WI Annual report 2022-23

This has been our first full year since the lifting of the covid restrictions, although we did miss our Christmas meeting due to the bad weather. As things return to a new normal following the pandemic, we, like most other groups, have not returned to the pre-pandemic membership numbers, but are delighted to have several new members joining us.

Rosemary Rowe remains our President. Her wealth of experience in the role has proved invaluable, including leading us in our Platinum Jubilee Street Party for Children of the Village last year and again, just recently, for the King’s Coronation, with great success. Gill Rawson remains as Treasurer, while Denise Harvie has taken on dealing with our Stoke Gabriel Neighbours Facebook presence and also continued with her very popular gardening group. Mavis Schindler founded our popular Craft group. Although only small in numbers, this has continued throughout the year, notably crafting the Crown for the letter box in the village for the Jubilee last year and now for the Coronation. Theresa Darnell is our Vice President, along with several other very capable members. Evelyn Watson’s help with the running of our WI this year has been very welcome. She has put together our speakers programme with a focus on local speakers, has proven very popular. Evelyn also organised our Christmas Fayre which was so popular it will probably return this year.

Other speakers this year included a representative from The Mare and Foal sanctuary, from Rewilding Sharpham, the founder of Moorish foods, who lives here in Stoke Gabriel and our local MP. Our November meeting is usually a crafting one and this year we were shown how to make a Christmas door decoration, by our member Chris Hunt. We had our annual New Year lunch at the Livermead House Hotel, Torquay. Throughout the year some of our members have attended events organised by Devon WI and Dart Bay craft group. Winner of our Monthly competition cup for the year was Shirley Elmer and I won the Bloom of the month.

There was no Wassail this year, nor a Carnival, for our members to take part in as they usually do, but they did have a stall at the Summer mini-market and took part in the Village Summer Show.