

Launton WI Secretary's Report 2024

2024 has been an amazing year for Launton WI. Not only have we increased our membership by almost 20% on last year's numbers but we have several more ladies interested in joining us this coming year. Due largely to word of mouth but we have increased our advertising and poster displays.

January saw us meeting Mozart amongst rambles in the Alps - an interesting and informative talk.

February's speaker had to pull out but we enjoyed a last-minute replacement.

March Annual Meeting saw a change of President as the then President decided to stand down. We also increased our committee by three members - a huge achievement which is working well.

April's birthday meeting went as planned and the Resolutions meeting in May was led by a very well-informed member and the Dentistry motion was carried almost unanimously.

June's speaker gave us some insight into a Wedding in Delhi and the literary and historical information on the Mitford Sisters was a treat in July.

Our summer BBQ in August would have been better with less rain but everyone had a great time in spite of it. This has become a summer favourite with our members.

We were disappointed that SkyWave Gin could not come in September but had a great talk with interesting comments from a poet using her own life problems to promote a lighter side to life.

October brought us an interactive murder mystery author which we all joined in with with great excitement, learning how to start out writing a murder mystery - a real fun evening as well.

In November our very own cake icing expert gave us a hands-on demonstration on cake icing, donating her Christmas cake to our raffle for WI funds. Launton Christmas cakes will never be the same!

December has seen us join with other WIs in South Ploughley Group as Launton hosted a Christmas Dinner with a 3-course meal and mince pies. Not just a fun festive occasion but getting to know more WI members in the Group.

As well as the monthly meetings we have served teas to the litter-pickers of Launton. We have joined in the Poppy Cascade, helping to make over 4000 poppies for Remembrance Day - this was a real community event. We were tired of our dilapidated parish hall so our president organised a clean-up and repaint, done mainly by WI with other village help and support from the parish Council and local businesses. Another community success.

Outings included an extremely enlightening visit to Viridor where our rubbish is dealt with - amazing! Also a trip to Grey's Court with its historical associations with the WI. We had organised a trip to the Houses of Parliament but the election put paid to that - to be reorganised in 2025.

Social events included the BBQ and a light-hearted croquet match with Langford Village WI at a member's garden, including a bring and share lunch, a craft morning with Langford WI, overseen by experts from both WIs, and a shared quiz which swelled the WI funds. Unfortunately the rain stopped many of our planned walks though we did manage to organise some social lunches. We also learned a lot from the 'Promote your WI' meeting which we are putting into practice.

And in between we have supported Food Bank, Hygiene Bank and Homeless Oxfordshire.

We are looking forward to another successful year in 2025.

Hilary Bradshaw, Secretary, Launton WI