



Norfolk Federation of WIs
Charity Number: 227411

EDP WI Opinion Piece: Wednesday February 13th '019

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Show the Love with your Green Hearts!

14th February is an important date for many people as it means a day of romance, cards and possibly red roses! It is a day to celebrate love which has become a commercial bonanza for card shops, florists and restaurants. There were several Saint Valentines who could be the source of the tradition but I like the Slovenian Saint Valentine or Zdravko who was one of the saints of spring. A proverb says that "Saint Valentine brings the keys of roots" so plants and flowers start to grow on this day. In my garden plants have been growing for some time which maybe brings us to global warming!

On 14th February there is now a movement to show our love for our planet and for this reason you will see people from many organisations wearing green hearts. The National Federation of WIs has long been concerned about environmental issues and is a founding member of The Climate Coalition, a group of over 100 organisations and over 15 million people working for action on climate change. One of the core campaigns, "Show the Love", is focussed around Valentine's Day and aims to show people that climate change is affecting things they love from the food they eat to the land itself. It asks people to wear and share green hearts to show they would like action taken on climate change. The aim is to start a conversation about climate change and share the things that we love which will be affected. As a low-lying coastal county Norfolk has more to fear than some!

October 2018 saw the launch of the long-awaited report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, warning of the danger of letting global temperatures rise beyond 1.5o above pre-industrial levels. The Panel, which included scientists from around the world, is an authoritative and influential source of reports on climate change. Limiting the rising global temperature would benefit both nature and mankind, and for coral reefs it is the difference between life and extinction as they will not survive at 2o of warming.

Ann Jones, Vice-Chair of the National Federation of WIs, was a panel member of the Energy & Climate Intelligence Unit which focussed on the implications of the report and the net-zero target for greenhouse gas emissions for the UK. Ann highlighted that women are 'on the front line' of climate change and said it is organisations like the WI who need to 'call for change the loudest'.

So each year on the 14th February members of the WI across England and Wales show their love for everything we could lose to climate change. Members make and wear Green Hearts to show the love for, and express their concern about, climate change. Elaine Weymouth, Norfolk Federation of WIs Climate Change Ambassador, reminds us that in 2017 we celebrated the day with an event at the Forum when



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children were invited to decorate green hearts. Whilst some of the younger children did not appreciate the significance of the green hearts, it gave our members the opportunity to speak to the parents about climate change. Then in 2018, we were allowed to decorate the railings around St. Peter Mancroft Church in the centre of Norwich and again this gave us the opportunity to spread the word about Climate Change.

Taking part in Show the Love 2019 will be a key moment to highlight the power of communities coming together to Show the Love for the climate and WI members, along with many others, will be wearing their Green Hearts to remind people of the dangers to our planet and how we should all do our best to preserve it.

What else can we do? We could write to our MP and ask him or her to support the call for net-zero emissions by 2050 and if they have already signed up, thank them for their support!

Read more at <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/show-the-love/>

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