



EAST KENT FEDERATION

EAST KENT NEWS

FEBRUARY 2026



Contact

Information for the Federation Office

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Opening Hours:

Tuesday to Thursday,
9.30am – 3.00pm
(closed for lunch from 1.00pm to 1.30pm)

[East Kent Federation Website](#)

[Ticketsource](#) for bookings



WORD FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS

Happy New Year everyone!

I'm sure we are planning Annual Meetings, looking forward to the new WI year and the exciting things planned for our members.

We are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Federation AGM on 2nd April.



It's good to know that Watch Parties are being planned for the NFWI AGM on 4th June and listening to the exciting speakers who will be addressing us. WIs will have received the information from NFWI.

One of the most important parts of the National AGM is the vote on the Resolution, so please make sure that your WIs selections are sent to the federation office as soon as possible.

PLEASE remember to send in the full list of resolutions and the number of votes cast for each one e.g. Accessible toilets – 6, Women's Homelessness – 10, and so on. The total numbers are sent to NFWI to determine the most popular resolution which will be discussed and voted on at the AGM.

We will let you know the outcome as soon as we hear. The one with the most votes will be discussed at our Resolution meeting on 14th April. Tickets are available now for this, it should be a very interesting discussion.

We still need delegates for the NFWI AGM, please do volunteer, if we do not have enough there will be WIs who will not be represented. It is not arduous and you will not have to write a report if you don't want to – we will supply one if you wish.

Carol

federation.chairman@eastkentfedwi.org.uk



Christmas seems a long time ago.

We loved seeing all of your fabulous photos from your parties. It is nice to know how much fun you have.

At Federation preparations are in full swing for the Annual General Meeting. Last year we found a smaller, more suitable, central location at The Great Hall, Kent College, Canterbury with free parking. We learnt a couple of things but overall, we got really great feedback from those that came. This year's meeting takes place on the 2nd April. It might not sound too exciting - an AGM, but it is such a warm, interesting and uplifting day.

We have local dignitaries joining us and two fabulous speakers. You may not have heard of either of them, but they are both amazing women. They represent everything we stand for. Do you ever wonder how people get to the position they are in? When you hear our speakers, you will see why they are where they are. There will also be the raffle, prizes, stalls, hampers and lots more! It is so good to hear everyone singing Jerusalem together. Bring a packed lunch and come and meet other WI members. We are committed to providing you with an in-person experience, but we need you there! Call the office to order a ticket or go on ticketsource to get yours!

Angela

EAST KENT FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES - CIO

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 2nd April 2026, 11.00am – 4.00pm
Great Hall, Kent College, Whitstable Road, Canterbury, CT2 9DT

OBSERVER TICKETS £20

DELEGATE TICKETS free of charge

This is a member only event and tickets are sold on a non-returnable, non-refundable basis (unless the event is oversubscribed) [Ticketsource](#)

Transport: There is a large car park at the venue but it would be helpful to car share where possible. The busses from Canterbury and Whitstable stop outside the school.

Refreshments: Tea and coffee will be on sale before the meeting and at lunch time. It is advisable that members bring a packed lunch as the venue is not close to shops or cafes/restaurants.

OUR GUEST SPEAKERS WILL BE:

KEJI MOSES



Keji is currently Lord Mayor of Canterbury, she is the founder and CEO of a charitable organisation to empower and educate those affected by pregnancy loss with the tools they need to make their voices heard. She lives in Canterbury with her husband and children and enjoys writing inspiring blogs, podcasting and spending quality time with friends and family.

Keji has a particular focus on empowering women to overcome adversity. She interviewed more than sixteen guests on her social media on topics such as grief, loss, self-esteem, impostor syndrome, mental and emotional well-being, and other more relevant topics.

Keji is passionate about self-advocacy and takes a holistic approach to providing support that considers the whole person, not just their mental health needs. She is a former civil servant who has worked for the Metropolitan Police and Department for Work and Pensions. She is an active member of the community and sits on a number of Local Committees and Boards.

