



Welcome to Issue 34 - Members' news

This is a print-friendly version of the Scottish Women's Institutes monthly member newsletter.

Scottish Women's Institutes was established in 1917 and is an inclusive and inspirational membership-based organisation. We are here to build an inclusive community, to have fun and form friendships, to campaign, to learn, to share and to socialise. We provide a platform for social activities and networking, and champion women's issues.

Find out more about us at **www.theswi.org.uk**

Scottish Women's Institutes is a SCIO, SC053058

SWI AGM 2025 – you're invited!

All members are invited to join us for the Scottish Women's Institutes Annual General Meeting.

This is your chance to hear what the SWI is up to, what strategic progress has been made, ask questions, and help shape the future of SWI.

Saturday, 24th May 2025, 10:30am-noon

Location: Online via Zoom

[BOOK HERE](https://rebrand.ly/24d5dd) - **rebrand.ly/24d5dd**

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

GUEST SPEAKER

Juliet Isherwood, Membership Manager, National Federation of Women's Institutes

Juliet will share how our sister organisation the WI has successfully launched virtual Institutes, offering women a flexible way to engage online. She'll explain how they work, who joins and what they offer to foster connection.

MEMBER PANEL

Lorraine Chapman, Gwen Foster and Jane Muirhead

Lorraine discusses how Cousland merged with Cranston and Pathhead, keeping each institute's identity. She'll share insights on how they collaborated and overcame challenges. Gwen and Jane talk about starting new women's groups in Winchburgh and Biggar and how they got involved as a Federation to support them.

KEY UPDATES

Hear all about the Skills & Events Committee's work, the SWI Heritage Project, and The Crichton Opportunity.

Download AGM papers here - **rebrand.ly/24d5dd** and we'll see you on the day!

Our commitment to lifelong learning

SWIFTS pilot a great success

The SWI continues to respond to members' needs and create exciting developments for members.

SWI National Judge Pat Cooper and the Skills and Events Committee sub-group is working on modernising learning pathways to replace traditional proficiency tests.

The Scottish Women's Institutes' Framework for Textile Skills (this will be known as SWIFTS) is being developed, and a pilot course – Beginners' Knitting – has just been completed in West Lothian. Members have been learning in-person and online, and have created children's cardigans to be judged by SWIFTS tutor, Pat Cooper.

Feedback from all members who took part will inform the development of intermediate and advanced levels of SWIFTS.

Looking ahead, additional textile disciplines such as crochet and intermediate knitting courses will be added to the SWIFTS programme, and Homeskills and Floral Art courses are also being developed. We'll keep you posted!

The SWI Evelyn Baxter Programme

Scholars from the SWI Evelyn Baxter Programme are currently touring Federations around Scotland – this year’s theme is Macrame.

The flagship educational programme illustrates the SWI’s commitment to offering learning opportunities for women in Scotland. All of our scholars are trained volunteers, keen to give something back to the SWI.

Contact your Federation Secretary for details of your local class or to register interest. If you have any questions email **hello@theswi.org.uk**

Our commitment to communities

Don’t miss the big show!

Scottish Handcrafts Championships

When June 19–22, 2025

Where Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh

Theme “Life is a Celebration”

Hosted by the SWI at the iconic Royal Highland Show, this event is a must-visit for anyone passionate about traditional crafts.

Come along to see entries from all across the world and see hello to the SWI members who run this great event for the Royal Highland Show organisers.

If you’re entering the championships, the deadline for entries is this Monday, May 12th.

Bank of Scotland accounts for Institutes

The SWI has arranged special dispensation for members holding Treasurers’ accounts with Bank of Scotland in order to avoid new monthly charges.

The bank has now created a portal for members and all Federation Secretaries have instructions for Institutes, so please contact your Federation if you are having issues with accounts.

Could you run an SWI Junior Dippers group?

We’d love to hear from you! Please contact SWI central office at **hello@theswi.org.uk** for more information.

*****Our commitment to SWI’s growth*****

We’re delighted by the enthusiasm for new groups around the country – sixty women came along to the launch of the new Biggar group, and our launch in Paisley brought twenty new members. We have upcoming launches in Dumbarton, Stonehaven and Dunfermline, and uptake is high with ladies bringing ideas to help shape inspiring new groups. A big thank you to Federation members who help to support the launches!

New website takes shape

We're thrilled to announce that a brand-new SWI website will launch this summer!

Designed with members at its heart, the new site will offer a fresh, modern look, easier navigation, and a great window on what we do.

Members have been involved in interviewing design agencies from all over Scotland, and planning the new site. Creatomatic, a design agency based in Lockerbie, has been chosen and is building a site to empower and connect women, whether you're a long-time member or new to the SWI.

Stay tuned for more updates—and get ready to explore a site that truly reflects who we are and where we're going!

