

Oakham WI Newsletter

December 2025

Next Monthly Meeting- Wednesday 17th December 7.15pm for 7.30pm start

All you need to do at Oakham WI's Christmas Social meeting is come along, ready to enter into the spirit of Christmas, and enjoy yourselves!

Please bring a glass so that you can enjoy a non-alcoholic festive drink.

There will be no charge; just remember to register your attendance on entry, by ticking the list of members - for safety/emergency reasons.

Please remember to wear your name badge too.

You will still need £1 if you want to take part in the raffle. Also, if you sign the group Christmas card, please make a donation to our charity collection. Remember, this is in lieu of sending numerous cards within the group, with a view to saving money and waste, so a donation is expected.

There will be some Christmas themed quizzes, refreshments and snacks provided by the WI committee and an opportunity to socialise with your fellow members.



From our President:

The last year has, as always, gone in a flash! It's been a very active year for Oakham WI with inspiring speakers from Paul Reid's Reach for the Stars, a Drunken Botanist and concrete sculpture to decadent desserts and a blind photographer. Craft sessions were well supported with flower wreaths, bag charms and cards, not forgetting the felt Santa's. Our ever popular social sixes, rambles and ambles proved a great success as have the history and book groups. Our new events team have worked hard on our behalf organising trips to museums, historic houses and cathedrals and already have an interesting list of ideas for 2026.

We have seen a new committee in place from October who are now getting into their stride and looking forward to a full on 2026 evolving Oakham WI on behalf of our members. We have said a farewell to some members but then welcomed others.

On behalf of the 7 committee members we would wish you a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all in the new year.



Remember for the meeting:

Please ensure that you carry a note of whom we can contact in the case of an emergency and details of any medication that a first responder might need to know about. This should be carried in an easily accessible place when attending meetings and events.

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Our November meeting:

In November we welcomed back Eve Marshall for a lovely social evening of felting and we were all pleased by the Father Christmas' that we made.

It was amazing how, with the same materials and the same instructions, each of our Father Christmas' was individual.



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Payment for events/activities

When paying for events/activities in which you are taking part, could we please ask that you pay either directly online by bank transfer (the preferred option) to:

Oakham Women's Institute

Sort code: 08-92-99

A/c no: 67228391

or by cheque, handed directly to our Treasurer - Linda B - or another member of the committee acting on her behalf.



We would prefer if you **DID NOT** pay cheques into the WI account, because although these show on our bank records, we have no reference with which to reconcile the payment; we can not see who has made the payment, or what it is for.

Your cooperation in this matter would be very much appreciated.

Oakham WI WhatsApp group

If you would like to join the Oakham WI WhatsApp group- a fun and informal way of keeping in touch with other members, sharing local information, etc - please email Jackie on oakhamwi@gmail.com, giving her your mobile number and she will send a link for you to join.



Please remember WhatsApp is an open forum, visible to many of our members, and sensitive, confidential or private information should not be shared.

Teas.

Please could you check the tea rota. If you cannot attend on the date that you are down for teas let Sherida know via oakhamwi@gmail.com as soon as possible and if you can, arrange to swap with another member.

When on teas you are expected to liaise with the others on the rota for that night regarding cakes and biscuits. On the evening you do not have to pay your £1 door fee.

You are expected to help with preparing and serving the refreshments but are not expected to do more than you feel capable of doing.



We provide tea and coffee but if you prefer fruit teas or decaffeinated tea, you are welcome to bring your own teabag for us to add hot water to.

The committee are providing refreshments for the December meeting.

In January, the members on the tea rota are Carol B, Carol E, Liz Hu and Rowena.

In February, the members on the tea rota are Jane G, Sylvie, Sheree and Linda P.

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Recent Events

Stamford Pre- Christmas Lunch



Sixteen members enjoyed a pre-Christmas lunch at Stamford Catering College in their Gallery Kitchen on 5th December. This is the second year we have organised this event and it did not disappoint. The very reasonably priced lunch was in the main delicious with the young catering staff exhibiting a high level of professionalism. A jolly start to the Christmas season.



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Upcoming Events

We will be holding our post Christmas lunch at the ever popular Rutland Water Golf Club on Tuesday 6 January 2026 and are taking bookings now. If you would like to come, please email us at oakhamwi@gmail.com, with RWG lunch in the heading giving your menu choices (see below). This is a lovely opportunity to enjoy each others company and beat the January Blues!

Please also make payment into the WI bank account with your name and RWG Lunch in the reference.

