

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are safe and well. It's a year since we closed the office for lockdown and it's been a year like no other.

For the first time our membership subscription for the next year is due to be paid by the 1<sup>st</sup> April and I know that by now your committees will have contacted you with details of membership renewal. This year we have had fifteen months for the fee we paid in January 2020 and I do hope you will continue your membership of the WI. We can quote that our membership gives us access to eleven meetings a year, 8 issues of WI Life, access to the wide ranging, membership only, My WI website and the WI training platform, Membership and access to all Federation activities, news bulletins, meetings and social events and a recognised voice in major public affairs issues and campaigns.

This past year has been difficult to provide this but the resourceful women of the WI have found ways to keep in touch, zoom meetings, telephone calls, buddy systems, garden visits, newsletters, meetings in a bag, walks and picnics when allowed. But I think most people would agree that the WI gives them so much more, friendship and support of other women, a safe place to be and a wealth of wisdom and experience that can be drawn upon.

The Board of Trustees and Committees have been working hard to plan for the future making provisional plans for activities for the next year and we are confident that things will get back to some sort normality soon and we are very much looking forward to that day.

The Spring Council meeting is to be held on April 10 and you can join it from the comfort of your own chair. Please contact the office to book your space and get login details. There is no cost for this and a provisional agenda is featured below, we have two good speakers and reports on the functioning of the Federation and plans for the future. I hope to see many of you on the day.

We have had lots of information from NFWI recently. The constitutional changes discussed at the companies' house meeting were wholeheartedly supported with a majority vote to accept all four changes. The next stage is the adoption by the members and this is now with the committees for ratification. Other news from NFWI is that the national annual meeting will now be held virtually and information will be released as soon as we have it. It will be the same day in June as planned and there will be some observer places available but as yet we have no other information.

SHE STOOD  
IN THE STORM,  
& WHEN THE  
WIND DID NOT  
BLOW HER WAY,  
SHE ADJUSTED  
HER SAILS.  
ELIZABETH EDWARDS



Thank you to all the WIs who have been sharing access to their monthly zoom events it has certainly been providing our members with lots of choice. You will see from the events page that we have added more to the list of activities there. Dust off your diary and enter the dates and codes so you don't miss a thing!



Thank you to everyone who attended our Easter craft morning last week, it was our biggest attendance yet. Joanne experimented with video and you can see most of the demonstration on the Federation Facebook page. Some pictures of the craft items demonstrated are below. Everyone seemed to enjoy it and hopefully participants will have a go – please send us your pictures of Easter crafts for our special Easter edition.

Don't miss the Flower Demonstration on Thursday March 25 which is a Federation event on zoom, all welcome and there is no charge for this. The next craft session is Faux Enamel Boxes and please have look at our programme that has new topics added.





**Join us for your Spring Council Meeting - Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April**  
**Support your Federation!**

Our Spring Council meeting is coming up on 10<sup>th</sup> April 10.30am and you can attend from the comfort of home. The meeting will last about 2 ½ hours and during this time you will get reports from the Board of Trustees, a secretary's report, results of our lockdown photo competition and 2 interesting speakers. There is no charge but you will need to book as space with the office as we are limited by our zoom license to 100 participants. Please contact Joanne to book your space asap – these are going quick!! Here's the agenda – it will be a full morning interesting and informative morning.

