

Policy Title: National Federation of Women's Institutes Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

The NFWI has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all staff, members, visitors and contractors whilst working or taking part in NFWI activities.

The NFWI Board of Trustees has agreed this NFWI Health and Safety Policy and this document replaces previous versions.

The NFWI has a duty to ensure all organisers, visitors and relevant members are aware of the NFWI Health and Safety Policy and that those responsible for ensuring its delivery have clear information and training to support them.

This Policy will need to be adhered to whenever a meeting, course or event is organised on behalf of NFWI.

This is a compulsory policy for all federations and WIs. Though the implementation may vary depending on the size and activities of the charity, all WIs/federations must adopt the policy and follow the guidance. It is the responsibility of the WI Committee/federation board to ensure this is implemented.

This policy is an introduction to the areas which WIs and federations should be aware of and take action in relation to. This document (and any supporting resources) do not provide a comprehensive guide to all health and safety considerations and trustees are encouraged to remain up to date on the different aspects of this policy.

This policy operates alongside and in conjunction with any additional requirements stated by the WI, federation or any insurance providers or partner organisations. Federations and WIs should ensure they are aware of their insurance cover and any additional requirements of their insurer.

Health and Safety at Work Policy

This statement is the NFWI's policy on health and safety at work as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, including subsequent amendments and other relevant safety legislation.

Under common law, voluntary organisations and individual volunteers have a duty of care to each other and others who may be affected by their activities.

1. The NFWI's Responsibilities

The NFWI believes in the active prevention of accidents and ill health, and it is accordingly the policy to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, health, safety and welfare of employees, members and visitors.

The NFWI will keep up to date with current professional expertise on health and safety matters and to observe all relevant statutes, regulations and codes of practice with which this Policy is consistent. The policy will be regularly reviewed and updated accordingly.

The NFWI will provide suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of its employees and persons not in employment but who may be affected by the work arising out of or in connection with the conduct of the NFWI. Such as members, volunteers, and Trustees.

The NFWI will make appropriate arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventative and protective measures.

The NFWI will ensure that all employees are instructed in health and safety procedures and that supervisors with health and safety responsibilities are adequately trained to meet these responsibilities. Adequate training will be given in the use of all equipment used whilst at work. Employees will also be informed of how to raise concerns to ensure these are addressed promptly and appropriately.

The NFWI recognises its duty to persons other than employees and will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of such persons is not put at risk by the NFWI's operations.

2. Risk assessments – WI and Federation

Risk assessments are a way of identifying any potential risk and to look how that risk can be controlled and or decrease the chance of an accident happening. They allow you to think what could cause harm and decide how to best manage the risks, they should in turn create sensible measures to control risks.

All WIs and federations must undertake their own risk assessments alongside any completed by a venue/building where they hold meetings. Risk assessments should be kept for future records and may need updating if any changes take place with the venue/building and/or depending on the nature of activities the WI has planned.

It is advised that a separate risk assessment form is completed for any trips taken by a WIs/federations which involve group travel such as hiring a minibus/coach or group ticket on a public transport. If members are travelling individually there is no need to complete individual risk assessments unless required to do so by your insurance.

3. Fire Safety – WI and Federation

The owner or landlord of the venue/building is required by law to have completed a fire risk assessment and to share this with you. They must inform and show all emergency evacuation routes and exits, informing you of the fire assembly point. If you are the owner of your meeting and/or office venue then this responsibility sits with your Trustees (see more information below).

There should be safety signs; exit signs, fire signs and information signs near the fire extinguisher of the venue you hire, this is the owner/landlord's legal responsibility to make sure these signs are correct and in place.

Any electrical equipment provided by the venue/hall should be checked and have safety certificates dating when the last testing had taken place. When members bring their own electrical equipment, it may have to be tested before using on site and is recommended to inform the owner/landlord before using.

4. Venue ownership – WI and Federation

If a WI or federation owns a building such as a village or community hall or office space it is a legal requirement to have public liability insurance. If the charity hosts or interacts with members of the public, other organisations, volunteers and or people using the building there is a duty of care to ensure they are safe whilst engaging in activities. Public liability cover is there to help protect and cover if something were to go wrong, such as an accidental injury or damage to the property. Public liability cover can also support with legal costs if needed to defend a relative claim made against the charity/venue.

5. Venue Hire – WI and Federation

Owners or Landlords with control of a non-domestic premises/venue such as a village or community hall hold the legal responsibilities under the health and safety. The owners/Landlord hold full legal responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the premises/venue and must ensure regular checks and maintenance work is carried out.

The owners/Landlords must ensure that the venue, access to it and any equipment they provide are safe for WI members and or other users. Both owners/landlords and WI groups should carry out their own risk assessments for the venue and ensure these are kept up to date and filed for future reference if required at a later date.

6. First aid – WI and Federation

All WIs and federations should have an appointed person who is able to take charge of first aid arrangements such as making sure the first aid box/bag is fully stocked, and in case of an emergency is able to call 999.

If a WI or federation is partaking in any activities that hold a higher risk within their meetings it is their individual responsibility to take the extra precautions for their health and safety. If a WI group organises a trip to do an activity, the external organisation will complete their own safety talks and checks as well as a risk assessment. Again, the insurance cover and any additional requirements must also be checked as part of the planning for any activity or event.

If a WI member sustains a significant injury such as a broken bone, a fall or head injury the first aider/ appointed person is required to complete an accident reporting form (this can be found on My WI under health and safety policy). A copy of the completed form must be sent to the WI's federation for their records.

Federations with paid staff and employees (full time or part-time) are highly advised by HSE to have a first aider on site when the building is open and in use. Depending on the number of staff employed would depend on the number of qualified first aiders needed.

All WI groups and Federations should have an accident book to log any injuries and treatment received. This book should be kept with the first aid kit and accessible to all.

For further reference around first aid and the requirements, a detailed document can be found on My WI, under the Health and Safety Policy giving more specific information on what is required and expected.

7. Resources

NFWI policies/guidance:

- NFWI First Aid guidance document
- NFWI Risk assessment form
- NFWI serious incident reporting
- NFWI Safeguarding policy

The below organisations and statutes can offer further support and information:

- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)
- St John Ambulance
- British Red Cross
- British Heart Foundation

The below legislation is relevant to this policy:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981
- Management of health and safety at work 1999

8. Contact Information

For more information, please contact us via email membership@nfw.org.uk. You can also call 0207 371 9300 or write to us at NFWI, Membership and Engagement Team, 104 New Kings Road, London, SW6 4LY.

9. Updating this policy

This policy is under continuous review and will be updated annually or as required. Any updates will be communicated to federations, who should cascade this information on to WIs.

National Version Control

Version	Date Created	Last review date	Next Review date	Document author
1.	August 2023		July 2024	Membership and Engagement team

WSFWI Version Control

VERSION:	DATE OF ISSUE	SIGNED OFF BY:	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW
1	25/03/2025	E Brichta	March 2026