**Hampshire Confederation of Women’s Institutes**

**Archiving and Record Keeping for WIs**

WI records are important evidence of the history of your WI and any decisions made. WI records can also provide an important contribution to social history in the local community as well as providing information about women’s lives over time. For example, we know from the records kept that Hampshire WIs played a large part in the bottling and canning of surplus fruit and vegetables in World War II.

**Who is Responsible for Archiving?**

Each WI is responsible for sending their records regularly to their Record Office. For the majority of WIs in Hampshire this is the Hampshire Record Office in Winchester. However, WIs in Portsmouth and Southampton should send their records to their local Record Office (more details under “Where to Archive Documents”).

If, at any point, your WI would like any records for a specific event these can be retrieved from the Record Office for the event, then returned for safekeeping.

WI records are those that have originated from or are produced by the WI. Archiving of records originating from either Hampshire Federation WI or National WI are their responsibility and should not be archived by individual WIs.

**Please Note:** if any records for an ongoing WI are sent into the HCFWI Office for sending to the Record Office, the WI will be contacted to request they come and collect the documents and send to the Record Office themselves.

When a WI is suspended:

* All records listed in Tables 1 and 2 below are sent to the HCFWI Office to be kept for 3 years. At this stage, there should only be the most recent records as older records should already be archived at the Record Office.
* Items such as trophies, President’s tablecloth and banners that are specific to the WI should also be sent to the HCWFI Office.
* Other items not specific to the WI, eg, crockery, tea towels, tablecloths, bell, etc, are of no archival value and are not returned to the HCFWI Office. These can be offered to WI members, other ongoing WIs or could be sold, and the money sent to HCWFI.
* After 3 years in the HCFWI Office the records are sent to the relevant Record Office by the HCFWI Archivist.

**What Should be Archived?**

Please ensure that:

* All records are correctly dated.
* All scrapbook/photo album records are labelled with “who/what/when/where/why”.
  + For the “who” it is recommended to keep to a minimum to adhere to GDPR/Data Protection Guidelines, eg, first name and initial of surname.
* Avoid using plastic wallets (unless acid free) as these can cause fading of the content. Any plastic wallets sent to the Record Office will be removed.
* Do not use metal clips, etc, as these will rust and mark the documents.
* Do not use sellotape as this loses its stickiness over time.
* Avoid photo albums that use the clear, peel-back plastic – better to use a traditional scrapbook and use photo corners.

The following table lists the items that should be archived at the Record Office.

**TABLE 1**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Records to be Archived at the Records Office** | **How Long to be Kept** |
| Signed Constitution and Rules | Permanently |
| Committee Meeting Books \*  (to include any decisions or byelaws) | Permanently |
| Meeting Records Books \* | Permanently |
| WI Final Programmes | Permanently |
| Scrapbooks/Photo Albums | Permanently |
| Treasured Correspondence, eg, invitation to Royal Garden Party | Permanently |
| Annual Committee Reports (produced by the Secretary) | Permanently |
| Annual Financial Statement | Permanently |
| Registration Certificates, eg, Charity Commission (if applicable) | Permanently |
| Legal Documents about your Property if it is owned by your WI | Permanently |

* Loose leaf copies of these records in appropriate storage are acceptable (not required to be in ring binders when you send to HRO, envelopes/paper folders are fine).

**TABLE 2**

The following records are not required to be kept permanently so do not need to be sent to the Record Office:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ongoing Record Keeping** | **How Long to be Kept** |
| Leases (if applicable) | 15 years |
| Financial Records (Annual Statement to be archived) | 7 years |
| Gift Aid Schedule/HMRC Spreadsheet | 7 years |
| Members Completed Gift Aid Authorisation Form | 7 years |
| Correspondence with HMRC | 7 years |
| Significant Correspondence with Federation or National on behalf of your WI | 7 years |
| Insurance Policies (if applicable) | 3 years |
| General Correspondence | Destroy on a 6 monthly basis or at periods agreed by each WI |
| Correspondence with Hampshire Records Office  (contains your WI reference number) | Kept for the duration of your WI |

**Where are the Documents Archived?**

**Please Note: Contact the relevant Record Office to arrange a time to deliver your records.**

For the majority of WIs in Hampshire you should archive your records at:

Hampshire Record Office

Sussex Street

Winchester

SO23 8TH

Telephone: 01962-846154

[Make an enquiry, book a visit, or request copies or research (office.com)](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=tdiBPwfuF0yGnB20OQGNm5cwNxLjAQVHgOp5mkJzfLdURDhGTjNJT0tTWEtNREFLSldTR1pNSzFYSSQlQCN0PWcu)

WIs in Portsmouth (within the Portsmouth City Council boundary) should archive their records at:

Portsmouth History Centre

Central Library

Guildhall Square

Portsmouth

PO1 2DX

Telephone: 023-9268-8046

Email: [portsmouthhistorycentre@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:portsmouthhistorycentre@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

Webpage: [Portsmouth History Centre | The National Archives](https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/a?_ref=42)

WIs in Southampton (within the Southampton City Council boundary) should archive their records at:

Southampton Archives

Civic Centre

Civic Centre Road

Southampton

SO14 7LY

Telephone: 023-8083-2251

Email: [city.archives@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:city.archives@southampton.gov.uk)

Webpage: [Southampton archives](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/arts-heritage/southampton-archives/)

**When Should I Archive?**

It is recommended that the records in Table 1 are regularly sent to the Record Office where they will be kept in an archival environment.

Consider only keeping records for the current and previous President’s term within your WI – anything older to be archived at the Record Office.

If your WI currently holds records going back decades, please arrange for archiving all but the recent records.

**Why Should I Archive?**

To ensure important records are kept in archival conditions, ie, fireproof, waterproof, rodent proof, etc.

Village Halls, members garages/attics are not suitable and valuable records could be lost due to burglary, fire, flood, etc.

WI records are viewed as important social history.

**How to Archive?**

Make a list of all records going to the Record Office and keep a copy for your records.

Contact the relevant Record Office to arrange a time to deliver your items.

When the Record Office has logged your records you will be sent a confirmation letter that includes your reference number – please keep this letter with your current records. This reference number will need to be referenced when archiving your next batch of records.

**TEXTILES**

Some tips for the storage of your textiles, eg, tablecloths, banners, etc:

* To avoid fading keep out of strong light.
* Avoid storing in areas where temperature can vary, eg, attics, or near any water source, eg, pipes or radiators.
* Acid free tissue paper, boxes, etc should be used. If there are several items, acid free tissue paper should be used between the layers. Never use coloured tissue paper.
* Tubes could be used to roll larger items using acid free tissue paper between the layers.
* For textiles not in constant use, it is good practice to check the storage every few months to ensure no pests are present.

Record Offices do not have the facility to archive any textiles. Items such as banners, tablecloths, etc, that contain details of your WI can be archived at The National Needlework Archive in Newbury.

Contact Details:

The National Needlework Archive

The Old Chapel Textile Centre

Main Street

Greenham Business Park

Newbury

RG19 6HW

Telephone: 01635-38740

Email:

[octc@live.com](mailto:octc@live.com)

[nat.n.a@live.co.uk](mailto:nat.n.a@live.co.uk)

[**www.nationalneedleworkarchive.org.uk**](http://www.nationalneedleworkarchive.org.uk)