LINDSEY BARRELL, AKA MS CHERRY BOMBE



Essex based Lindsey has been a WI member for many years and her alter ego, Ms Cherry Bombe, has been a regular speaker on the WI circuit since 2014. More recently her talk entitled 'Burlesque, Me and the WI' has been wowing audiences far and wide, both via Zoom and face to face, and the feedback has been fabulous.

Recently described by one WI member as 'the best speaker I have ever heard in all of my years as a WI member' and by another as 'an amazing lady and gifted storyteller', Lindsey leads two troupes of Burlesque dancers, who are all WI members and are aged between 40 and 82! They travel the home counties giving talks and performing and raising funds for local worthy causes.

EKFWI AGM SALE OF BASKETS 2 APRIL 2026



Once again, we welcome donations of 'Baskets' which will be sold at £5.00, £10.00 and £15.00 each. Please mark your baskets with the price you consider appropriate.

We are hoping that each WI will donate a basket (or more if you wish to) filled with themed items of 'goodies' for gardening, cooking, craft, pampering etc. We know you will have some great ideas and it will be something lovely that people will want to buy.

Deliver your Basket on the day; it does not matter if you come a little later as we need more baskets to replace the ones already sold.

The income from the baskets will be shared with our Charity this year – the Kent Neuro Therapy Centre in Canterbury. Our donation, and any money raised by our WIs, will be used to support the specialist physio-hydrotherapy and exercise services such as mat and seated Pilates, mat and seated yoga, aqua yoga, gym etc.

FEDERATION TREASURER



To introduce myself, I am Chris Kerr and have recently taken over the role of Federation Treasurer. I am on the Board of Trustees, President of Newington WI, I am a WI Adviser and an IFE in my spare time - what is spare time??? I am therefore asking for your support.

When you are paying in cheques, can you please attach as much information as possible, either on the back of the cheque or attached to the cheque, to help us to identify what the payment is for, ensuring that the invoice number is included.

When you do an online BACS payment and there isn't enough space in the reference field for the full details, can you please send an email to the Assistant Secretary with the details; and for affiliation fees, a breakdown of the payment?

As you can imagine, we have lots of payments arriving, and it can be hard to identify your WI, event, or name. I would like to thank each and every WI treasurer and member for all that you do in helping the Federation Treasurer. We know it can be tricky sending in cheques and BACS/Online.

News from NFWI: 2026/7 Subscription Rates

Following response to feedback from members and in line with the NFWI's recently announced Practical Pledges, it is confirmed that a greater percentage of the increase will go to the WIs, meaning: £2.00 to WIs, 50p to the Federation, and 50p to the NFWI. The overall subscription distribution for the 2026/7 membership year will be:

Total Subscription: £54.00

WI Share: £27.10

Federation Share: £12.55

NFWI Share: £14.35

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call the office. We are here for you.

THE WINNERS 200+ CLUB DRAW

December's 200+ Club Draw

1st	£14.75	No 136	Diana Terry	Saint Martins WI
2nd	£8.85	No 132	Margot Allison	Sheldwich WI on the Green
3rd	£5.90	No 42	Pauline McCalden	Whitfield WI

January's 200+ Club Draw

1st	£14.75	No 12	Sandra Hursey	Whitfield Evening WI
2nd	£8.85	No 61	Diana Terry	Saint Martins WI
3rd	£5.90	No 7	Lynda Hover	Whitfield Evening WI

RESOLUTIONS MEETING

TUESDAY 14th APRIL 2026

at

ASHFORD ROAD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION HALL

151 Ashford Road, Thanington Without,
Canterbury
CT1 3XR (on A28)

**Doors open at 9.30am for 10.00am start
(until approx 12.00 noon)**

Tea & coffee available on arrival

TICKETS £10.00

Join your Public Affairs Team to learn more about this year's resolution to be put forward at the NFWI Annual Meeting in June – we have speakers ready to leap into action for this meeting. This is your chance to find out more about the selected resolution, ask any questions, etc. ready for discussion at your WI in May.

