Scottish Women's Institutes SCIO, SC053058

SWI
Scottish Women's Institutes

Scottish Women's Institutes Strategic Plan

2027 - 2032

Building on Our Heritage. Growing Our Future.



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President's Foreword

As SWI approaches its 110th anniversary in 2027, we celebrate generations of women coming together through friendship, lifelong learning and fun. These values remain at the heart of our future.

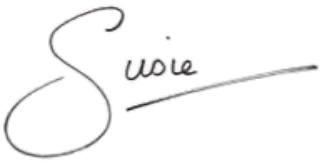
Over the past four years, we have strengthened our foundations: securing SCIO status, modernising governance and digital systems, building a sustainable national office, celebrating our heritage and developing partnerships.

In 2025, we achieved 3% membership growth for the first time in more than 70 years. But reversing long-term decline will take continued effort.

Shaped by members' views, this strategy focuses on a simpler structure, stronger volunteer support, an outstanding member experience, membership growth and financial resilience. We will review our progress each year and adapt as needed.

Together, we can protect what makes SWI special while creating opportunities for future generations.





Susie Finlayson - SWI National President

Strategy Overview

Building on Our Heritage. Growing Our Future.

Our Vision:

To be Scotland's leading community for women, where friendship, lifelong learning and shared experiences enable every member to belong, contribute and flourish.



Where we are today

Over the past four years we have transformed Scottish Women's Institutes by:

- Securing charitable SCIO status
- Building a sustainable central office and agile staff team
- Modernising governance and committee structures
- Investing in digital systems, including a new membership CRM & website
- Celebrating our heritage
- Developing valued partnerships across Scotland
- Taking important steps towards long-term financial sustainability
- Achieving membership growth for the first time in over 70 years through the establishment of new Institutes



Our Ambition

By 2032 Scottish Women's Institutes will be:

- Attracting and retaining members, with thriving Institutes and new groups across Scotland
- Delivering an outstanding member experience
- Financially resilient and sustainable
- Supported by confident and valued volunteers
- Trusted for strong governance and transparent leadership
- Recognised as Scotland's leading organisation supporting women through friendship and lifelong learning



Our Commitments

Everything we do will be member-led, inclusive and sustainable
We will:

- Equip our office bearers and volunteers with the skills, support and confidence to lead
- Grow our community
- Celebrate our heritage
- Embrace innovation
- Lead with openness, responsibility and transparency

Strategic Summary

Together we will shape the next chapter of Scottish Women's Institutes, one built on friendship, strengthened by learning and inspired by possibility.

We will achieve this by:

1. **Building a stronger organisation** by creating a simpler more effective SWI with clear roles, strong governance and a structure that supports members and volunteers.

2. **Putting members first** by creating a welcoming and rewarding member experience through friendship, lifelong learning and opportunities to share our heritage and skills.

3. **Securing our future** by attracting and retaining members, developing new Institutes and diversifying income to secure SWI's long-term future.

4. **Growing our reach and influence** by raising SWI's profile, demonstrating our impact and building partnerships that extend opportunities for women across Scotland.

Our Vision

To be Scotland's leading community for women, where friendship, lifelong learning and shared experiences enable every member to belong, contribute and flourish.

Our Impact

- More women experiencing friendship, belonging and opportunities to learn.
- Heritage and skills shared across generations.
- Stronger, more connected communities across Scotland.
- A thriving SWI for generations to come.

Why Change

Our 2026 Membership Experience Survey confirmed that members value friendship, learning and supportive local Institutes. They also want a simpler structure, better communication, stronger volunteer support, more accessible and flexible opportunities, and a modern image that respects our heritage.

Strategic Priority 1: Building a Stronger Organisation

Creating a simpler, more effective SWI, with clear roles, strong governance and a simpler structure that supports members and volunteers.

Strategic Objectives:

- Review our structure and terminology with members; clarify National, Federation and Institute roles and reduce duplication and administration.
- Strengthen governance, compliance, communication and feedback.
- Improve digital membership services and payments while keeping accessible alternatives.
- Provide training, guidance and succession support for office bearers and volunteers.

By 2032 we will have achieved:

- A simpler organisational structure that members understand and value.
- Clear roles and effective, transparent governance arrangements.
- Around 90–95% of membership payments suitable for digital processing will be made digitally, with accessible alternatives available.
- Office bearer and volunteer satisfaction above 85%.
- Improvements in organisational communication.

Strategic Priority 2: Putting Members First

Make membership welcoming, rewarding and accessible, with friendship, learning and belonging at its heart.

Strategic Objectives:

- Use member feedback to improve services and activities; introduce consistent welcome and induction.
- Recognise members' and volunteers' contributions and encourage sharing of skills.
- Offer accessible, flexible local, regional, national and online opportunities, including traditional and contemporary skills.

By 2032 we will have achieved:

- Member satisfaction above 90%.
- First-year membership retention of 90%.
- Participation in national activities increased by 25%.
- Volunteer retention improving year on year.
- Accessibility embedded in the planning and delivery of SWI activities.

Strategic Priority 3: Securing Our Future

Grow membership and develop reliable income so SWI can thrive for generations.

Strategic Objectives:

- Recruit and retain members, support existing Institutes and establish new Institutes where needed.
- Grow income from fundraising, grants, sponsorship, appropriate commercial activity, donations and legacies.
- Manage assets, reserves and spending responsibly, reducing reliance on investment drawdown.

By 2032 we will have achieved:

- Membership growth of 20–25%.
- Unrestricted income increased by at least 10%.
- Non-subscription income contributing at least 65% of annual income.
- Reserves maintained within Board policy.
- Reduced reliance on investment drawdown to meet annual operating costs.

Strategic Priority 4: Growing Our Reach and Influence

Raising SWI's profile, demonstrating our impact and building partnerships that extend opportunities for women across Scotland.

Strategic Objectives:

- Strengthen marketing, accessible communications, media and community engagement.
- Use our 110th anniversary and Project 1917 to share heritage and reach new audiences.
- Measure and share our social, educational and community impact; develop values-aligned partnerships.

By 2032 we will have achieved:

- Increased public awareness and understanding of SWI.
- Website and digital engagement increased by 50%.
- A successful 110th anniversary programme with a lasting legacy.
- An Annual Impact Report demonstrating measurable outcomes.
- At least five active strategic national partnerships.
- Strong relationships across the voluntary, public and private sectors.

Delivering Our Plan



Annual Delivery Plans will translate our strategic objectives into:

- Clear actions
- Measurable targets
- Named responsibilities

Each plan will set out timescales and the resources needed. Numerical targets will have agreed baselines and clear definitions so progress can be measured consistently.

The Board will monitor delivery regularly, and an Annual Impact Report will share progress with members.

This strategy will remain a living document. We will review progress annually, listen to members and adapt our delivery as needs, opportunities and challenges emerge.

Our Impact

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Be part of something special!

Join Scotland's largest women's movement and become a part of a vibrant community, connect with like-minded women, learn new skills and more.

Fun

Take part in competitions, trips and national & local events.

Friendship

Meet new people, share interests and make lasting friends.

Learning

Try a new skill, explore ideas and enjoy a wide range of activities.

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