1.	<b>10.30am start - Jerusalem.</b>
2.	<b>Welcome by Margaret Carter, Federation Chairman.</b>
3.	<b>Introduction of Board of Trustees.</b>
4.	<b>Treasurer's Report – Clare Espie</b>
5.	<b>Re-appointment of Auditor.</b>
6.	<b>Secretary's Report – Joanne Inglis</b>
7.	<b>Speaker – Kate Stannard from Target Ovarian Cancer will introduce the UK's leading ovarian cancer charity. Together with the ovarian cancer community, they are transforming the futures of 41,000 women in the UK who are living with ovarian cancer and thousands more who are yet to be diagnosed. She will detail how they aim to achieve their goal of doubling survival from ovarian cancer by 2050. They work to: improve early diagnosis, fund life-saving research, provide much-needed support to women with ovarian cancer. This is a topic everyone can relate to and will be great to hear as this is the resolution for the Annual meeting</b>
8.	<b>Adviser recognition</b>
9.	<b>Hylton WI Centenary</b>
10.	<b>Photography competition entries and winners</b>
11.	<b>Speaker and author Barbara Lawson-Reay will give us a talk about the man and some of the women who formed the first WI - on Anglesey. They had very varied lives - manning soup kitchens one day and literally attending balls at Buckingham Palace the next! There is an introduction to Adelaide Hoodless &amp; Madge Watt.</b>
12.	<b>Members Memorial</b>
13.	<b>Chairman's Address.</b>
14.	<b>National Anthem</b>



## WHAT'S COOKING?

These flapjacks are gorgeous but won't stay around long in the cake tin! And now is the time to plan a show stopping Easter cake in case you get visitors, if you don't you can eat it all yourself

# Chocolate, banana and pecan flapjacks

A truly scrumptious, winning combination of flavours – which takes the humble flapjack to a whole new level.

**Hands on time:**  
**About 15min**  
**Cooking time:**  
**About 40min**  
**Makes 16**

### FOR THE FLAPJACKS

150g unsalted butter  
200g light brown soft sugar  
100g golden syrup  
150g dark chocolate, chopped  
2 bananas, mashed  
425g jumbo oats  
50g pecans, roughly chopped

### FOR THE PRALINE TOPPING

75ml double cream  
50g butter  
150g light brown soft sugar  
50g icing sugar  
25g cocoa powder  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
25g banana chips, roughly chopped (optional)  
25g pecans, roughly chopped

**1** Preheat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan)/mark 5. Line a 20.5cm square brownie tin with baking parchment.

**2** Put the butter, brown sugar, golden syrup and chocolate in a medium saucepan over a low heat and cook gently, until the butter and chocolate have melted. Stir to combine, then stir in the banana, oats and pecans.

**3** Press the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 35-40min. Allow to cool completely in the tin.

**4** Once cool, make the praline topping, add the cream, butter and sugar to a medium saucepan, bring to the boil over a medium-high heat, and continue cooking for 1min, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and stir in icing sugar, cocoa powder and vanilla.

**5** Spread the warm frosting evenly over the flapjacks and scatter banana chips (if using) and pecans over the top. Allow to set before slicing.

### Per serving:

(with banana chips)  
456cals, 5g protein, 22g fat (10g saturates), 58g carbs (38g total sugars), 4g fibre



## MaltEaster Bunny ice cream cake

A cake that's fun and delicious! It may look difficult to create, but there's no baking involved in making this easy cake.

**Serves 16 • Ready 30 mins, plus freezing**

2 x 328g bags Cadbury mini eggs  
2 x 500ml tubs Ben & Jerry's Chocolate Fudge Brownie ice cream  
500ml tub Ben & Jerry's Cookie Dough ice cream

16 MaltEaster Bunnies, chilled  
4tbsp Lotus Biscoff smooth biscuit spread

**1** Line a 20cm loose-bottomed cake tin with two layers of cling film. Spoon 1 tub of chocolate fudge brownie ice cream into the tin and press to form an even layer. Bash 1 bag of mini eggs with a rolling pin and scatter half the crushed mini eggs on top of the ice cream layer.

**2** Spoon the cookie dough ice cream on top. Scatter over the remaining crushed eggs and top with the other tub of brownie ice cream. Freeze overnight.

**3** Turn the ice cream out of the tin and remove the cling film. Spread the back of each chocolate bunny with a little biscuit spread and stick around the outside of the ice cream cake.

Tie a ribbon around the outside to secure and fill the centre with the remaining bag of mini eggs.