A festive menu graphic featuring various Christmas decorations. At the top, there are several hanging ornaments: a heart, a star, a round bauble with a snowflake pattern, a round bauble with a swirl pattern, a large star, a round bauble with a diamond pattern, and a pine cone. There are also snowflakes and a bell at the bottom right. The text is centered and reads:

Festive Menu

Two Courses £25.00
Three Courses £30.00

To Start

Roasted Celeriac and Apple Soup (v) (gf)
Smoked Salmon and Crayfish Terrine (gf)
Pulled Ham Hock Croquettes, Served with a Stilton Sauce topped with Crispy Shallots
Roasted Beetroot Terrine, Whipped Goats Cheese, Candied Walnut Crumb (v)(gf)

To Follow

Roast Turkey, Stuffing, Pigs in Blankets, Roast Potatoes
Braised Belly Pork, Root Vegetable Rosti, Apple Puree
Pan Fried Sea Bream, Creamed Leeks and Celeriac
Roast Squash, Sweet Potato and Wild Mushroom and Chestnut Duxelle Wellington, Mushroom and Brandy Sauce (v)

To Finish

Christmas Pudding, Brandy Custard
Lemon and Raspberry Panna Cotta
Chocolate Orange and Hazelnut Brioche Bread and Butter Pudding
Selection of Cheese and Biscuits

**If you have any special dietary requirements please inform a member of staff
A 10% discretionary service charge will be added to your final bill**

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Upcoming Events

Social Six - Wednesday 21st January 10.30am

After the busyness of Christmas and the New Year, a chance to sit, chat and relax over a cup of coffee at a local venue.

We would love to see as many of you as possible; it is a chance to chat to other members that you might not talk to at our monthly meeting.

Sign up via oakhamwievents@gmail.com with Social six in the heading.



Pranayama breathing Wednesday 25th March 2pm

Pranayama is a yogic practice of controlling the breath, using a sequence of inhales, exhales, and breath holds to connect the body and mind. It is believed to regulate life energy and is often used to promote relaxation and reduce stress.

Pranayama offers numerous benefits, including stress reduction, improved mental clarity, emotional balance, and enhanced respiratory function. Regular practice can also lead to physical benefits like improved circulation, better sleep, and a stronger immune system.

Debbie is to take us through two sessions each lasting approximately 30 minutes. In between the two sessions we will have tea or coffee.

Session 1

- ✓ Background on yoga (including asana (movement) pranayama(breathing) and relaxation/meditation. All about being holistic (whole-istic).
- ✓ Benefits of pranayama and the 'pranic' layer of our being.
- ✓ Basic deep breathing techniques x 3.

Session 2

- ✓ Invigorating pranayama (description and brief practice).
- ✓ Balancing pranayama (description and brief practice).
- ✓ Calming pranayama (description and brief practice) & how this leads into meditation practice.

All of this can be done sitting in a chairs so all can take part.

Debbie will also demonstrate how we can sit on the floor using props to practice pranayama. She is currently writing a book "breath deep, live long".

This promises to be a session that could help all of us with the challenges of modern living.

The cost is £10 and we need you to sign up by 14 January 2026 (preferably sooner) in order that we can confirm the booking with Debbie.

Please sign up by emailing oakhamwievents@gmail.com with meditation in the heading.

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Upcoming Events

Post-Christmas Amble – A Breath of Fresh Air

After the mince pies, puddings and generous second helpings, it's time to stretch your legs and make a little room -for laughter, fresh air, and a gentle post-Christmas amble.

Wrap up warm, lace up your walking shoes or boots, and join your WI friends for a circular stroll to Eggleton, followed by well-earned refreshments at Terry's Café back in town.

Meeting Point: Oakham Museum

Date: Tuesday 30th December

Time: 10:30am

To take part, please email oakhamwievents@gmail.com with 'EGLETON' in the subject line.

Crafting in February - Willow Weaving - Animal Taster session

Wednesday 4 February at 2.30pm

Martin, from Rutland Willows, maker of the Spitfire on the bypass, is to lead an introductory session on willow weaving. He will give us a brief introduction to the life of the willow and then help us to make a fish and a dragonfly.

In order that he can provide us with appropriate help and guidance this event is limited to 15 members, with a minimum of twelve needed for the event to go ahead.

If you want to take part in this event to be held in the Church Hall please sign up by emailing oakhamwievents@gmail.com with Willow in the header.

We have thirteen members signed up for this event so have space for two additional members. If you wish to join in, email and once you have confirmation that you have one of the remaining places, you will be asked to make the non-refundable payment of £25 into our bank account.

