**HFWI 103rd ACM – 15 OCTOBER 2024 – REPORT FROM GEORGINA VOOGD, HFWI TRUSTEE**

Georgina had the pleasure of attending the Herefordshire Federation of WI’s 103rd annual council meeting on Tuesday at Ledbury rugby club. It was her first ACM and proved very insightful. Georgina wanted to share some key takeaways from the session:

* HFWI have had a busy year, and it was great to reflect on the impact HFWI has had and what we can focus on over the next 12 months.
* We watched a lovely video from a schoolteacher, in South Africa, whose pupils have benefitted from the teddy bears that have been knitted by HFWI members. We always need teddy bears and fish and chip outfits for babies. If you would like the patterns for these if you are able to support this initiative, please contact admin@herefordshirewi.org.uk. Your knits can be deposited at WI House for distribution to those who are in need.
* We heard from Mary Simpson from Healthwatch Herefordshire [Home | Healthwatch Herefordshire](https://www.healthwatchherefordshire.co.uk/) who are a health and social care champion. Her talk focussed on the menopause and about how it helps to talk about the menopause with others. Healthwatch Herefordshire really need people to complete their survey on the menopause and me [Why do we want to hear from you? : Menopause and me - survey (smartsurvey.co.uk)](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/84EQP6)  to help the NHS in Herefordshire with how to best support women with menopause – please take the time to complete the survey if you have had menopause and pass the survey on to others.
* The 2024 Cogan Cup winners acted out their winning script. There was only 1 entry this year which was disappointing as longstanding competitions like this don’t seem to be supported by WIs anymore. Please get thinking about a script that could be submitted in 2026!
* We need support with campaigns. Some great events were organised this year and not well attended which is disappointing.
* A presentation was given on Antibiotics and how they are impacting our rivers. When we take antibiotics, we do not ingest 100% of the antibiotic and it comes out in our urine and goes into the water. We should not flush/wash away antibiotics for people or pets as they should not be in the water. We are encouraged to become antibiotic guardians [Antibiotic Guardian – Pledge to be an Antibiotic Guardian](https://antibioticguardian.com/)
* The WI Learning Hub has lots of **free**, interesting online courses available on it. Since it was launched in January 2024 there have been over 54,000 bookings on the Learning Hub. There is a massive range of courses on there (a mixture of live and on demand) including craft sessions (crochet, sketching, acrylic painting, bullet journaling); talks on topics such as Whitehall through the ages, Cities, Shakespearian speeches; chair yoga and Pilates; guided meditation; fundamentals of accounting; retirement planning. The list is endless!  Georgina has attended two live sessions so far and they were brilliant. There is also the Devilled Egg Cookery school offering a diverse array of cookery tutorials designed to empower individuals to master the art of home cooking at their own pace. You can cook along with the tutorial in your own kitchen, and you know what ingredients you need beforehand.
* HFWI is looking for volunteers to become Independent Financial Examiners who can examine other WIs accounts. All volunteers will receive training and for every set of accounts you review you receive £20.  If interested in doing this please contact Jacquelynn Woodhouse, Jacqui.herefordwi@outlook.com.
* HFWI are also looking for trustees. Georgina and her mother are both trustees and enjoy being involved. Commitment-wise there is a monthly trustee meeting (usually on a Tuesday) and three out of four meetings are virtual meetings with an in-person meeting once every quarter. If you want to learn more about this or are interested, feel free to contact Margaret Simcock, chair@herefordshirewi.org.uk.
* The HFWI will be launching a group organising all HFWI’s trips called Out and About. Keep an eye out for details and get involved.
* We heard from Graham and Angela O’Connell from the National Garden Scheme [Home - National Garden Scheme (ngs.org.uk)](https://ngs.org.uk/) about the history behind the scheme and the impact the funds raised from it have. Some of you will know about the NGS Jane Voogd has opened up her garden for it. We were informed of the amount of money they raise - £3.4 million last year! You can support the NGS by visiting gardens next year and can find out which gardens are open on the website or by purchasing the yellow book. You can also do some virtual tours at any time - [Virtual Garden Visits - National Garden Scheme (ngs.org.uk)](https://ngs.org.uk/virtual-garden-visits/).
* Please read the HFWI newsletter! It contains lots of important information! Next one out very shortly. Also contribute reports on what your WI has been up to.

If anyone wants to learn more about any of the points, I have mentioned then just reach out to me. Georgina

Direct these enquiries to chair@herefordshirewi.org.uk