



10 February 2021

Dear WI Committee Member,

The NFWI has been very concerned about the difficulties created by Covid-19 and its impact on WIs and members.

We are particularly concerned that some members have felt a lack of a full 'WI experience' this year, particularly those in WIs where activities have been significantly impacted by the pandemic, and that this is causing some members to reconsider whether to renew their membership in April.

As we have already offered a three month extension to the current membership subscription, which has cost the organisation £1.7 million, we (NFWI, federations and WIs) simply cannot afford a further extension or any monetary acknowledgment of the ongoing challenges faced by WIs.

However, we are delighted to launch a new initiative which allows WIs greater flexibility over their portion of the membership subscription, offering WIs the option to charge the full amount of the WI portion (as set by the NFWI and National Council each year), reduce the WI portion of the subscription, or completely waive the WI portion of the subscription. The decision on which option to choose is up to your committee.

NFWI and federations have fixed costs in order to deliver fixed aspects of the WI experience, such as WI Life, newsletters, promotional materials, member support, etc. However we are aware that WIs may have saved on these fixed costs this year and in some instances may not always need their full portion of the membership subscription in order to deliver their WI experience to members. We have become particularly aware of this during the Covid-19 period, when some WIs have been able to continue relatively seamlessly – giving a member experience and using their funds as normal – but others have not.

Before this initiative was rolled out to WIs, we undertook a member consultation in which we reached out to a wide variety of WIs, rural and urban, of all sizes, across the entire geographical location of the organisation. Thank you to all WIs who were involved in this consultation, your feedback has been invaluable in the development of this initiative and the accompanying guidance.

The NFWI strategic vision, which was launched in September 2020, includes 'Flexible' as one of its main statements, and more flexibility was something that many members requested as part of our vision consultation. We are delighted to be able to offer initiatives such

as this which reflect WI members' requests for more flexibility and our commitment to introduce this into the way we operate. Although there is no obligation for any committee to make changes as part of this initiative, we hope all members will appreciate the additional flexibility.

This guidance will also be placed on My WI next week, where we will add FAQs over time if necessary, so please refer to My WI for the most recent version at any given time.

We hope the guidance is clear but if you have any further questions or would like clarification or assistance, please get in touch with your federation or the NFWI Membership and Engagement department ([membership@nfwf.org.uk](mailto:membership@nfwf.org.uk)).

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hilary Haworth'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

Hilary Haworth

Chair of the NFWI Membership Committee