More details will be available once the chosen resolution is announced

Will it be?

Accessible public toilet facilities to promote dignity, health, and social inclusion,

Action on women's homelessness,

Every child needs a friend,

Love Your Vulva – Self checking is your best defence against vulval cancer or

Nearer to Nature

This meeting is open to all members. Delegates are reminded that they may claim the cost of the ticket from the WIs they represent.

Tickets available via [Ticketsource](#)

**Or contact the Federation Office: Tel:
01227 464106**

Email:

assistant.secretary@eastkentfedwi.org.uk

All tickets sold on a non-returnable/non-refundable basis unless the event is over-subscribed.

WIST TEAM

Following on from the Presidents and Secretaries training that we recently delivered, thank you to all those who provided positive feedback. This was greatly appreciated. We have taken this on board and going forward we will be including any points that you feel may have been missed and look forward to seeing many more of you at our future President and Secretary training sessions.

Gill Crone
WIST Chairman

STEWARDS EKFWI AGM

We are all looking forward to our Annual Meeting in April and we need a couple more stewards to help our members enjoy the day. A steward will receive a complementary ticket to the event as a thank you for taking the time to help. If you think that this is something you would like to do, please contact the federation office for more information.

If you are interested and would like some more information, please contact Alison – federation.secretary@eastkentfedwi.org.uk; or telephone the office 01227 464106

EKFWI Charity 2024 - 2026

Please note that our current charity, the Kent MS Therapy Centre, has changed its name to **Kent Neuro Therapy Centre**.

Just a reminder that all monies, cheques, and/or collection cans will be collected at this year's AGM on 2nd April 2026. You still have time to finish collecting for the Charity. So come on, one last push to raise a little more money for this very worthwhile cause. The Charity for 2026-2028 will be announced at the AGM in April.

Cheques: Please make cheques payable to 'Kent Neuro Therapy Centre'

Thank you

The East Kent News editorial team welcome articles from WIs which focus on special events or may be of particular interest to other members. Please limit the number of words to a maximum of 150 and just one or two individual photographs. Send the photos separately not embedded into the text, this makes editing much quicker. Please send as a word document not PDF.

FROM OUR CLIMATE AMBASSADOR

In November I gave a talk to my local branch about being a Climate Ambassador and the new NFWI campaign Fair Green Future.

The Fair Green Future will have two stages . The first is about learning and listening to explore how climate change impacts people unequally. Women and disadvantaged people often suffer more from the effects of climate change and climate policies can hit vulnerable people hardest if they are not well designed. We need to make sure that those most affected can be involved in the discussions and decision making. And part of that means dealing with all the misinformation that is around at the moment.

The second stage will use this learning to call for political change and a fair green transition for all.

NFWI have produced some excellent resources so that you can discuss the campaign within your branch.

There is a discussion guide here which includes a short explanatory video [Fair Green Future Discussion Guide](#) and a fact sheet [Fair Green Future Factsheet](#).

If you do have a discussion in your branch please let me know how you get on so I can feedback to Public Affairs.

AUDITIONS EVENT FOR SPEAKERS



AT
SHELDWICH VILLAGE HALL
LEES COURT ROAD, FAVERSHAM, KENT
ME13 0LG

Friday 27th February 2026

Doors open 1.00 pm

1.30 pm – 5.00 pm

Ticket price £5 payable on the door

Raffle

Tea and coffee will be available on arrival
No pre-booking required – please note that this is for members only.

This is the way YOU choose the Speakers as recommended in the Speaker's List.

Use your talent spotting skills not just for your WI, but for the WIs across East Kent.

We look forward to seeing you.

