



Public Affairs Digest

Issue 59: March 2021

Dear Member,

Welcome to the NFWI *Public Affairs Digest*, an e-update on all the latest WI campaigning news, delivered directly to your inbox.

If you know anyone in your WI who is interested in our campaigns, please direct them to the campaigns area of [MyWI](#) to sign up to receive this Public Affairs Digest.



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Forward

Contents:

- [**The resolution selection results are in!**](#)
- [**An unusual Show the Love 2021**](#)
- [**Fairtrade Fortnight, 22nd February- 7th March 2021**](#)
- [**Celebrating International Women's Day**](#)
- [**Women and Modern Slavery**](#)
- [**New Food Foundation report**](#)
- [**Last week was Food Waste Action Week**](#)
- [**Experiences of Domestic Abuse**](#)
- [**Campaigns Corner**](#)

The main priority for the NFWI is the safety and wellbeing of our members. If you haven't already, please visit [this link](#) for the latest, up to date government guidelines.

See more information about support [at the end of this Digest.](#)



The resolution selection results are in!

Between November and January, every WI member had the chance to have their say on the shortlist and the resolution they would like to see go forward to the Annual Meeting on 8 June.

A call to increase awareness of the subtle signs of ovarian cancer received the most selections from members.

The NFWI Board of Trustees has decided to put this resolution forward to the Annual Meeting.

[Find out what happens next here.](#)

An unusual Show the Love 2021

Between 1st- 22nd February 2021, WI members joined together to Show the Love for people, places and planet- whilst being apart.



(Photos: Shropshire Federation, Peckham WI in West Kent Federation, Wellingore WI in Lincolnshire South Federation)

2021 has by far been the most unusual year for WI members to take part in Show the Love activities.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, WI members worked together to come up with innovative and ingenious ideas to Show the Love and raise awareness of the importance of taking climate action.

The NFWI has seen the highest level of social media engagement in the Show the Love campaign that we have ever recorded, and during the campaign sent

out over 450 resource packs to members across England, Wales and the Islands. WI members continued to call on their MPs to take climate action at the highest levels of Government; championed community projects; and raised awareness of the urgent need to take action for climate and nature.



It doesn't end there...

2021 is a huge year for UK and international climate action. With the UK playing host to both the G7- 11th-13th June 2021 in Carbis Bay, Cornwall- and COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021, there has never been a better time for WI members to add their voice to our climate campaigns.

In addition to supporting The Climate Coalition's own campaigns, the NFWI Public Affairs team will be focusing our attentions on raising awareness of the effects of climate change on women and girls. We will be providing members with campaigning opportunities, in addition to educational webinars and opportunities to use your craft skills to call for climate action.

We are aiming to make the first of these activities and resource guides available from the end of March 2021.



Fairtrade Fortnight, 22nd February- 7th March 2021

Following Show the Love 2021, WI members have also been celebrating Fairtrade Fortnight. The theme of this year's Fairtrade Fortnight has been the effects of climate change on farmers in communities where Fairtrade work.

You can catch up with [all past events here.](#)



(Photo: Anne-Marie Bickerton)

Celebrating International Women's Day

For International Women's Day this year, we asked WI members to take part in our campaigns craft project, 'WI Women in Activism'.

Thank you to all members who took part, the entries were both beautiful and powerful.

If you're still working on your banner or haven't started, you can still get involved. We plan on using the banners for any future marches we attend, once Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted.

[You can find more information here.](#)

[The online exhibition is available to view on My WI. Click here.](#)



Women and Modern Slavery

In 2018, one third of victims identified by the UK Modern Slavery helpline were women. The Clewer Initiative has published 5 short videos 'Women in the Shadows', as part of their work on tackling Modern Slavery. The videos are extremely powerful in highlighting the ways in which women are exploited through various forms of modern slavery, and how we all can play a role in helping these victims.

We would encourage you to watch the videos, which are only a few minutes long, and share them among your networks, so we can learn how to spot the signs of modern slavery and get victims the help they need and deserve.

Please note, the videos contain references to sexual exploitation which some viewers may find distressing.

