



Northumberland Federation of WIs

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Chairman: Mrs M Read, Treasurer: Mrs N Birch
Secretary: Mrs N Gash

17 March 2020

Dear President and Members,

CORONAVIRUS AND MEETINGS/EVENTS/TRIPS

I am sure that many of you by now are aware that on Friday 13th March, along with the backing of the Board of Trustees, I postponed the Annual Council Meeting due to be held on Saturday 4th April 2020 and today, Monday 16th March I have cancelled ALL Federation events and sub-committee events and meetings until the end of April starting with immediate effect. I know that many of you will be disappointed but will also understand that it has been both necessary and appropriate as many of our members fall into the category of vulnerable for reasons of both age and/or underlying health issues.

We have been in contact with the Royal Grammar School and have made a provisional booking for Saturday 3rd October for a rescheduled meeting and we may also manage to have the same speaker for that date. For that reason, I would ask for your patience and also for you to keep hold of your delegate's ticket (even if the delegate changes).

WI Advisers will not be attending Annual Meetings for the moment but if your WI is due to hold it's meeting in the near future then the Adviser due to visit you will get in touch with you to discuss what you have to do.

At this moment in time individual WI's are at liberty to carry on as they wish, either holding their committee and monthly meetings or indeed cancelling them but I would ask all WI's to consider their membership and what indeed may be in their best interests. Many WI's have sub groups within their WI's who may meet in public places such as libraries and all of these things need to be considered as Government may ban meetings in such places and of course for those meeting in schools, again, a decision to close schools may be taken in the near future. We simply do not know at this stage what could happen on a day to day basis. Several WI's have in fact already received cancellations from the speakers they were due to have at their meetings.

As far as Federation events and Federation Committee events are concerned please continue to put your names down for future events and decisions will be taken by the committee or Board nearer to the event date. The reasoning behind this is that if we were to now cancel all events for the foreseeable future and the government guidelines came out to say that it was business as usual in a month's time we would be faced with many disappointed members who would ask why we had cancelled so soon. This is unknown territory for us all and difficult decisions are having to be made on a daily basis and I only ask that you bear with us and support us and each other as you always do.

Please do not inundate Nancy with telephone calls about courses and refunds etc., as all the information you need will be kept up to date on our website and Facebook page. If you have applied for a place on a course or at an event that we have had to cancel then the contact number on the application form will be telephoned and asked to relay

the information to those who wished to attend. In these cases, refunds will follow in the usual way.

Thank you all for your patience and understanding at this extremely difficult time and take very good care of yourselves and your nearest and dearest.

With very best wishes and hopes that it will not be too long before we are all at events together again.

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Mrs Marjorie Read
Federation Chairman