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Upcoming Events

Discover a Real Roman Experience: Jewry Wall, Leicester's Exciting New Visitor Attraction - Tuesday 10 February

Leicester's rich Roman heritage is about to come alive like never before as Jewry Wall reopens its doors! Following an extensive refurbishment, the museum will unveil an immersive, state-of-the-art exhibition that takes visitors on a journey through Roman Leicester, offering a unique blend of history, objects, storytelling, and interactive experiences.

Jewry Wall is part of a 2nd Century Bath House and is one of Britain's largest surviving pieces of Roman masonry, standing as a testament to the grandeur of the ancient town of Ratae Corieltavorum (the Roman name for Leicester).

Now the 60's museum building adjacent to this remarkable site has been transformed into an exciting new attraction that brings history to life in an engaging and accessible way for visitors of all ages. The re imagined Jewry Wall is a groundbreaking experience, placing storytelling at its heart, transporting visitors back almost 2,000 years through a mix of:

- ♦ Real Romans – Discover stories of the people of Roman Leicester, brought to life through cutting-edge visual story-telling.
- ♦ Everyday objects of life from two millennia ago.
- ♦ Multimedia immersive displays - Will transport you into the past with atmospheric projections and digital reconstructions of Ratae (Roman Leicester).

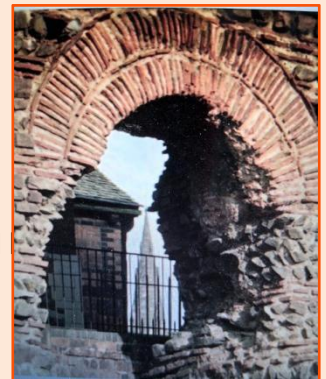
We are to travel by train from Oakham, departing on the 9.21 train to Leicester. We will then walk to the museum and enjoy coffee before, depending on numbers, either having a guided tour or self guiding around the museum.

At 1pm we will break for lunch in their new cafe which has fabulous views over the Roman bathhouse and has a variety of lunch options.

We will return to Oakham on the 15.12 train, but you may of course choose to stay in Leicester to do a bit of shopping before making your own way back to Oakham on a later train.

This event will be going ahead as 14 members have signed up but if we have a minimum of 15, we may be able to arrange a private tour and will be able to reserve restaurant places. The cost for entry is £11.50 for concessions or £12.50 standard entry.

If you wish to join us for this event please email oakhamwievents@gmail.com with Leicester in the heading.



FOR THIS EVENT THERE WILL ALSO BE A SIGN UP AT THE December MEETING WITH DIANE AVAILABLE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS.

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Upcoming Events

Bodyguard at the Curve, Leicester
Wednesday 13 May 2.15pm



The international, award-winning smash-hit musical THE BODYGUARD is back! Starring international leading actor Sidonie Smith* (SISTER ACT, CHICAGO, JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR) as Rachel Marron, Olivier Award nominated Adam Garcia (CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG, WICKED, COYOTE UGLY) and Matt Milburn (CORONATION STREET, HOLLYOAKS) as Sy Spector. Former Secret Service agent turned bodyguard, Frank Farmer, is hired to protect superstar Rachel Marron from an unknown stalker. Each expects to be in charge – what they don't expect is to fall in love.

We are planning to see this matinee performance, travelling into Leicester by train, and whilst May is a long way off, tickets are selling fast. Price area B tickets are £54, whilst price area C tickets are £46.50. As a WI we cannot purchase tickets until we have received payment from members. Accordingly we are to check ticket availability on Monday 5 January and if tickets are still available we will email out requesting all those interested to respond and make payment. We will advise of the price once we have established which, if any, tickets are available.

If you have already decided you want to go, email oakhamwievents@gmail.com with Bodyguard in the title, but otherwise you do not have to decide until 5 January.

Sea Glass session

As those of you who were attending the session know, the sea glass workshop had to be cancelled as Karen our instructor went down with flu and as well as feeling awful, did not want to pass it on to us.

Once she is feeling a bit better, we will look at rescheduling and will offer those who had signed up either a place on the new date or a refund. We will also open the session up to those who might not have been able to make the original date.

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Dates for your diary

Bookings for events are only taken once the event is advertised in the main body of the newsletter; these dates are advance notice of our plans. You do not need to book attendance at the book group or history group.

* Open for bookings

Date and time	Event
Tuesday 30 December* 10.30am	Egleton Amble
Tuesday 6 January*	Post-Christmas lunch at Rutland Water Golf Club
Wednesday 21 January* 10.30am	Social Six
Wednesday 4 February* pm	Craft Session - Willow weaving
Tuesday 10 February* Full day	Visit to the Jewry Wall Museum in Leicester
Monday 9 March evening	Fashion Show
Wednesday 25 March* pm	Pranayama breathing
Saturday 28 March	Annual Council meeting at Leicester Grammar School
Monday 30 March 10.15am	March Ramble
Wednesday 8 April evening	Sister Act at Corby Cube
Monday 27 April 10.30am	Bluebell Amble

Remember you can also look at our website for details of future meetings and events and view photographs from previous events:

<https://wioakham.wixsite.com/mysite>

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Federation News

Annual Council Meeting

£18pp

£9 Steward

Saturday 28th March 2026.

