

Guidance to WIs thinking about suspending or closing

If your WI is thinking of suspending, there are many options that should be considered first in order to hopefully avoid this outcome. These include:

- Have you sought guidance from your appointed WI Adviser and/or county federation? WI Advisers are trained to help and guide WIs. Your WI Adviser will have some useful and practical ideas that you can use at your WI.
- Has your WI reached out to any other local WIs? You could look at the possibility of enlarging with another local WI. This might be an ideal solution to continue as a new joint WI and gain new members and your WI Adviser would guide you through this process.
- Has your WI taken part in local events to help promote membership? Getting involved in events is a great way to attract new members while helping to advertise your WI. It may also provide opportunities to raise funds for the WI. However we appreciate that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some events may not have been able to take place. We hope that as restrictions lift that more events can take place safely.
- Does your WI have a website and/or social media page? Social media is a brilliant way to reach out to a huge number of people. You can list your WI's programme and activities to entice prospective members to come along and visit. Please find our social media guide on My WI and ask your federation digital team for help.
- Has your WI discussed the options of expanding the committee? If the officers at your WI would benefit from additional support then this would be an ideal option to explore. Sharing the main roles with a vice and/or assistant President/Secretary/Treasurer would help lighten the load and ease the pressure off the main officers. If you have any dual members they are also able to take a role on the committee after advising the federation and setting up a bye-law. If there are concerns about the commitment to the role of President or Treasurer remember that this is an annual appointment only, unless she wishes to put her name forward in subsequent years.
- Your federation is able to offer training and support for the roles on the committee and your Adviser will be able to give you the details of what is available.
- Have you reviewed your current programme to see if there are any areas that could be refreshed and improved? Your WI's programme is an important part of what you are offering the members and needs to be as innovative as possible. Keeping your programme varied and as interesting will ensure all members' interests and hobbies are covered. You could ask your members if they have any suggestions for this. An exciting programme will help entice new members while keeping current members captivated.

- Has your WI created posters to attract new members? These could be displayed on local news boards at local shops/halls/libraries etc. Templates for posters are available to create on My WI and would be a brilliant way to attract new members in the local area. Word of mouth is also a great way to attract interest to your WI and members could be encouraged to bring along a friend to a meeting.

If you are still considering suspension for your WI your remaining funds will be transferred to the federation for three years in the hope that the WI may be reformed in that period, in which case the funds would be returned to that WI. After the three years the WI is formally closed and the funds remain with the federation.

If your WI were to suspend you would lose the friendship, support and sense of community with your fellow members. Membership also offers wonderful value and opportunities including WI Life, My WI, and the chance to have a national voice and influence change through our resolutions and campaigns.

Contact us

For more information, please contact the NFWI via email membership@nfwl.org.uk ; call 0207 371 9300 (Ext. 201) or write to us at NFWI, Membership and Engagement Team, 104 New Kings Road, London, SW6 4LY

Version	Date created	Last review date	Next review date	Document author
1	September 2020	N/A	September 2021	Membership and Engagement Team