Any queries, please contact the Federation Office 01227 464106 or assistant.secretary@eastkentfedwi.org.uk

WI OFFICERS ANNUAL RETURN

Please complete and return your WI Officers Annual Return promptly after your annual meeting; the form was sent to WIs before Christmas. Keeping our contact information up to date is essential.

Please will you also make the necessary amendments in MCS.

If you do not have a WI Officers Annual Return, please contact the federation office and one will be sent to you.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 27 February 2026	Auditions Event, Faversham	Page 5
Thursday 2 April 2026	EKFWI AGM, Kent College, Canterbury	Page 2
Tuesday 14 April 2026	Resolution Meeting, ARCA Hall, Thanington	Page 4
Wednesday 22 April 2026	Literary Lunch	
Wednesday 27 May 2026	Garden Day, Canterbury Academy	

To book direct or to see if tickets are still available click on [Ticketsource](#) for most events.

Deadline for copy to be included in the March EKN Friday 20 February 2026.

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION RESULTS

We were inundated with entries for the photography competition this year which was entitled Insects – thank you all so much for your response! Images ranged from colourful butterflies, to cockroaches to graceful dragonflies to busy wasps and bees!

The PALS sub committee spent a long time firstly enjoying your photographic skills and then shortlisting the many entries.



The winner was submitted by Jackie Thomas from Smeeth WI – congratulations. Jackie says of her winning entry 'It's a four spotted chaser, photographed at RSPB Minsmere. I was bird watching and don't know much about dragonflies but the warden was there and told us what it was. I was pleased to get this picture with a zoom lens, the four spots showing up perfectly in the translucent wings'



Runner up was Mandy Jarvis from Margate WI with her colourful image. Mandy says 'I took the photo with my iPhone while visiting Chapel House gardens, Ramsgate with WI friends. The colour of the butterfly wings complimented the flower shade and it looked beautiful on a warm sunny afternoon'.

Third place Lin Gates from Cherryhill WI. As there were so many quality entries we also shortlisted a further three who have been sent highly commended certificates - Aileen Meyer of Graveney and District WI, Ruth Runciman from Willesborough WI and Stephanie Wolfe from Sheldwich on the Green WI.

We are now on the hunt for a title for the next competition – please visit us on our stand at the ACM with any ideas you may have or send into the office. We will choose the next title at our May meeting so get your thinking caps on please!

Clare Boggia Secretary Lifestyle Team – Performing Arts, Leisure and Sports

PUBLIC AFFAIRS TEAM

Violence against Women and Girls

Kent Police have been running a series of talks on Violence against Women and Girls. These are run on Microsoft Teams and are open to interested parties, EKFWI received an invitation.

The last meeting was held on 1st December 2025 the day before the 2nd Part of the Angiolini report was published. This was well timed as the meeting was about measures being taken to protect Women and Girls in the Community. Mention of Wayne Couzens was made as he started his police career and criminal behaviour in Kent.

Kent is a large county, and a great deal of effort has been made to reduce the risk to Women and Girls in the Community. There were police present at Freshers weeks at Kent Universities to provide presence and support for students starting university being away from home and meeting lots of new people. There have been visits to schools although they emphasised that this was not to point the finger at boys but to encourage the pupils to understand what healthy relationships are.

There are also Walk and Talk sessions when groups of women go out with female police officers and it gives a chance to provide support and build rapport. Measures have also been taken to improve safety on public transport.

Kent Police are tracking the progress of these measures to see the areas where there is improvement and where there needs to be more attention.

Anyone who is involved in anything to do with Violence against Women and girls or who has an interest in this subject could ask to join these meetings

News from around the Federation

For their first meeting of 2026, **Woodchurch WI** welcomed Sue Duckworth who spoke about East Kent Folklore. Sue began with a definition of folklore - the traditional beliefs, customs, myths and stories of a community or particular place, passed down through the generations.



