

MIDDLETON-CUM-FORDLEY W.I. REPORT

for the PARISH COUNCIL AGM May 2023

We have recently had our yearly membership meeting, so total numbers joining for this year are not known at this time. We hope the membership will remain steady at 25+. Some of our oldest and dearest members have moved from Middleton, some have not continued with their membership due to ill health. We will miss them all. However we have gained new members from other villages such as Peasenhall and Sibton.

Our clubs, continue to be attended well, including Cinema, Gardening, Lunch & Book Clubs. We started a new art club this year and members have enjoyed developing their skills using watercolours. We hope to celebrate club members art work with an exhibition of paintings in the autumn.

We always try to have talks by knowledgeable, entertaining people from the local area, and we have enjoyed a variety of fascinating speakers this year. Gary Doy spoke to us about the Southwold lifeboat, Luke Fitzgerald gave us an amazing talk about his skills as a master thatcher. Later to come this year we have Sylvia Hawes who will be bringing along her guide dog, later in the autumn we will be hearing from Steve Everett from Minsmere discussing red deer.

Other meetings included a vote for the W.I. Federation to campaign for 'Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife'. The W.I. will work with other organisations such as the Rivers Trust to put pressure on the government and water companies to stop polluting bathing waters and areas in rivers.

The Summer Garden Party was held at the Recreation Ground, despite the extreme windy conditions. We welcomed over 30 guests and everyone enjoyed a glass of Pimms whilst appreciating a delicious selection of food kindly donated by members.

As ever, the WI year included participation in the usual village events, from Open Gardens in June, the August Summer fete & Autumn Fayre, providing home-made cakes, jams and chutneys. The Garden Club is working hard to enhance our plant stall and have been growing on a wide selection of plants. In the autumn W.I. members will be planting 1,000 daffodil bulbs around the village.

The committee has been restructured recently with new and old members taking on new responsibilities. We look forward to another year with our amazing members as we continue to entertain, enlighten and give support where we can.

L.Whitbread. May '23