

PARISH MEETING 14th APRIL 2025

Ashendon WI Report.

Mr. Chairman thank you for allowing the WI to present our report to the village once again.

We are proud of our WI and all it represents in our community. Our meetings enable like-minded ladies to gather each month in friendship and engage on matters of community, our County and even at international level. We are self-sufficient and supportive of each other, resilient and believe in hard work and giving back.

These values and traits are readily seen when we were approached and readily provided flowers to the tables for the Pensioners' dinner last November.

Each year Remembrance poppies are put on the Church wall; last year we particularly remembered D. Day and added poppies to the Lytch Gate.

We enjoy enhancing our Church with Christmas decorations.

We made cakes for the Village Rounders Match in aid of the Community Project "Save Our Pub".

We helped with the St. Mary's Celebration Weekend in September.

Members reinforce key WI principles of community and friendship in all we do.

Since our report last April Ashendon WI members, always wanting to enhance their understanding and education, have enjoyed a variety of talks:

- How to Read an English Country Church; We heard what social and architectural influences had on the pre-Christian to Anglo Saxon era.

This was fascinating. If you would like to hear more, we are planning the return of our Speaker, the Rev. Nicholas Henderson, on 8th July.

- I wonder if you have visited Sulgrave Manor in Northamptonshire?

We enjoyed hearing the history of the Manor which is linked to the Washington family in the US. This was followed up with a visit to the Manor last August travelling in Bernie the Bus; and of course, by necessity, a stop for lunch.

- We had a captivating and amusing talk about the process of making stained glass.

- A former Royal Footman gave us insights into how Royal banquets are arranged, travelling with royalty and the special relationships formed.
- Local speakers always offer special meetings:
 - Ian Edmans (Jenny's son) gave an outstanding presentation on his conservation and research work as Curator of Waddesdon Manor Aviary.
 - Sian was inspirational with her talk "Crossing Britain – Coast to Coast"
 - A representative from Stoke Mandeville Research Centre made us aware that incredibly, every two hours someone sustains a spinal cord injury and how the resulting trauma leaves many people with paralysis and a lifetime of debilitating health problems.
 - Just last Tuesday we had an amazingly informative presentation on Scammers. What scams to look out for and the tactics used.

All members have enquiring minds. To this end, the County Federation arrange various events which range from quizzes, Lunches, Investigation and Discovery Days and have key-note speakers at all their events. Our Resolution process allows us to elevate concerns; last year we highlighted Dental Health which has brought much media attention and have an on-going spotlight on microplastics. This year we have an awareness Resolution "Bystanders Can Be Lifesavers".

We offer support for local charities:

This year we have recognised

The Alexandra House of Joy in Bicester

Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research Unit

Sian's charity, Sport in Mind.

Obviously running parallel with the serious educational element of the WI, we are fun!

Our Christmas meeting had us cavorting in the Village Hall to the wonderful sound of Ukuleles.

We have been out and about. We visited Quanton Nurseries followed by lunch at the George and Dragon. We enjoyed a sunny January day on a visit to College Lake and recently visited Thrift Farm which supports young disadvantaged adults offering them work experience.

We entered the WI competition at the Bucks County Show. With relative success. My Victoria Sandwich cake didn't go too well! But Jan's dress made out of a pillowcase came second.

As ever, I could go on:

BUT I will leave you with an invitation to our Ashendon WI Literary Lunch to be held here on Saturday 26th April. Two courses, puddings to "die" for, all drinks and an enthralling speaker: Helen Fry. Women in Intelligence which fits the 8th May remembrance of 80th anniversary of V E Day.

AND to highlight that we meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm. Notices are always in the Hall window and we are now on the Village Support WhatsApp Group.

Susan Rand. Secretary Ashendon WI.