

CORNWALL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES STYLE GUIDE

Introduction

The CFWI style guide is designed to ensure everyone takes a consistent and professional approach to our communications with members and the public. The guide outlines CFWI style, grammar and spelling preferences and commonly used terms within the organisation.

If you encounter WI style problems not dealt with here, please contact countynews@cornwallwi.org.uk.

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CFWI Preferences

Talking about the WI

'The WI' is preferable when talking to the public about what the organisation does as a whole.

WIs

WIs are either a 'WI' or multiple 'WIs'.

No full stops are needed.

Do not use the terms 'Institute', 'Club', 'Group' or 'Branch' to refer to a WI.

CFWI

'CFWI' is preferable when talking to members about what we are doing at a county level.

Do not use the term 'County' to refer to CFWI.

NFWI

'NFWI' is preferable when talking to members about what is happening at a national level.

Do not use the terms 'National' or 'NF' to refer to NFWI.

Singular and plural

WI, CFWI (and other federations), NFWI, the Board of Trustees and CFWI sub-committees are all singular, e.g.:

- The NFWI employs over 90 staff.
- Surrey Federation is celebrating its centenary.
- Manchester WI is based in northwest England.
- The CFWI Board of Trustees meets on the second Tuesday of each month.
- The Arts and Leisure Sub-committee is holding an event in March.

Other collective nouns are also singular, e.g.:

- The government has announced an investigation.
- The BBC is launching a new website.

WI publications

Titles of WI publications use initial caps, e.g. County News, the Yearbook, the Annual Report, WI Life, Public Affairs Digest, the Annual Review.

Offices and titles

Titles take initial caps, e.g. WI President, WI Secretary, WI Treasurer, Board of Trustees, Trustees, Federation Chair, Federation Vice-chair, Federation Secretary, Federation Treasurer, WI Advisers, Trustees.

At national level, it's the NFWI Chair.

At federation level, it's left to the discretion of the office holder to determine whether to use Federation Chairman, Federation Chair or Federation Co-Chairs.

Use initial caps when referring to specific federations, and lowercase when talking about federations in general, e.g. Cornwall Federation, all federations in England.

Do not use Mrs, Ms, Miss or Mr unnecessarily; use Sally Smith, rather than Mrs Sally Smith.

Projects and campaigns

Use initial caps for names of projects and campaigns, e.g. WI Healthy Living and Wellbeing Week, Make Time for Mental Health, WI Walking Netball.

Use lowercase when referring to projects or campaigns in general, e.g. 'The programme will run for two years.' 'The campaign launched in 2018.'

Abbreviations

Spell out the full name the first time with the abbreviation in brackets and then use the abbreviation thereafter*, e.g. The Cornwall Federation of Women's Institutes (CFWI).

*There is no need to list the abbreviation if you don't go on to use it thereafter.

Some abbreviations can be taken as known, e.g. UK, USA, the BBC.

Language and Writing Style

Use clear and plain language

Always write for the reader, e.g. 'Members can take part in our new campaign action' rather than 'We are inviting members to take part in our new campaign action'.

Use plain English (see [Appendix 1](#)) and write concisely.

Stick to the active rather than passive voice, e.g. 'The WI has published a new report' rather than 'A new report has been published by the WI'.

Among/ amongst and while/ whilst

Use 'among' and 'while' rather than 'amongst' and 'whilst' as it sounds less formal.

Inclusive language

Be sensitive in your choice of language, so use:

'over-60s' rather than 'OAPs' or 'pensioners'

'older people' rather than 'the elderly'

'people with disabilities/mental illness' rather than 'the disabled/the mentally ill'

Use 'woman/women' rather than 'lady/ladies'.

Use inclusive words such as 'firefighter' and 'staffed by', rather than 'fireman' and 'manned by'.