[You can watch the ‘Women in the Shadows’ video series here.](#)



New Food Foundation report: The Pandemic Effect on Food Insecurity Remains a Crisis

Throughout the pandemic, the Food Foundation has been tracking food insecurity at a household level. Their new report provides further evidence that the pandemic has had a **devastating impact on the UK’s most vulnerable populations.**

Nationally representative data collected between March 2020 and January 2021 shows that the **problem of household food insecurity continues to be at crisis levels.**

Their latest findings show:

- Food insecurity remains higher than pre-Covid levels affecting an estimated **4.7 million adults** (9% of households) over the last six months. This compares to pre-Covid levels of 7.6%.
- **55%** of those experiencing food insecurity (an estimated **2.5 million adults**) said it was because they **did not have enough money for food**.
- Despite Government's financial support schemes and the Universal Credit £20 uplift, **22% of households have experienced a drop in income** since Feb 2020.
- **An estimated 2.3 million children live in households that have experienced food insecurity in the past 6 months** (12% of households with children).
- Nearly **1 million children (13%)** aged 8-17 years reported that either **they or their family had visited a food bank since early December 2020**. This has risen by two percentage points since the summer holidays (11%).
- **In the past 6 months, 14% of food sector workers experienced food insecurity** compared with 9% of non-food sector workers.
- **20% of BAME households have experienced food insecurity in the last six months** compared to 9% of white British households.
- Adults identifying as being limited a lot by **health problems or a disability are now five times more likely to be food insecure** than those without.

[You can read their full report here.](#)

[More of their data can be found here.](#)



Last week was Food Waste Action Week

During the first week of March (1 – 7), the WI took part in the UK’s first ever Food Waste Action Week. Thank you to all members who took part.

Don’t worry if you missed it - you can **check out our blog**, where we have outlined WRAP’s key statistics on food waste, as well as the WI’s ‘Top 10 Tips to Reduce your Household Food Waste.

You will also find some great resources, including some posters and flyers for you to download in both English and Welsh.

If you want to check out other awareness days relevant to campaigns, you can find our Campaigns Calendar on MyWI.

NO MORE

violence against women

Experiences of Domestic Abuse

As part of our No More Violence campaign, we would like to invite members who have experienced domestic violence or abuse to share their stories with us if they feel comfortable about doing so. This can include: physical or sexual abuse; psychological and emotional; financial or economic; coercive control; harassment, and stalking or online/digital abuse.

Hearing from survivors and firsthand accounts is extremely powerful and it is important to ensure women’s stories are heard. These case studies can remain anonymous should you wish, and will contribute to our work on Survivors’ Stories. Please send your story to **pa@nfwi.org.uk**

For support information please visit: **www.thewi.org.uk/dv-support**.



PA Digest on My WI

Missed an issue of the Digest? You can now access previous issues on My WI.

You can find them here.



We want to hear about local WI campaign activities. Please email us with your news!





Lincolnshire South hears from Anthony Nolan volunteer courier

Earlier this year, Lincolnshire South Federation's Public Affairs Sub-Committee hosted an online talk by Elizabeth Jenks, who is a volunteer courier for the blood cancer charity Anthony Nolan.

They have experienced the benefits of virtual meetings as they welcomed ladies from Barnstaple in Devon, Bicester in Oxfordshire, the Isle of Wight and

neighbouring Lincolnshire North as well as members locally.

Elizabeth briefly explained how Anthony Nolan came into being and the work it does. Anthony Nolan usually only use volunteers as their couriers. When Elizabeth first signed up in March 2003, she was one of only 10 couriers. Now there are more than 60 who, in 2019, made more than 1,300 trips to collect stem cell or bone marrow donations from all over the world.

One stark fact that emerged was that someone is diagnosed with blood disease every 14 minutes! The work done by these volunteer couriers is truly life-saving.

Trustee Janis Tunaley says: "They are most certainly unsung heroes in our community and all who listened to Elizabeth were both amazed and impressed by her talk. Thanks to all who attended for their interest and we encourage everyone to spread the word to increase the number of stem cell/bone marrow donors."

[If you want to know more about the WI's Make a Match campaign, click here.](#)

Support and help during pandemic

This can be a particularly difficult and worrying time for adults and children living with domestic abuse. **[This link](#)** will take you to a page of support sources, please share as widely as possible. It is important that survivors know that they are not alone.

This can also be a difficult and worrying time if you require additional assistance. If you need emergency food or support you can find the contact details of your local food bank using your postcode **[here](#)**.

If you are able to support your local food bank with donations or by volunteering, click here to visit the **[FareShare website](#)**.

You can also visit **[this section](#)** of our website for information from the NFWI on ways you can help your community, sources of support and other helpful information such as setting up a virtual meeting.

We have a PDF versions of the digest available, that you can share with the people around you. Please **get in touch** with the Public Affairs department if you would like a copy.

Please also encourage other members of your WI to sign up to receive this monthly digest.

Kind regards,

The NFWI Public Affairs team.

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