



Members News – Issue 49

August 2026

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

The Members' Gathering countdown is on!

There are just 15 days to go until we kick off two days of friendship, learning and fun at the SWI Members' Gathering! With exciting speakers, workshops, and oot an' aboots on the agenda, it's set to be a gathering not to be missed.

The central office team have been busy finalising the details, preparing name badges, attendee packs, and more.

SWI members should receive their delegate pack this weekend, so keep an eye on your inbox, it's full of everything you need to know for the Members' Gathering.

We can't wait to celebrate with everyone attending!

New: SWI learning initiative

We're delighted to launch three brand-new beginner courses: Crochet, Knitting, and Embroidery, part of the SWIFTS Learning Pathway.

Each 12-week course costs just £95 for SWI members and includes in-person workshops with an experienced tutor, personalised guidance, ongoing support, and a certificate of completion, what fantastic value.

Join Fiona Meade for Crochet, Helen Gibson for Knitting, or Susie Finlayson for Embroidery, and start learning a new skill today. Spaces are limited, so sign up now!

Sugarcraft, baking, floral arts and preserves are still to come so keep an eye on the SWI website for the latest updates.

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Forres success story: New group sparked by open evening!

Facing the closure of her own Institute due to falling membership, Moray & Nairn Federation committee member Zena decided to act. She organised an open evening to recruit new members locally, hoping to spark a new group in Forres.

The event last month was a roaring success, chairs were brought in twice to keep up with arrivals, and the room buzzed with enthusiasm several Committee members went home hoarse from talking up the SWI all evening.

Thank you to Zena for organising, Davie at Erskine North Centre for hosting, Lesley for her make-and-take table, and to everyone who helped the session be a success.

The central office is on hand to provide support to members and Federations looking to organise events to help grow their membership, reach out to Membership Coordinator Roz for more information.

Rosalind.Galloway@theswi.org.uk

Help us build a National Directory of tutors, speakers, demonstrators and judges

You told us you'd like a national directory of talented people who can support and inspire Institutes across Scotland. Whether they've visited your Institute and left a lasting impression, delivered a fantastic Skillshare session, or have expertise to share, this directory will help connect members with speakers and specialists across our network.

Know anyone who would be a great addition? Click the form below to let us know who they are and we'll contact them to confirm they're happy for us to include their details. We'll only hold and use their information with their consent, in line with UK GDPR.

National Directory Form: www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y9CN63H

Success at Project 1917 meetings

Members came together in Edinburgh, Stirling and the Isle of Arran for initial discussions in how we celebrate our 110th anniversary.

So many great ideas and excitement about the opportunity ahead. 2027 is our chance to celebrate 110 years of the SWI, recruit new members and show the whole country what today's SWI is all about.

More meetings are coming up, don't miss out:

- Roxburghshire – Wilton Dean Hall Friday 18 September 12pm |
- [Click here to book](#)
- Stewartry of Kirkcudbright – Castle Douglas Church Hall Saturday 19 September 1pm | [Click here to book](#)
- Aberdeen (Garioch Heritage Centre)– Friday 2nd October at 1pm | [Click here to book](#)
- Ross-shire & Sutherland – Dingwall Masonic Lodge 14 November 2pm |
- [Click here to book](#)
- Highlands & Islands – If you're an SWI member from Shetland or Orkney and want to get involved, contact your Federation for more information on your local Project 1917 meeting. These Federation are facilitating their own meetings and feeding back ideas to central office.

If you can't attend, but want to give us your ideas, please visit this link:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M9DTSBP>

Vaughan Nash Reminder

We are delighted to share that this year's Vaughan Nash Competition has received 45 entries from teams across the SWI, a wonderful reflection of the skill and creativity within our membership.

All entries will be on display following the official unveiling at the Members' Gathering, from 6:30pm on Friday 11 September. For those unable to join us then, the exhibition will also be open to SWI members and the general public on Saturday 12 September, between 11:30am and 1:30pm.

Vaughan Nash teams will receive an email next week with full details on displaying, dropping off and collecting their entries.

A big thank you to all the teams who have submitted an entry.

