-bakers who we call the 'Cake Charmers'. Please let your buddy know if you have any particular allergies and if you wish to become a future charmer yourself. Profits made on refreshments after costs will be

donated to our charity of the year, which for 23-24 is the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance. Whilst we enjoy chatting with our refreshments we open up the fundraiser and have a moment to tackle the quiz

Once a year in March, we combine our Annual General Meeting (AGM) with our choice of WI resolution. Resolutions are nominations for National WI campaigns which are put forward by members. The selected resolutions are debated by each WI and the decisions are taken by delegates to the National Annual Meeting. It is our way of having a voice on important topics on a national platform. Our AGM is also where we elect a new President and appoint the officer roles for our WI for the year ahead

During the Summer (August) we take a break from meetings at Cliffe Hill and try to get out & about, instead taking advantage of the better weather to arrange, picnics, walks or garden visits for example

In our local area, Stapleford is part of the Willoughby group of WIs along with: Bramcote, Trowell and Wollaton. We enjoy really warm friendships across the Willoughby group sharing ideas and invitations to each other's events. The WI is divided into county groups and Stapleford is part of the Nottinghamshire Federation and the head office is in Newark-on-Trent. The National Federation is the headquarters of the WI and is located in London

In addition to the main programme, there are various groups that are open to all members, some have set dates in the month when they occur and some are arranged by the members themselves on a more relaxed basis, the details of which may be agreed at the monthly meeting or by an informal WhatsApp group. Please ask any member of the committee if you wish to get involved as you will be very welcome:

- Book Club – 1st Weds of the month see June, Lesley or Maureen
- Craft Group – arranged ad hoc by interested members
- Lunch Club – arranged ad hoc by interested members
- Supper Club – 1st Tues of the month see Lesley
- Theatre Group – arranged ad hoc see Jayne
- Walking Group – arranged during light nights see Lesley

We encourage all members to share their interests within the group, for example we have our Green Champion Beryl, who helps with recycling projects and sharing WI green news. Sue has recently organised a very successful croquet tournament and other members collect: bottle tops, old coins & stamps for various charities

Lastly, we have our Sunshine Fund. This is something dear to our hearts and is unique to the Stapleford Roses. This is a collection tin which is passed around at our meetings or left on the reception table for your donations of loose change (or more if you like!) We use the funds on a discretionary basis as

agreed by the committee where we feel we would like to bring a 'ray of sunshine' or smile to a member who we feel may be in need. It affords us the chance to make lovely and welcome gestures

We hope you can see that there is a lot on offer for you to enjoy and it's entirely up to you as to how much or little you want to be involved. I'd like to encourage all our members to think of our WI as something we collectively own, so if you have a suggestion for a speaker, an event or a new group that you'd like to lead, please share it with us. We hope you have a great time and make some new friends

Heidi Platts, President, Stapleford WI