Help test the site

Could you volunteer to be a tester for the site as it develops? We're looking for...

- Members who've joined
- in the past year
- Long-term members
- Heritage Group members

We'd love to hear from you! Please contact SWI central office at hello@theswi.org.uk for more information.

Heritage News coming soon

The Heritage Project had a busy spring! We started digitising a century of member's magazines; trained oral history volunteers; recorded in Wigtownshire and Perthshire and met members in Dingwall and Hawick.

The first issue of SWI Heritage News will be released this month, so watch your inbox to make sure you keep up to date with the SWI Heritage Project and The Crichton Opportunity as it develops!

Support SWI's Heritage Project

Snap up a slice of SWI history with our fabulous notecards and postcards. Notecards feature beautifully crafted handmade items and the postcards show members through the ages. Great reminders of our wonderful organisation. Shop now here - rebrand.ly/axpwr5v

*****Volunteering opportunities*****

Could you be an SWI Trustee?

A vacancy has arisen for an SWI Board Trustee – could you bring your skills to help shape the future of Scottish Women's Institutes SCIO in this voluntary role?

This is a unique opportunity to:

- Represent 8,600 members.
- Help to strategically lead the organisation.
- Play a vital role in guiding the organisation towards sustainability.
- Uphold the SWI's core values and vision.

Board Trustee Jane Hogg and National President Mary Burney

The ideal candidate will share our passion for learning, friendship, and enjoyment, and will bring valuable skills and experience to our governance team.

Deadline for applications: **May 30th**

Download the application pack here **rebrand.ly/33iqsju**

*****Celebrating members*****

Who's your Member of the Year?

Nominees are sought for the Margaret Whiteford Trophy for Outstanding Member of the Year. This celebrates members who go above and beyond for their SWI communities. Members who are great ambassadors for everything we hold dear – supporting others, friendship, lifelong learning and sharing skills. Go on, nominate our special women and make someone's day!

Deadline for nominations: **July 25th**

NOMINATE A MEMBER here – **rebrand.ly/9qkbpzd**

*****Events*****

Don't miss SWI Summer School 2025

115 members have already booked their place at this year's SWI Summer School at Stirling University – we have just a few spaces left! Join us for three days of fun and learning over a long weekend with like-minded women in a stunning environment and immerse yourself in a single course throughout the weekend.

LIMITED SPACES

3D Decoupage & Iris Folding

Tutors: Nan Middleton & Aileen Pittuck

Learn fabulous papercrafting techniques.

Book here – **rebrand.ly/022gzii**

ONE SPACE REMAINING

Temari Balls: beginners & beyond

Tutor: Kay Smith

Learn the ancient Japanese art.

Book here – **rebrand.ly/qikwfob**

SWI Skillshare Workshops a great success

Our successful new series of SWI Skillshare Workshops are hitting the right note. Whether it's felting, mosaic, watercolour painting, or terrazzo, we're welcoming a wide range of SWI members and non-members for a day of fun, friendship and learning. Don't miss our next workshop!

Sewing, Upcycling, and Repair

31st May | In-person

Whether you want to fix something, alter a skirt, transform a dress into a top or cover up a stain, Jen will teach you the skills to bring new life to your clothes.

BOOK HERE - rebrand.ly/uw38nyr

Catch up with online events

You can catch-up on all online talks on our YouTube channel here - rebrand.ly/n17lifm

Competitions & benefits

National Golf Competition

Competition | Monday, August 4th | Gleddoch Hotel, Golf & Country Club, Renfrewshire
SWI invites entries to this year's Golf Competition hosted by Renfrewshire Federation.

This is a new style competition, so some rules and formats have changed. Read all the information here (rebrand.ly/4s1lan4) If you wish to enter more than two teams email hello@theswi.org.uk

ENTRY FORM - rebrand.ly/4l96zaj

National Writing Competition

Warnock Trophy | Deadline September 15th 2025 | Open for entries

Unlock the power of your pen in this year's writing competition. We invite participants to explore the theme of 'The Weather' by submitting captivating written pieces in the form of a poem (max 20 lines). Email your poem (on a Word document if possible) to hello@theswi.org.uk before 15th September, 2024.

ENTRY FORM - rebrand.ly/ulzco4w

National Outdoor Bowling Competition

Competition | Monday, September 1st | Kirkcudbright Bowling Club

SWI is pleased to announce entries are now open for this year's Outdoor Bowling Competition.

There is a new rule format – teams will play on one green for four games (instead of five). If you wish to enter more than two teams email hello@theswi.org.uk

ENTRY FORM - rebrand.ly/20w7pbi

National Photography Competition

Competition | Deadline October 27th | Open for entries

Harness the potential of your camera in this year's photography competition. We encourage members to delve into the theme of 'The Natural World' by entering your compelling photos.