Per serving: 450 cals, 24g fat, 16g sat fat, 47g carbs >>



## Federation Dates for your Diary



Date & Time	Event	ID/ Password
Thurs 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 7pm	Flower Arranging by Susan Elsdon demonstration with a spring theme and make a couple of designs and talk about seasonal flowers.	874 0252 9298 922786
April 10 <sup>th</sup> 2021 10.30am	Spring Council/Social Meeting – Annual Meeting. Meet the Board, hear the annual reports, competition and 2 interesting speakers	Codes will be issued upon booking with the office
Thursday May 27 <sup>th</sup> 7pm	Conspiracy Theories – A talk from Andy Thomas, who is one of the UK's best-known researchers into conspiracies. He is the author of many books and appeared on many TV and radio shows.	859 3659 1602 075874
<b>NEW</b> Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2pm	Walk –Herrington Park – depending on latest government guidelines	
<b>NEW</b> Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> June 7pm	Karen Tann – Zumba Exercise – something a little different for the Federation, please join with a floaty/chiffon/silky lightweight scarf and two wooden spoons (or similar) ready for some of the exercises.	856 5092 4587 676010
<b>CRAFT DEMONSTRATIONS</b>		
Sat May 1 <sup>st</sup> 2021 10.30am	Faux Enamelling	870 5685 9801 enamel
Sat June 5 <sup>th</sup> 2021 10.30am	Paper Roses	841 2831 2909 paperroses
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2021 10.30am	Rubber Stamping - first steps to make us all artists.	849 9638 7253 647173
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 10.30 am	Vases for nothing - up cycling to make pretty containers	889 2126 3196 418846
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2021 10.30am	Modelling with lightweight air-dry clay	830 4198 8597 994216

### Invites from WI's

- Join Bowes Belles WI on Friday 19th March at 7pm for a fun evening of "Who dunnit?", Be entertained as our talented actors (no promises!) lead you through their witness statements before solving the crime with your fellow detectives. Join us as an individual detective or in teams of 4 or less. Please notify us ASAP if you are joining as a team, along with team member names, so Zoom Rooms can be allocated in advance. Email [bowesbelleswi@gmail.com](mailto:bowesbelleswi@gmail.com)



- Bowes Belles WI invite you to join them on Tuesday 13th April when their speaker, via Zoom, is Howard Middleton. Howard is a food writer and presenter from Sheffield, who first caught the public's attention on series four of The Great British Bake Off, going on to win their affection with his quirky style and love of unusual ingredients. Howard continues to entertain audiences as a public speaker, compere and broadcaster. Guests are welcome to join the evening for a donation of £2.00. Please email [bowesbelleswi@gmail.com](mailto:bowesbelleswi@gmail.com) for joining instructions.

*Remember if your WI does not have a zoom licence and would like to host a virtual meeting, we are now offering the Federation licence for a small charge. Please get in touch with the office and book a date, Joanne will also help organise this and show you how to use Zoom*

### Other events/groups you may be interested in getting involved with

**Charity Rights of Women**, provides free specialist legal advice to women in need, and they have started a fund raising initiative to mark International Women's Day .Rights of Women's crowdfunding page is now live on: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/rights-of-women/>

**Life Story Writing Courses** - The workshop is being ticketed through Eventbrite. Here is the link: [Memory Lane Morning](#)



## Memory Lane Morning

Capture some early memories of childhood with Sarah Lott from The Memory Book

This two hour workshop will give you an introduction to the life story writing process and set you on your way to getting some family memories written down.

Thursday 25th of March  
9.45am to 12 noon

**£13.50**

Have fun with a trip down Memory Lane and revisit your childhood years.

Numbers are limited so please book ASAP.  
If you're not able to come on the date, let me know and I'll keep you posted about my next workshop.

