BREASTON WI REPORT 2025

We have eighty members and a small waiting list. We have monthly meetings in St Michael's Church Hall on the third Monday of the month with a break in August.

We have run an interesting and varied programme organised by our speaker seeker. Our most popular meeting last year was when Baroness Bolsover entertained us by telling us the history and etiquette of afternoon tea. The speaker from Ellern Mede Group, which had a facility in the village for those suffering from eating disorders, was another popular meeting.

We are a tight run ship of eight Committee Members, led by our President but we are grateful for the many and varied helpers along the way. At the meetings we have a hostess group to serve refreshments in the break as well as a band of ladies, who look after the Welcome Desk. We like to have three volunteers setting up at each meeting and three clearing away at the end as well as someone to give the vote of thanks. We still like to sing "Jerusalem" at the start of every meeting. We have a raffle at each meeting with the proceeds going towards paying for Hall hire and there is a book swap. A monthly newsletter goes out to all members.

A Social Group of seven ladies have organised events during the year. These included a fish and chip supper, a darts night at The Chequers and a Games Night at the Church Hall. Risley Park pub provided the venue for our Annual Dinner and a Supper and Quiz night – both very enjoyable.

We have held two very successful coffee mornings, raising £1,000 for the East Midlands Deaf Children's Summer Camp and £820 for the Motor Neurone Disease Research Institute. We were surprised and delighted to be awarded £10,000 from the Post Code Lottery fund to be split over two years.

Every week there is a sketching and art group calling themselves "Doodlebags" as well as the Walking Netball group. In the summer months we play rounders on Perks Park weather permitting and organise walks whatever the weather, but they always involve coffee! There is the Knit and Natter group which meets in the pub and the WI Gardeners who look after Doreen's bench on Risley Lane.

As part of the Derbyshire Federation of Women's Institutes we can participate in events run by them. We had success in last year's County Show both in the co-operative competitions and the open classes. After attending a DFWI workshop on rag rugging we ran our own workshop here as well as a Christmas Crafts Dabble Day with six activities to choose from.

We have enjoyed a splendid range of trips and outings over the year. There were theatre visits to see "Calamity Jane," "Mack and Mabel" and "Hairspray." We visited Bromley House library, Doddington Hall, Ladies Day at Uttoxeter races, Bakewell and afternoon tea at Haddon Hall, a day in London at Christmas, Belvoir Castle, and Belton House.

January saw us celebrating the 20th anniversary of our WI. We held a party at The Sportsman pub and seventy members came along as well as two guests from DFWI. We enjoyed a delicious cold buffet, and we were entertained by Lily Taylor Ward. A very enjoyable evening!

So that was a year in the life of Breaston WI - a whirlwind tour to give a flavour what it's like to be a member of our WI.