

You are probably thinking "WI? It's all jam and Jerusalem".

Unfortunately, this is what most people think but, NO...this is definitely not the case.

I am very proud to say that Woore WI has been active in our village for over 104 years, but it has certainly changed from just being a group of ladies eager to help out after the first world war to nowadays being a much more diverse, inclusive, active, friendly and relaxed group. (as I'm sure a number of ladies here tonight will agree)

Like so many other groups, societies and organisations, the Pandemic has also been a major challenge for us. We were unable to hold our monthly meetings but instead, with some degree of trepidation, took to the internet and got together via ZOOM. At the same time, we also supported many members and non-members in the village with friendly phone calls, door-step visits and offers of help. On one lovely sunny day, we did have a garden party...socially distanced of course.

We were all greatly relieved to be back to a little normality during the second half of 2021 when we were able to resume meeting as a group in the hall as well as being able to continue our fundraising efforts in support of our nominated charities. Notably, these were our famous Big Breakfast, a village Treasure Hunt and the Christmas Fair. Throughout the years we have been able to give donations to Woore church and chapel, Woore primary school, Air Ambulance, Guide dogs for the blind, Marie Curie nurses and Cystic Fibrosis to name but a few and last year, despite not being quite so active, we raised enough to be able to donate £250 to Young Carers in Shropshire and £550 to the Lou Macari Homeless foundation in Hanley.

We have also been involved in the County's "Shropshire Way WI Challenge" where we were asked to knit scarves of a certain length, all of which together would equal the length of the Shropshire Way – some 190 miles. Naturally, we were delighted to be able to take 52 completed scarves to County office to add to those already donated, which ensured that the County exceeded the challenge. All of these scarves were then freely distributed to charities for the homeless.

Although it has been a difficult time for us, we have seen our membership grow and it is so nice to hear ladies say that the WI has provided them with a wonderful opportunity to form new friendships and to become more involved in our community. We would love this to continue and, of course, are grateful for any support that is offered to us.

We have many varied activities planned for 2022/3 including visiting speakers with a variety of topics, outings and community activities, so ladies, why not give us a try. We welcome anyone to our meetings which are held on the second Thursday of every month at 7.30pm in this hall. We also organise open meetings to which anyone is invited, especially our men-folk.

If you would like to know more about what WI involves, then please look at our table display or ask any of our members.