Please get in touch:  
[sarah@thememorybook.co.uk](mailto:sarah@thememorybook.co.uk)



THE MEMORY BOOK  
[www.thememorybook.co.uk](http://www.thememorybook.co.uk)



**Denman At Home.** <https://www.denman.org.uk/calendar/> - and then there is always lots provided by Denman – I particularly like the sound of the Daffodil Wreath Workshop

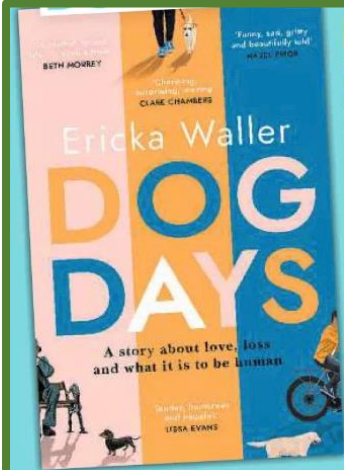
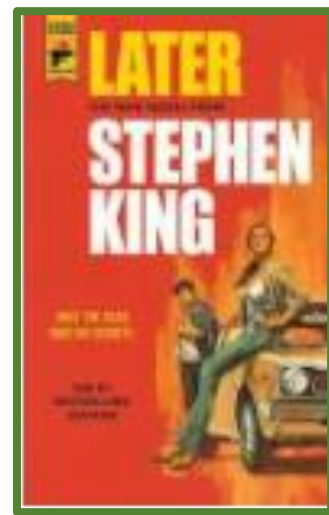
March 20, 2021	
all-day	● Online Course : Tai Chi For Everyone with Alan – 6 Part Course
all-day	● Online Course : Tai Chi For Everyone with Alan – 6 Part Course
all-day	● Online Course : iPhone Photography with Janine – 4 Part Course
all-day	● Online Course : iPhone Photography with Janine – 4 Part Course
all-day	● Online Course : Make a Daffodil Wreath with Claire (Saturday)
all-day	● Online Course : Make a Daffodil Wreath with Claire (Saturday)
all-day	● Online Course : Two 12x12 Family History Themed Scrapbook Layouts with Liz (Saturday)
all-day	● Online Course : Two 12x12 Family History Themed Scrapbook Layouts with Liz (Saturday)



## Read and Rhyme –

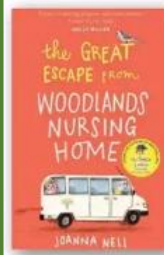
I am a great fan of Stephen King's books and I love to read them but rarely will I watch a film of his books. I think this is because when I'm reading, my imagination will only conjure up images my mind can

cope with whereas a film brings you other people's graphic images from their imaginations. I have just read King's latest "Later" which is a gripping story about a boy who can see dead people, and whilst you may think that it's an idea that has been written about in the past King approaches it from a different angle. I can thoroughly recommend it.



### **Dog Days by Ericka Waller (Doubleday)**

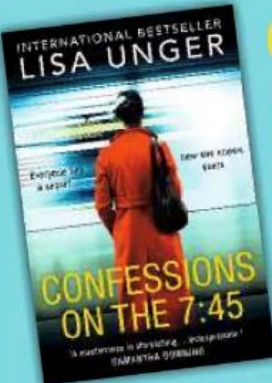
George's wife has died, and the last thing he needs is his neighbour Betty trying to rescue him. And then there's a dachshund pup called Poppy. Dan is great at helping other people, but his most meaningful relationship so far is with his Labrador, Fitz. And Lizzie is living in a women's refuge with her son. She's shut herself off from everyone around her, but when she is forced to walk the refuge's terrier Maud, a new life beckons. A charming, moving story.



### **The Great Escape from Woodlands Nursing Home**

by Joanna Nell (£18.99, HB, Hodder & Stoughton)

Bird-loving Miss Bloom is a reluctant resident at Woodlands nursing home. But things pick up after she is taken under the wing of the Night Owls, a club run by a nurse who sneaks her dog in during each shift. Also, a slow-burn friendship with Walter takes Miss Bloom in surprising new directions.



### **Confessions On The 7:45 by Lisa Unger (HQ)**

On Selena's train home from work, a woman named Martha shares a confession – she's having an affair with her boss. In turn, Selena says she suspects her husband is sleeping with the nanny. Then, when her nanny goes missing just days later, Selena begins to wonder if it's connected. A brilliant psychological thriller.

