

Annual Report for Launton WI

2025 - 2026

We have had another successful year with an increase in members attending a full and varied programme of talks, events and social occasions.

We started the year in January with a 'Sunny walk in the Cherwell Valley' - a fascinating insight into little-known parts of the Cherwell Valley. It was interesting to learn about lesser-known places close to home. This was followed by a competition entitled 'something sunny' which brightened a gloomy January evening.

February's meeting gave us all pause for thought as our speaker showed us how to clean our houses, minds and life with the aim of 'taking back control'. We were given ideas to work on and members came away with revitalised plans to put her ideas into practice.

The annual meeting and presentation of the Competition Trophy followed March's meeting. The current committee all agreed to stand again and the members present voted the committee back in with the president agreeing to stand for another year. The members present are supportive and positive about the work the committee are doing.

Launton WI's birthday meeting is in April. We had a speaker from a local Hospice who described the work of the hospice from its beginning and surprised us with the a run-down of the cost of running the hospice. This was followed by birthday cake made specially by one of our members.

NFWI Resolution 2025 (Bystanders can be Lifesavers too) meeting in May took the form of a demonstration of CPR by a WI member, followed by a questionnaire and information about defibrillators and how to help as a bystander. This was led by another WI member and there was much discussion around how to promote the use of the defibrillators in the village and how the WI could bring it to the attention of more people in the village. The village hall was being reroofed so our President made sure all members were aware of the health and safety implications of this at our meetings.

On a lighter note, June's meeting was from a detectorist. It was fascinating to see what he had found and where he had been detecting. Handling the ancient coins and other artefacts was amazing and the background information about them brought them to life for us.

A last-minute change of plan due to a leak in the village hall meant that our July speaker couldn't come. So we had a 'Books and Bingo' meeting in a member's garden. We described books we had read and shared them between us followed by a very adept bingo caller. It was a very good meeting but thank goodness for email and WhatsApp for communicating changes at the last minute.

August saw us again in the garden for our annual summer BBQ. A great social event with Bangers and burgers barbecued by some members and other salads and puddings provided by the committee and other members. This has become an annual event, much looked forward to. Happily it was a lovely sunny evening.

September's meeting was rung in by Launton handbell ringers. A group started by a Launton resident some years ago, it has gone from strength to strength and not only gave us an amazing demonstration of their skills but explained how the music is written and then gave some members the opportunity to try handbell ringing - not as easy as one might think!

We were all a little nervous about October's meeting - entitled 'Dem Bones'. This was an explanations and demonstration of replacements for damaged bones in the lower body - hips, legs, feet.. our speaker brought along many alternative types of artificial replacements for these bones and explained how they would be used to help us walk pain-free again. A fascinating and informative meeting, not as gruesome as it sounded.

Our local photographic expert from Imagex came to speak to us in November. He helped us understand some of the complexities of cameras and mobile phone cameras, and gave some very practical advice. Most of us came away with better understanding of how to use our phones to take better pictures. A very practical and helpful evening.

December's Festive floral Fun meeting saw us all making a Christmas greenery table decoration with the help and guidance of our friendly local florist. We all managed to produce a decoration, with the help of mulled wine and mince pies provided by the committee. An enjoyable start to the Christmas season.

And in between our monthly meetings we had a monthly social event - lunch at a local venue, a walk in a nice setting or a visit to our Village cafe. We organised a table-top sale and had dinner at a nearby pub and our annual bring and share croquet challenge in a member's garden. We helped make more poppies for Remembrance Day and Christmas decorations for Christmas trees put up around the village by our local woodland group, making green and purple decorations for a specific WI tree. Almost all our members were able to attend a Christmas dinner at a nearby golf course as a Christmas social event.

The committee is busy now organising another interesting and varied programme for members of Launton WI as we aim to provide monthly meetings in line with WI ideals and encourage more women to join us.

Hilary Bradshaw,
Secretary, Launton WI