

WI Annual Report to the Parish Council – April 2025

The focus this year of our monthly meetings has been to get everyone involved in the meetings – we've been exercising our vocal cords and singing with a voice coach, and we had a fabulous evening, concentrating on quick sketching during a Life Drawing evening with our own artist / member Michelle Parsons. We've had a very mindful evening having a go at Tai Chi and a hugely enjoyable night with Ella leading us in Scottish Country dancing (she's a very patient teacher!).

On a more serious note – we listened with rapt attention as Trevor from St John's Ambulance taught us all how to respond to an emergency, how to make lifesaving decisions in those first crucial minutes. We left that meeting feeling hugely confident of how to perform CPR, use the defibrillator and how to keep ourselves safe. We would urge everyone to learn how to put someone in the recovery position and be confident with basic lifesaving actions.

Learning the recovery position here -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvM4VcVz-k>

First steps to CPR here –

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/first-aid/cpr/>

We've continued to campaign for issues important to us locally, as well as chosen nationally by the WI – we've met with the Rivers Trust to think carefully about how rivers, waters and wildlife are affected by the smallest of choices we make every day and we've been pressing our MP, Nick Timothy, to bring pressure on the government to increase access to affordable dental health for all.

Our monthly meetings are just one part of the life of our WI. We continue to have very active weekly walking groups and monthly reading groups. We've enjoyed pub lunches, Sunday morning dancing in the hall, Quiz nights, daffodil planting across the village and an after-hours tour of Bury Cathedral. We've also started a series of craft drop-in workshops on a Saturday afternoon – where everyone is welcome to learn a new skill or brush up on an existing one! We've added lots more events this year in the evenings and weekends – to support our working members, including an evening book club. We've continued our monthly tea and cake events for the village as well as music social nights and the Literary lunch.

In 2026 we will be celebrating 100 years of the WI in Wickhambrook. Earlier this year Dorothy and Gillian took us through 99 years of history of the WI in our village – and it helped us all feel so very connected to those strong women, with vision, organisation and humour that have come before us. If you're not already a member – please consider 2026 the year you come and join us!

Mitch Karunaratne