March 21 is World Poetry Day, I have always enjoyed poetry, I see it as the art of saying as much as possible in the least number of words. Everyone has had a different experience of poetry and many of us have a favourite poem. One of my favourite poets is the American poet e.e. Cummings, here is my favourite poem by him.

### **“May my heart be open to little Birds” by e.e. Cummings**

may my heart always be open to little  
birds who are the secrets of living  
whatever they sing is better than to know  
and if men should not hear them men are old



may my mind stroll about hungry  
and fearless and thirsty and supple  
and even if it's sunday may i be wrong  
for whenever men are right, they are not young

and may myself do nothing usefully  
and love yourself so more than truly  
there's never been quite such a fool who could fail  
pulling all the sky over him with one smile

Why not share your favourite poem with us? Or maybe have a go at writing your own?

**You don't have to be an accomplished writer to try your hand at poetry. Add another string to your bow with these handy tips**

### 1 Do your homework

Reading lots of different types of poetry is the best way to not only learn how to write your own, but also to expand your poetry skill set. Research online ([nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk](http://nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk)) and join live poetry events such as Eventbrite ([eventbrite.co.uk](http://eventbrite.co.uk)).

*Pen a poem!*

### 2 Find your subject

Choose a theme or subject that excites you and will inspire creativity. It could be family, your garden, the natural world or an observation. The most successful poems come from the heart, dig deep into the subject and give truthful reflection.

### 3 Build your idea

Brainstorm the idea of your poem. Simply jot down anything that comes into your mind about the subject. Add phrases, adjectives, metaphors, rhymes and any other language that fits your theme. Don't over think this step – these rough ideas will help spark others as your poem evolves.

### 4 Draft, write and write again

When starting out, it's great fun to try writing different styles of poetry. Choosing a style will help give your poem structure but don't stick rigidly to it; revisit your work at least a few times before declaring your piece finished.

### 5 Read out loud

Read your work aloud to a friend, family member or to yourself, to check the sense and flow of the piece. Don't be afraid to ask others for their opinion but remember poetry can be subjective and your style may not be everyone's taste.

### Know your poetry

■ **Acrostic** – a poem where the first letter of each line spells out a word ■ **Elegy** – a poem of reflection on death or loss ■ **Free verse** – a poem that doesn't follow a pattern ■ **Limerick** – a five-line poem that does follow a pattern ■ **Ode** – a tribute to something or someone ■ **Sonnet** – a 14-line poem, often about love





# Flower POWER

With Mother's Day upon us, celebrity florist Larry Walshe talks the language of flowers

**W**e've been giving flowers for thousands of years, so many blooms derive their meaning and symbolism from ancient myths. But it was the Victorians who gave us the art of floriography – the 'language of flowers'. Back then, giving flowers was a means of coded communication – and it was so popular that many of the meanings are still in use today.

Much as now, popular flowers included tulips and roses, though nowadays we have far more varieties available. Flowers are always a welcome gift, but receiving a bouquet based on the meaning of flowers adds a whole new dimension.



**Tulips** symbolise new beginnings and peace

## Create the perfect bouquet

### Sending love

Red roses are associated with romantic love, but for telling a family member how much you care for Mother's Day or a birthday, choose yellow roses, purple irises, peonies or orchids.

### Giving thanks

Giving flowers to say thank you is a wonderful way to show your appreciation. Popular thank-you flowers

include sweet peas, amaryllis, daisies, hydrangeas, and white, pink or yellow roses.

### Saying sorry

Certain flowers can help to communicate sympathy and say 'I'm sorry'. Good apology flowers include roses – to convey love and affection – and lilies for humility. If you need to heal a rift, tulips symbolise new beginnings and peace.