Member Recruitment pack

To help you get back into the swing of all things SWI, we've created a brand new poster/flyer and social media graphic that you can you share to help encourage new members to join your local Institute.

The poster/flyer has a customisable space where you can write the relevant details in. Included is an A4 tips sheet with some helpful ideas for sharing and using the materials included.

Available in members' resources on the SWI website.

Staying safe online

The Scottish Women's Institutes (SWI) is committed to supporting members' wellbeing, both in person and online. As more of our communication, activities and everyday life move online, it's important that members feel confident and protected while using email, banking, and social media ensuring that no members feel left behind.

That's why we've created a handy online safety guide for members informed by recommendations from the National Cyber Security Centre to help keep you safe online.

Available in members' resources on the SWI website.

Bowling the competition away

Fourteen teams took to the green for this year's National Bowling Competition, hosted by Argyll Federation, with members travelling from across the country to enjoy a day of friendly rivalry and good company.

Congratulations to all who took part, especially to our winners: Roberta Bowen, Anne Stewart and Janet Campbell from Argyll Federation.

Well done also to runners-up Julie Murray, Fiona Whitby and Angela Murray from Stewartry of Kirkcudbright Federation.

Ruralympics deadline fast approaching

Just a few days left to enter the National Ruralympics Competition, the deadline is Monday 31 August.

Hosted by `Ross-shire & Sutherland Federation, the competition takes place on Saturday 10 October at Dingwall Academy and brings Federations together to test their teamwork, skill and sporting spirit.

Entries must go through your Federation, so don't delay. Want to enter a second team? Get in touch after your first entry to join the waiting list.

Host a National Competition!

Expressions of interest are now open for Federations wishing to host a National Competition in the next three years, 2027, 2028, 2029. The Skills and Events Committee are currently looking to plan the calendar far in advance. without the support of host Federations across the SWI, this would not be possible.

Hosting a National Competition is a great chance to showcase your Federation and bring members together from across the country for a memorable day out. If your Federation would like to be considered, please email Beth an expression of interest stating your preferred year and competition.

We'd love to hear from you.

Milage expense claim increase

The mileage expense rate has been increased to 55p per mile, in line with the latest UK Government recommendations.

This update applies to all future expense claims, please ensure your claims reflect the new rate going forward. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Old Membership Cards

Please note that membership cards are no longer distributed by SWI Central Office.

The last batch distributed are due to expire soon, however there is no need for concern as this does not affect your SWI Membership in any way. If your card shows an expiry date, there's no need to actively renew it your membership is still valid.

If you'd like to know your membership number please email: hello@theswi.org.uk or call us on 0131 225 1724

Thank you for being a member.

Member Discounts

Wendy Wu Tours: 5% off all tours, can be used in conjunction with other offers.

CODE:SWI5

Rydale: 10% off country clothing – limited to non sale items only

CODE: SWI10

Bloom & Wild: 15% off flowers & Gifts

CODE: THESWI15B&W

Willowberry: 10% off skincare products

CODE: 10offSWI

The Edinburgh Woollen Mill: 20% off all clothing products

CODE: SW25

The Crafty Kit Company: 20% off craft kits, supplies and gifts

CODE:SWI20

Please Note that all discounts are only available online and are not for in store use.

Member Support & Benefits

National Benefits:

- Take part in national events – From the SWI Summer School and Study Tour to the Members' Gathering and competitions.
- Learn new skills online – Enjoy free online events, a library of YouTube "how-to" videos, and scholarship opportunities.
- Use the membership toolkit – Access ready-made templates and ideas to promote your Institute and celebrate members' achievements
- Enjoy exclusive discounts – Take advantage of great savings and special offers just for members.
- Stay connected – Receive our monthly members' e-newsletter and quarterly Heritage Project updates.

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 [here](#).

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 [here](#)

Do you want to receive event alerts?

Subscribe to SWI's Eventbrite page and never miss a thing.

Do you want general news?

Visit www.theswi.org.uk for updates.

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

Alternatively, if you have a grumble to share, please follow our complaints procedure to ensure that you receive an appropriate and timely response.