With a varied coastline, a variety of fishing and agricultural areas, plus a long historical and literary tradition Kentish Folklore continues to expand and develop. Traditions linked to the fishing industry are seen in the Sea Blessing at Margate and Whitstable; inland are tales and traditions linked to Hop Picking. Superstitions and stories connected with witchcraft of the 16th Century are evident in Canterbury where there remains a replica ducking stool. The Holy Maid of Kent (Elizabeth Barton) being one of the more eminent supposed witches. Hoodening, more specific to East Kent and Thanet, still remains along with Wassailing, an Anglo-Saxon tradition of blessing the Apple Tree.

Members of **Becket WI** enjoyed a Christmas lunch at the Spitfire Cricket Ground in December.

The ladies enjoyed a delicious two course lunch with much laughter and frivolity, a good time was had by all.

Newington WI kicked off the first meeting of the year in fine style with an entertaining and inspiring talk from crime novelist Linda Murphy Regan. From the outset, Linda had the room captivated with anecdotes from her colourful upbringing and her early career as an actress, sharing stories that were both warm and laugh-out-loud funny.

She spoke candidly about her journey into writing, including the setbacks she faced when her first attempts were turned down by publishers. Undeterred, Linda reinvented herself by trying a different genre, a decision that led to her successful career as an accomplished crime novelist; one of her books is now being made into a film.

Laughter and enjoyment were the clear themes of the evening, and Linda's lively personality shone throughout. The night ended with a book signing for members wishing to purchase copies, rounding off a thoroughly enjoyable and uplifting start to the WI year."



Stanford with Postling and Lympne WI made Christmas trees from old paperback books. One member sourced some books from the Demelza bookshop in Hythe. The shop used 2 in their window display of Christmas books.



Paint the World Orange walk

On 25 November a dozen **Castle Green WI** members joined the Inner wheel's walk to support the 2025 UN initiative focussing on the ending of violence against women. On a freezing cold but brightly sunlit morning we wrapped up in orange scarves, hats, bags, jackets and trousers to show our support. Stopping off at the balloon bedecked Folkestone Bandstand. Pictured are some of Castle Green's members, including Jo Scott who organised the walk, plus President Christine Farquhar clutching the large orange shoulder bag



On the 26th November some of **Rodmersham WI** members attended the Xmas 70's do at the Mecure Hotel, Great Danes. 4th December we had our annual Christmas dinner at the Fruiterers in Rodmersham, all agreed a lovely meal. 8th December we hosted at Rodmersham Church, a service of lessons and carols. We invited other local WI's to join us. This was followed by a nice cup of tea and mince pie. £96 was made £48 to the church £48 to the local food bank. 18th December we held our Christmas meeting, mulled wine was served on arrival,

Great Chart & Godinton WI seasonal craft evening where members made a selection of 'Pom Pom' Christmas gnomes and ping pong ball/tea light snowmen complete with mini woolly hats.



KENNINGTON WI our Arts & Crafts group have started the New Year with a very enjoyable afternoon painting pebbles.



Members of **Orlestone WI** were proud to celebrate their 60th Anniversary at the January meeting and marked the occasion with a party, joined by guests from five of the WIs in the Hamstreet and Romney Marsh Group.

We began with a quiz to discover what we knew about the Sixties – we didn't ask 'what do you remember about the Sixties' as many of our members would have been far too young or not even born then to remember anything. Not many recognised Dr Beeching of the infamous Report which closed so many rural railway lines but everyone knew the Black Forest Gateau, now making a come-back. After singing Jerusalem, we enjoyed a buffet supplied by the Committee. The magnificent cake, made by the daughter of one of our members, was cut by Mary Bingham who is a founder member of Orlestone WI. A game of Pass the Parcel with 'Do this' instructions in every layer made us all laugh and we ended the evening with a free raffle, prizes being delivered through a Left, Right Story.



We plan to mark our 60th anniversary year in a number of ways. We're already setting aside money to buy a locally made oak seat for the village green and we plan to embroider our names on a new tablecloth. In addition we'll be supporting six good causes, focussing on those for women and children and we'll start with filling dental hygiene bags, to be distributed by either HomeStart or Rising Sun.