## Popular flower meanings

**Roses:** ✦ Gratitude ✦ Grace ✦ Joy ✦ Love

**Lilacs:** ✦ Tranquillity ✦ Passion ✦ Wisdom ✦ Love

**Peonies:** ✦ Romance ✦ Prosperity ✦ Love ✦ Compassion

**Dahlias:** ✦ Strength ✦ Change ✦ Dignity ✦ Kindness ✦ Grace

**Tulips:** ✦ Happiness ✦ Confidence ✦ Love

**Lilies:** ✦ Devotion ✦ Purity ✦ Birth ✦ Good luck

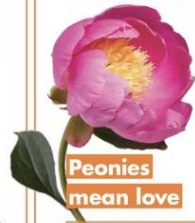
**Sweet peas:** ✦ Thank you ✦ Goodbye ✦ Pleasure

**Lilies of the valley:** ✦ Motherhood ✦ Purity

✦ Sweetness ✦ Happiness ✦ New baby

**Irises:** ✦ Wisdom ✦ Hope ✦ Trust

✦ Passion ✦ Faith ✦ Hope



**Peonies** mean love



## How to keep flowers fresh

Follow these tips to help blooms last up to two weeks.

- ✦ Rinse stems in clean water and cut by around one inch at a 45° angle.
- ✦ Remove any leaves that sit below the water line.
- ✦ Pop a flower food sachet into a clean vase filled with lukewarm water.

- ✦ Position your flowers out of direct sunlight, in a cool room, away from draughts or radiators.
- ✦ Change the water every two or three days; each time cleaning the vase and re-cutting the stems. And add flower food if you have some left over.

✦ Larry Walshe is the founder of luxury online florist Bloom see [bybloom.co.uk](http://bybloom.co.uk) for details.

## Thinking of you

To let someone know you're thinking of them, choose dahlias – symbolising strength, dignity and grace; or amaryllis, for determination, love and strength. Flowering mint is a fragrant and thoughtful addition, denoting serenity, positivity and good health.

**Dahlias** symbolise strength, dignity and grace



## Postbag



Thanks for this packed newsletter, you really do so well, oh that WI Life was equally interesting, they could learn alot! - Auriel Brown Jarrow WI.

Good morning. thank you, Joanne and Margaret, for the lovely 'write up' in the monthly newsletter about the new recycling group in SOSWI. which I set up. I appreciate it. You both do an amazing job each month. The content of the newsletter is always lovely to read and in-depth. Lots to focus on for the coming weeks to keep us all going. Keep up the good work.

Take care and stay safe - Regards. Lorraine Thompson

Thank You to Jarrow WI and their superb ZOOM meeting with Helene the Lady who certainly makes you laugh. Her anecdotal tales of Lockdown Life and getting used to ZOOM meetings were hilarious. Comparing the start of a ZOOM session to a Seance were bang on, 'Anyone there, can you see me, can you hear me?' etc were so true, just what was needed for a good, get away from it all 60 minutes. Also, her acronym for the word diet Did I Eat That could be also described as Did I Enjoy That, I for one really did. Thank you – Teresa Rowell – Herrington WI.

## WI news

It is with sadness that we heard of the death of one of our members of Chopwell WI, Marie Stephenson (28.4.1942 to 27.2.21) She was an active member of the WI and will be sadly missed by her friends. We have lost a lot of members this year so there will be a special memorial within the Spring Council for those we know about. If you have lost a member and would like to include them on this please send in details to the office.



**Quirky Bird.** - Many of you have taken part in paint along with the Quirky Bird. Jan Hobson, Washington Station WI, read the article about 'The Quirky Bird' in the last WI Life magazine. She was looking for something different to do and as the article was so interesting, she decided to join in with Lynn's zoom sessions which were thoroughly enjoyable, even though she had no experience of watercolour painting. This is her first painting using watercolours and some bookmarks. Jan is looking forward to attending more sessions and hopefully improving over time. Jan recommended it to Joanne and both have really enjoyed the experience.



<https://www.quirkybirdwatercolours.co.uk/> is the website but you can find her videos on u tube and facebook. The live sessions only cost £4.00



### *Best dressed post box in the North East!!*

Whickham Fellside W.I. treasurer Chris Harkness together with Lesley Collins of the Knit & Natter group came up with the idea for this fabulous crochet/knitted decoration for the top of the post box in the centre of Whickham Village. It was added secretly so as to give passers by a nice surprise!! It's been admired far and wide and we are delighted it has made so many residents smile in these gloomy times 😊 Well done Lesley and Chris (Photo courtesy of Whickham Residents facebook page.). Members of Whickham Fellside W.I. got a lovely surprise when committee members hand delivered their March newsletter this week - each member received a bunch of pretty daffodils, wrapped in cellophane and tied with a ribbon!!