Other Style Points

Spellings

Use the following:

- Adviser not advisor
- Coordinate, cooperate (but a co-operative society, the Co-op and co-opt)
- Coexist but co-education
- Online not on-line
- Email, but e-learning and e-skills
- Fundraising
- Ever-changing
- Open-ended
- Re-formed

Upper case and lower case

Use upper case for the following WI terms:

- Chy Noweth an Conteth (please note correct spelling)
- WI: Annual Meeting
- CFWI: Annual Council Meeting, Resolution Roadshow
- NFWI: Annual Meeting, Autumn National Council, Special Meeting
- Board of Trustees
- Membership Support Sub-committee, Arts and Leisure Sub-committee, Environment and Public Affairs Sub-committee, Events Team, Cookery and Craft Sub-committee
- Rules, Constitution
- Gift Aid
- NFWI: Education Committee, Membership Committee, Public Affairs Committee, etc.

Use lower case for the following WI terms:

- formation record, suspension record
- federation office
- bank account
- resolution

Use upper case for specific titles and lowercase for titles in general, e.g. 'Minister of Defence' but 'government ministers'.

Use lowercase for offices in general: chief executives, chairs, boards of trustees.

Use lowercase for 'internet' and 'email' when used in the middle of the sentence.

Use lowercase for seasons of the year (winter, spring, summer and autumn), unless they appear in the title of a document, book, song, etc.

Titles

For titles of books, plays, films, operas and radio and TV programmes, newspapers, magazines, journals and WI publications, capitalise the first word of the title, and all words within the title except articles (a/an/the), prepositions (to/on/for, etc.) and conjunctions

Use capitals for titles prefixing names, but not for job descriptions: 'Although being president of the United States is stressful, President (insert name) was glad to be re-elected.'

Dates

Write dates in the following style: 6 March 2019

Headings and titles

Use initial caps only on the first word, e.g. 'Our history', 'What we do', 'Running your WI'

Punctuation

Full stops

No full stops after abbreviated titles such as Mr, Mrs and Dr

No full stops after St (Saint)*

*The general rule is that a full stop is not needed if the first and last letters of the abbreviation are included.

No full stops in 'WI'

No full stops in commonly known abbreviations such as BBC, FBI, RSPCA and NATO

Never use two spaces after a full stop at the end of a sentence.

Commas

Never use a comma between the penultimate item in a list and 'and/or', unless required to prevent ambiguity.

- She taught knitting, origami and drawing.
- I ate fish and chips, bread and jam, and ice cream.

Exclamation marks

Never use more than one exclamation mark at the end of a sentence. Use exclamation marks sparingly.

Abbreviations

Use approximately rather than approx.

NB not N.B.

e.g. precedes an example or examples

i.e. precedes an explanation

When using people's initials, use a space but no full stop to separate initials: C S Lewis or J R R Tolkien.

Apostrophes

Dates do not require apostrophes (e.g. 1990s) unless the century is omitted (e.g. the year of '66 was a great one).

Contractions

'It's', 'don't', 'won't' etc. are less formal than 'it is', 'do not' and 'will not' and are preferable, especially online,

Hyphens

Use 'to' instead of hyphens between date ranges when writing, as it's easier to read, e.g. March to September (rather than March-September)

Reporting speech/ quotation marks

Introduce reported speech either with a colon or comma, followed by double quotation marks, e.g.:

- CFWI Chair (insert name) said: "We are grateful for the support of our WI members."
- CFWI Vice-Chair (insert name) said, "I am looking forward to our next Speakers' Auditions Day."

The first word of the quote starts with a capital letter and punctuation stays inside the quotation marks.

Keep single quotation marks for quotations within a quotation.

In news stories and press releases the speaker always 'said' the quote, never 'says'.

Use single quotation marks when writing about book chapters and sections, essays and magazine articles, e.g. The 'Running your WI' section of My WI.

Telephone numbers and emails

If you are including a telephone number in a sentence, use the following format: Please contact CFWI on 01834 272843.

