

MARCH 2025. Joanna welcomed members to our Birthday Meeting and Bring and Share Buffet. We are 72 years old now! We sung Jerusalem. Apologies were received from Shirley, Ruth and Lydia. The February minutes and the Risk Assessment were placed on the table for viewing. In Matters Arising Joanna thanked all that had contributed last month to the Foodbank; we had 7 carrier bags full - including 20 tins of tuna! She read out a lovely thank you card received from Zena a volunteer at the Foodbank. Joanna then thanked all who had donated cakes or helped at the Town Twinning Jumble Sale Refreshments, all the cakes were sold and we made £72. Another thank you (and a round of applause) was given to Judy and Lesley for hosting a Chain Reaction Cheese & Wine evening, this was very popular, attended by 17 all enjoying a good selection of cheese and wine and a quiz. Correspondence: Debbie told members that *Bystanders can be lifesavers* had received the most votes nationally so that would be the resolution that will be voted for or against at the NFWI Annual Meeting in June. She then offered bulb catalogues (orders by the April meeting) also flyers on osteoporosis bone density testing at County House and then mentioned the NFWI raffle telling members that we would all receive a ticket at the July meeting as a gift bought from funds as in the past few years. Additional tickets would also be available to buy at the July meeting. Debbie then read out a thank you letter from ACWW for the £30 donation raised from our competition box. In County News Joanna asked members to complete the Bridging our Digital Divide survey on p.11 by 22nd April. Joanna reminded members to use the Suggestion & Feedback box then asked members to get their diaries out and we proceeded with the Sub Committees: The Book Club are meeting on Monday 24th March 7.30pm at Elizabeth's. Outings; Living Crafts at Hatfield House Friday 9th May, sign up board available again, also open to family and friends as we will need 15 people to get the cheaper group price tickets of £9 each. Joanna asked for a show of hands to gauge interest in visiting the local Bluebell Woods in late April - 8 members are interested in this so we will have a sign up board at the April meeting. Copped Hall Gardens near Epping, Sunday 3rd August for a Garden Afternoon at £7 each. Joanna asked members to save the date and said we would have a sign up sheet at the April meeting. Joanna thanked Veronica and her Sewing Group who have raised £78 for our funds, members gave a loud round of applause. Sue R advised that the Town Twinning made £550 at their jumble sale and will be having a Quiz Night on 22nd March (the WI team comprises of Janet, Elizabeth, Gerry, Marian M, Pam C and friend.) Under Future Plans, Joanna told members of the next Chain Reaction which is Susan's Film Night to see 'Sweet Charity' on Monday 7th April at 7pm those interested needed to sign up tonight. Next meeting will be on 10th April with Ian Paddick on The Old Bakery Gin. Gerry will give the VOT. The competition is something botanical. Marion C and Margaret will help Veronica with refreshments. In AOB, Joanna asked for a show of hands to gauge interest in a guided tour and tea at the De Havilland Museum to include husbands, partners, friends; 20 to 25 members were interested in this so more information will be given at the next meeting. She reminded members that our May meeting will also have a produce and craft stall so start preparing items to sell. Joanna then introduced us to Mary Harris, a nutritional coach and Weleda agent who had popped in unannounced to see what the WI is all about and to offer Weleda brochures and free samples. After thanking Sue Andrews for making our pretty birthday cake Joanna opened the buffet and once members were settled with piled plates she welcomed Lisa Garrity who entertained us with music on her saxophone, Irish flute, Marimba and tenor sax. Also, with her witty stories of travelling in Guatemala, Bolivia and Zambia. Members enjoyed listening to the different instruments, singing along and even playing Happy Birthday on little coloured bells! Joanna gave the VOT. After the buffet and entertainment Debbie remembered to remind members that subs are due at the April meeting with membership now costing £51. The winner of the competition (decorated biscuit) was Pat Pauley. After the raffle was drawn Joanna reminded members of the Town Twinning Quiz on 22nd March, Susan's Film Night on 7th April and that our next meeting would be on Thursday 10th April. We closed the meeting with the National Anthem as usual.