### Puzzles

#### Wordsearch

Find all the fruits and vegetables.  
Words can run horizontally, vertically,  
forwards, backwards or diagonally.

<b>BANANA</b>	<b>LYCHEE</b>
<b>BEAN</b>	<b>MANGO</b>
<b>BEETROOT</b>	<b>ONION</b>
<b>BRAMBLE</b>	<b>PEAR</b>
<b>CABBAGE</b>	<b>POTATO</b>
<b>CHERRY</b>	<b>PRUNE</b>
<b>DAMSON</b>	<b>RHUBARB</b>
<b>ENDIVE</b>	<b>SALAD</b>
<b>FENNEL</b>	<b>SALSIFY</b>
<b>FIG</b>	<b>SATSUMA</b>
<b>GOURD</b>	<b>SPINACH</b>
<b>KALE</b>	<b>SPROUT</b>
<b>KUMQUAT</b>	<b>YAM</b>
<b>LIME</b>	





Did you know it the  
UNs International  
Day of Happiness on  
March 20, take a  
look at this article for  
some surprising facts  
about happiness.

On that note,



Take care

Best Wishes

Margaret Carter -  
Chairman - Tyne and  
Wear South Fed of  
WI's

0191 5845814

Margaret Carter 0191

4165269, 07718 231984

[macarter1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:macarter1@hotmail.co.uk)

[twsfwi@btconnect.com](mailto:twsfwi@btconnect.com)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUJV-gwvdB8>



**The best medicine?**

Happiness has been shown to boost our immune system and reduce our risk of cardiovascular disease, depression and stress. It could even lead to a longer life. One study examined the expressions of happiness in the application letters of a group of nuns to joining the order at age 18. Despite all leading a similar, moderate lifestyle, 90 per cent of the most optimistic nuns were still alive at the age of 85.

**Museum is a world first**

Last summer, the Happiness Research Institute opened the world's first Happiness Museum in Copenhagen, featuring eight rooms dedicated to different theories on the nature, history and geography of happiness. Nearer to home, Stan Rosenthal opened the UK's first Happy Café in Brighton in 2014 allowing people to learn happiness-enhancing skills while connecting with others over a cuppa. There are now more than 100 Happy Cafés around the UK. Hopefully they'll be open again soon.

**Simple joys are best**

Countless philosophers have spent centuries trying to fathom what makes us happy but in 2000, one American psychologist created a mathematical formula for happiness. He declared  $H$  (Happiness) =  $S$  (the sum of a person's genetic capacity for happiness) +  $C$  (their circumstances, eg income, environment) +  $V$  (factors under their voluntary control ie their ability to learn or decide to be happy).

Several studies have found that the older we get, the happier we become. It's partly to do with being satisfied with the little things as everyday experiences, such as chatting with a friend or walking in nature, contributed to happiness in older people compared to youngsters who placed greater emphasis on milestone events.

**It's a fact!** St Ives, Cornwall is officially the happiest place to live in the UK according to a recent survey, followed by Skipton, North Yorkshire and Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

**A Scandinavian secret**

Year after year, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland top the lists of the happiest countries in the world but what makes the Nordic citizens so content with their lot? Research suggests it's a mixture of first-rate schools, a reliable welfare system, low levels of crime and a strong sense of freedom and trust. Then there's the lifestyle – sauna-going, known to promote health and good mood, is Finland's national hobby while the Danes emphasise the importance of hygge – finding moments of warmth and cosiness to cheer the soul every day.

For information and support on domestic abuse, contact:

- **Police:** 999 press 55 when prompted if you can't speak
- **Refuge UK wide 24-hour helpline:** 0808 2000 247