If you are including an email address in a sentence, please use the following format: For more information, please contact countynews@cornwallwi.org.uk.

Ampersands

Always write the word 'and' rather than use an ampersand (&) unless it is part of a brand name or an organisation's official name.

Numbers and Lists

Bullet points

Use bullet points to list items and break up text.

When each bullet point is a complete sentence you should:

- End your introductory sentence with a full stop.
- Start with a capital letter.
- Put a full stop at the end of each point.

If bullet points are not complete sentences, start with a lower case and omit any closing punctuation, e.g.

This section of the website contains:

- essential membership information
- committee roles and responsibilities
- key WI policy information
- a copy of the WI Constitution

Numbered lists

For lists of short items or titles, start with capitals – there's no need to end with a full stop, e.g.

Members joining the walk on Saturday should bring:

1. Stout boots
2. Rainproof jacket
3. Backpack
4. Walking stick

Numbers

Spell out one to nine as words and write 10 upwards as figures. Be flexible, for example you can write 'nine and ten' or '9 and 10' in the same sentence.

Spell out words for 'first', 'second' and so on up to and including 'tenth'; use numbers and st/nd/rd/th for larger ordinal numbers.

Avoid starting a sentence with a figure but if you have to, always spell out the number, e.g. 'Ten people thought...' rather than '10 people thought...'

Spell million and billion in full when using words, e.g. £3million. Under CFWI style guide, a billion is the equivalent a thousand million.

Percentages

Use % with figures (1%, 9.5%) rather than writing out 'per cent' with words (one per cent).

Time

Use am/pm and insert minutes only when needed: 10am (no space), 3.30pm; for opening hours: 12noon to 4.45pm. Use noon or midnight rather than 12pm or 12am.

Appendix 1: Plain English words

(an) absence of	no, none	in order that	so that
accordingly	in line with this, so	in receipt of	get, have, receive
acquaint yourself with ...	find out about, read	in relation to	about
aforsaid	this, earlier in the document	in the absence of	without
as a consequence of	because	in the course of	while, during
as of the date of	from	in the event of/that	if
as regards	about, on the subject of	in the near future	soon
at the moment	now (or edit out)	irrespective of	despite, even if
at the present time	now (or edit out)	(it is) mandatory	(you) must
by means of	by	may in the future	may, might, could
cease	finish, stop, end	moreover	and, also, as well
commence	start, begin	nevertheless	but, however, even so
comprises	is made up of, includes	notwithstanding	even if, despite, still, yet
consequently	so	(it is) obligatory	(you) must
contrary to	against, despite	on behalf of	for
costs the sum of	costs	on numerous occasions	often
deem to be	treat as	on the occasion that	when, if
denote/depict	show	owing to	because of
despite the fact that	though, although	per annum	a year
due to the fact that	because, as	personnel	people, staff
during which time	while	provided that	if, as long as
for the duration of	during, while	referred to as	called
for the purpose of	to, for	relating to	about
for the reason that	because	subject to	depending on
further to	after, following	subsequently	later
furthermore	then, also, and	that being the case	if so
give consideration to	consider, think about	thereafter	then, afterwards
henceforth	from now on, from today	undertake	agree, promise, do
hereby	now, by this (or edit out)	until such time	until
herein	here (or edit out)	utilise	use
hitherto	until now	ways and means	ways
if and when	if, when (but not both)	whatsoever	whatever, what, any
in a number of cases	some (or say how many)	whether or not	whether
in accordance with	as under, in line with, because of	with a view to	to, so that
in addition (to).....	and, as well as, also	with effect from	from
in advance	before	with reference to	about
in case of	if	with regard to	about, for
in conjunction with	and, with	with respect to	about, for
in connection with	for, about	you are requested	please
in consequence	because, as a result	your attention is drawn to	please see, please note
in excess of	more than		
in lieu of	instead of		

Date Created	Last Review Date	Next Review date	Document Author
December 2024	April 2026	April 2028	HR Policy Group