

Parish Council

Hi I am Claire Bowyer President of BBWI elected in November 2024. My predecessor Stephanie has put in a lot of hard work and dedication over many years and forged a lasting relationship with the Parish and its many groups which I hope to continue.

Last year we celebrated 75 years of the WI in Bow Brickhill. The first meeting was held on the 26th January 1949 and 151 members attended. One of the activities was a challenge to write a Limerick starting with "there was a young lady from bucks" and a note to the council that the lavatory buckets were not emptied between 1-2pm over lunch. Ladies from the village over the next years comprised of Mrs L Cheshire, Mrs E Crawford, Mrs Berwick, Mrs West, Mrs R Gurney, Mrs J Varney & Mrs Pat Pullinger all local to the area and I am led to believe well known to village dwellers. .

We have also had changes within the committee and have a new secretary, treasurer and we currently have 7 people on the committee which is very positive for the future. We are taking time to reflect on our group sessions and make improvements supported by the members as we move forward.

We had an interesting programme in 2024 with informative sessions by Anglia Water which led to a very interesting discussion about the drains in the village! The Disability Diva and a session on Wellbeing as well as our members meeting which was an afternoon tea held in the BB Community hall.

The WI resolution was on the lack of NHS dental care crisis nationwide, so local MP's have been lobbied. At local level we have been working with the Hygiene Bank in MK collecting toothbrushes, toothpaste plus other toiletries to support the campaign.

Remaining steady at 19 members we have 4 members from the village. We continue to advertise in the BB news and are currently advertising in the wider community to encourage local women to join.

We have held events attracting members from the Bucks Federation and we were supported by several other local WI groups which helps raise our profile in the wider community. We are very fortunate to have such a large hall to host these events and would like to thank the Parish for supporting us.

We also enjoyed outings to Westbury Arts Centre, some local walks and a visit to the MK Museum.

We have also been raising awareness of climate change by asking members to take a bear called Bowina with them on their travels. After working out our collective emissions we planted a Golden Irish Yew tree to offset our collective carbon footprint and this is located at Westbury Arts Centre with a plaque "donated by the ladies from BBWI" which is at the front of the house, please take a look if you visit. There is also an article and pictures on the Westbury Arts website all about us!

We are very grateful to the Parish Council for continuing to invite us to sell tea, coffee and cakes at the Summer and Christmas fayres which raises our profile, supports with our fundraising and gives an opportunity to spread the word about our group. We currently have a healthy balance of £2547.46 in our account, and we have been able to support our members by keeping our annual subscription fee discounted at £46.00. We have also made a donation to the BB News of £25 towards publication for their continued support of our group.

We look forward to our year ahead and continuing our relationship with residents of the village.