Members of **Woodchurch WI** welcomed The East Kent Barber Shop Chorus to their Christmas meeting. Traditionally Barber's Shop singing is a style of unaccompanied vocal music (a capella) in four parts, known for its rich, close harmonies.

Firstly they performed songs including those made popular by the Beetles, The Everley Brothers, Gene Pitney and The Drifters. Some amusing audience participation occurred as we tried to keep time with the hand movements in "My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean". After a break for festive drinks and nibbles, the choir retuned with a selection of Christmas songs and carols. Including "Silent Night" – famously sung at the WW1 Christmas truce and "It's beginning to look a bit like Christmas". The fantastic performance was finally brought to an end with a rendition of the "Irish Blessing".

WE'RE ALL MAD HERE!

To celebrate our 104th birthday **Shepherdswell WI** held a Mad Hatter's Tea Party with tables wonderfully decorated, delicious homemade treats, magnificent mad hats (our competition), a "famous people in hats" quiz, amazing table magic by Mike Davis (check him out in the speaker's book) and, to finish, a poem about hats written by the grandfather of one of our members. What a fantastic (and somewhat bonkers) time we had!



WHAT DO YOU DO ON A WET DECEMBER MORNING? Ten members of **HOATH WITH DISTRICT WI** took themselves off to play Ten Pin Bowling at the Hollywood Bowl at Westwood Cross, Broadstairs. It was fun and at times competitive, but thoroughly enjoyable and will probably be included in next year's calendar for a re-match!



NEWS FROM OUR GUILDS

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

We are making our final plans for our Programme of outings, beginning in April, but there is still time to make suggestions of suitable places for us to visit. Membership is still only £5.00 per Member, with friends and family welcome to come to most events, at an additional cost of £1.50. Full details from the Secretary, Janet Adamson - contact via the Federation Office.



SPINNERS AND KNITTERS GUILD

The Spinners and Knitters Guild meets on the first Monday of each month unless it is a Bank Holiday, in which case the meeting takes place on the second Monday, from 10.30 am until 2.30pm in Chartham Village Hall.

Our aim is to have fun spinning and/or knitting in a relaxed atmosphere. We are a self-help group where, in addition to spinning and knitting, we indulge in many associated crafts from crochet, felting, dyeing, locker-hooking, peg loom weaving, etc.

Why not pop along to any meeting and see what we are up to? You can be assured of a warm welcome and the chance to find out more. We have regular workshops in all aspects of woolly crafts.

For further information, contact: EKFWI office and they will pass on your query.

LACEMAKERS GUILD – we are a small group of enthusiastic lace makers, who meet monthly at Meadow Grange Nursery, Honey Hill, Whitstable CT5 3BP.

We would love for some new members to join us. We are happy to help beginners and have various pillows, bobbins, books and threads to get you started your lacemaking way. Meetings are held on third Tuesday of the month 10 am to 1pm. For further information : contact the Federation office who will pass on a message.

NEEDLECRAFT GUILD - The Needlecraft Guild is a very friendly creative group, who all enjoy trying their hand at traditional, experimental and new techniques of Needlecraft. We try a new project each month. Whatever level of ability, a warm welcome and help is given to new members. We meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 10.30am till 2.30pm at Chartham Hatch Village Hall, Bigbury Road, Chartham Hatch, Canterbury CT4 7NH. For further details contact the federation office who will forward your message.

WHITSTABLE CRAFT & HOME ECONOMICS GUILD - Meet at St John the Baptist Church Centre, 11 St John's Road, Swalecliffe, Whitstable, Kent CT5 2QU on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. The meeting starts at 2.15pm. No meeting in August.

CRAFT & HOME ECONOMICS GUILD IN DOVER. Meetings are every 4th Wednesday in the month at 2pm.