10.30am - 3.30pm

Leicester Grammar School, Great Glen, Leicester, LE8 9FL

Doors open at 9.30am to shop at the stalls, view competitions and Committee displays. Please bring a packed lunch. Drinks are available for sale and you may wish to bring your own reusable cup. Parking is limited, so please car share, use public transport or be dropped off.

Our speakers for the Annual Council Meeting 2026 are:

**Adam Henson, Leicestershire Lord
Lieutenant & HeartWize**



One of the UK's best-known farmers and a presenter on BBC1's Countryfile. He regularly reports from his own farm on topical, practical challenges he faces and is a regular contributor to BBC Radio 4's On Your Farm and Farming Today.

We will have tickets available following WI allocations. If you wish to order tickets for this event, please contact your WI Secretary who can make a booking. This is an Opening Meeting, so please feel free to purchase tickets for a friend or family member to bring along – all welcome!

Please state clearly if you have any accessibility requirements.

Speakers subject to change at short notice.

This event may be photographed, we will presume permission unless otherwise informed

**Many events are often oversubscribed, book
early to avoid disappointment!**

The WI is everything YOU want it to be.



www.leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

WI House, 135 Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5LQ

Telephone: 0116 266 1342 Email: wihouse@lrfwi.org

Registered Charity Number 1016766

This is a fundraising event.



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Federation News



PHYSICAL FIRST AID FOR ADULTS (4.5 HOURS)

WI Campaign 'Bystanders Can be Lifesavers'



Why sign up?

Free to attend

Travel expenses covered (up to £10)



- ☒ Learn life-saving skills such as CPR, treating choking, and managing bleeding or burns.
- ☒ Gain confidence to act in real emergencies — whether at home, in the community, or while travelling.
- ☒ Hands-on, practical training guided by friendly, experienced instructors.

Takeaway:

Take home a free First Aid workbook to refresh your knowledge and record your learning.

**MARKET HARBOROUGH - UPPINGHAM –
EAST GOSCOTE - ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH -
HINCKLEY - OAKHAM**

Bookings opening soon - contact WI House

DENMAN TRUST GRANT

If interested in this free course and you want to know the dates the course is to run in Oakham, when they are available, please let a member of the committee know.

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Festive Photographs

New year photos are welcome for our next newsletter



Peterborough Cathedral Wonder of Christmas



Right:
Christmas
Cakes at
Belvoir
Castle

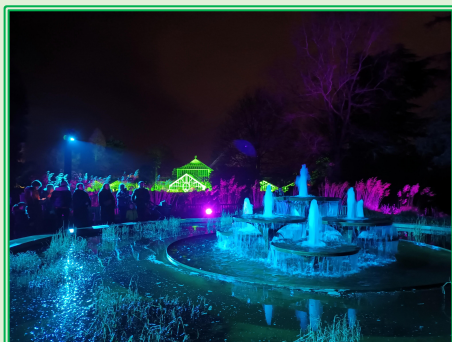
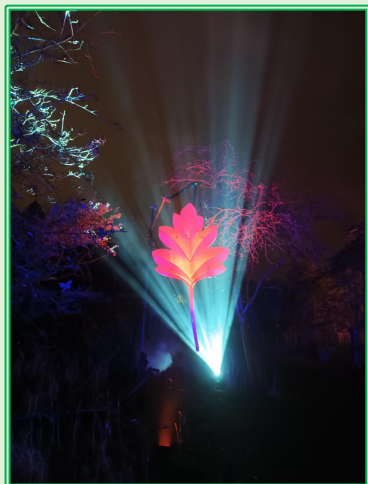
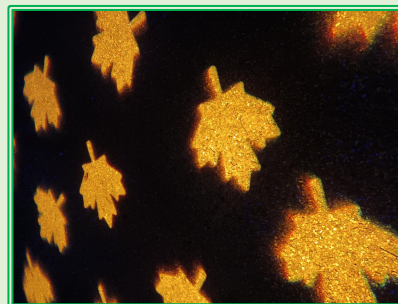


Liz Hu enjoying the Christmas decorations at Belvoir Castle.



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Festive Photographs



Cambridge Botanic
Gardens, as beautiful
as when we visited in
the summer.