Please email your photographs as Jpegs to hello@theswi.org.uk before the deadline.

[ENTRY FORM](https://rebrand.ly/7lht8bb) - rebrand.ly/7lht8bb

Your exclusive member benefits

The Edinburgh Woollen Mill

<http://www.ewm.co.uk/>

20% off all products, except sale and gift vouchers at Edinburgh Woollen Mill.

CODE: SW25

Wendy Wu tours

<https://www.wendywutours.co.uk/>

5% off tours

Can be used in conjunction with offers for huge discounts on last-minute trips to Asia and beyond!

Bloom and Wild

<http://www.bloomandwild.com/>

15% off flowers and gifts

CODE: THESWI15B&W

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

<http://www.fredolsencruises.com/>

5% off all cruises

CODE: WIScot10

Willowberry skincare

www.willowberry.co.uk

10% off products

CODE: 10offSWI

Don't miss the new SWI apron

Crafted from high-quality navy cotton, this durable apron features a beautifully embroidered SWI logo for a touch of elegance. Designed for practicality, it includes a spacious front pocket, adjustable strap, and secure waist ties.

In stock now – just £16.95.

One size fits all.

[SHOP NOW](https://rebrand.ly/iqgzjsi) - rebrand.ly/iqgzjsi

Sale or return boxes are available – great for any upcoming SWI Shows! Email hello@theswi.org.uk to order.

SWI shows around the country

Federation Shows and craft fairs are a fabulous way to showcase the talent, creativity, and community spirit of the SWI, and we know how much effort goes into making them a success.

Ross-shire & Sutherland Handcrafts Show

9th-10th May | Findon Hall, Culbokie

Join the fun on Friday 9th May, 6pm-8pm, or Saturday 10th May, 10am-3.30pm. All welcome.

Stewartry Federation Show

10th May | Dalbeattie Parish Church & Hall | 1-4pm

Free entry – all welcome!

East Lothian Federation Show

Saturday 17th May | Athelstaneford Village Hall | 2-4.30pm

All welcome!

Dumfriesshire Federation Show & Craft Fayre

18th May | Easterbrook Hall, The Crichton | 10.30am-4.30pm | £3 entry

All welcome!

Aberdeenshire Country Comes to Town

31st May | Inverurie Town Hall | 10am-4pm | £5

Entry includes refreshments!

Moray & Nairn Arts & Craft Show

Saturday 7th June | Nairn Community and Arts Centre, Nairn | 10am-3.30pm

All welcome!

Largs SWI Craft Fayre

AD Cameron Centre, Lade Street, Largs KA30 8AZ | Saturday 10th May | 1pm-3pm

Entry: £4 – includes bottomless tea or coffee and a Krispy Kreme Doughnut!

Ayrshire Federation's Flower & Flavours Open Day

28th June | Walker Hall, South Beach, Troon KA10 6EF | 10.30am-3pm

Tickets £10 – everyone welcome (bring your own lunch)!

It's showtime!

Send details of your show to hello@theswi.org.uk and let's work together to celebrate the incredible work of our members across Scotland.

Member extras

NEW SWI website

A brand-new website is currently being developed for Summer 2025 which will provide a one-stop shop for all things SWI, making your membership even better.

New joiners

From now on all new joiners from will receive an email with their joining information, including membership number, rather than a letter and a membership card. This helps modernise our services and work towards goals in our strategic plan.

NEW SWI Heritage quarterly e-newsletter

Now that the SWI Heritage Project has received major funding there will be lots more to report on, so SWI Heritage News will be released quarterly to keep you updated.

SWI Member Insurance

Members are covered through SWI Public Liability Insurance when working with non-members (children and adults) such as the Junior Dippers workshops.

Please note: It's important to ensure that any event involving non-members (adults or children) is branded as a SWI event, and it is recommended to confirm that any event venue you use has public liability insurance.

Access to SWI events

Keep up-to-date with the exciting range of in-person and online events at www.theswi.org.uk/event-diary.html.

Monthly newsletter

Email hello@theswi.org.uk to subscribe to receive the latest news direct to your inbox. You won't be bombarded by spam. We are committed to keeping our members informed so your help makes all the difference!

Communities on Facebook

Don't miss out, join us on Facebook and keep abreast of what's happening for the SWI and across the membership in Scotland. Follow us at

www.facebook.com/ScottishWomensInstitutes

Do you want to receive event alerts?

Subscribe to SWI's Eventbrite page at <https://shorturl.at/2btoh> and never miss a thing.

Do you want general news?

Visit www.theswi.org.uk for updates.

Not a member yet?

If you want to find out more about joining the SWI, please visit www.theswi.org.uk/join-the-swi

Contact us for any further information at SWI, Unit 8, 1 Carmichael Place, Edinburgh EH6 5PH or hello@theswi.org.uk or call 0131 225 1724

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