***This email has been sent to all Federation Chairmen, with Federation Treasurers and Secretaries, NFWI Board of Trustees, and NFWI Senior Staff bcc’d.***

Dear Federation Chairman,

We are writing to update you regarding the latest developments around Denman. In May 2021 we informed you that the Charity Commission had published a notice of their intention to create a scheme to support the sale of the Denman Estate and change of charitable objects to remove reference to the College. This scheme has now moved from draft to sealed which means that the Charity Commission have reviewed all feedback received and have now granted authorisation to sell the Denman Estate and change the charitable objects. In light of this, we will be liaising with our solicitors regarding what can be done with funds restricted to Denman and will be in touch with those federations who notified us of restricted funds when we have more information on this as soon as we can.

This information has been updated on the Charity Commission’s website and will be added to My WI and the NFWI’s external facing website tomorrow. It will also be sent directly to a specified list of Denman supporters. Please do share this with your WIs if you feel it would be of interest.

With regard to any future sale of the Denman Estate, the NFWI Board, operating as the Corporate Trustee of the Denman Trust, will make a decision over the coming months. However in the meantime the estate remains in the possession of the Denman Trust and is being maintained by the Denman Trust. It also remains a place of work for our Centre of Training and Personal Development and Denman staff teams.

Consultation on Denman Trust Educational Model

The second part of this update is focused on the future. The proceeds of any sale of the Denman Estate will be restricted for the use of the Denman Trust for educational activities for WI members. In order to make best use of these funds we want to know what you would like to see delivered.

The pandemic has taken us into unchartered waters and we have had to adapt our thinking and this has been no different for Denman. We have been running Denman at Home for the last 19 months and we know for many of you this has been of huge support during lockdown. Denman At Home has also been an accessible platform that reached out to over 90,000 people since its launch in May 2020.

Similar to other educational providers we have to analyse the emerging educational needs of WI members as the pandemic unfolds across the England, Wales and the Islands but also to look at educational trends and how current and future members want to access educational activities. Reaching out to members who are not digitally active remained a challenge for us during the pandemic, as with many other educational providers. We are glad that the team is already thinking ahead and many of you would have noticed the new additions of Denman on Demand and Denman on Tour. It is important that we leave no one behind when it comes to education, hence why the team needs your help to look at innovative new ways to reach members.

We promised that we would consult members on the design of the new educational model of the future, a unique and exciting opportunity for members. In the coming months, a survey invitation will be emailed to you via your Federation/WI Secretaries and included in *WI Life* magazine. The purpose of this survey is to collect information about WI members’ learning preferences to enable the Denman Trust to create a new, inclusive and accessible educational model that responds to the needs and learning preferences of WI members across all demographics and continues to develop and evolve in the future. The more information we can gather the better we can tailor what we offer as part of the new educational model.

The questionnaire is a comprehensive survey of your views on what you want us to offer in the future and so we hope as many of you as possible will be able to dedicate the time to share your thoughts. The data collected will help the Denman Trust in building an educational model for the future for the benefit of WI Members. The survey itself should take just under 10 minutes to complete. Surveys are very expensive and while the Denman Trust initially opted to have an online and offline option, the cost and resources needed were not feasible for the Denman Trust. We have therefore decided to produce this survey online and we hope you will understand our decision. The survey link will also be published on the Denman and NFWI website. As it is important that only WI members complete this survey, there will be a validation gateway which is simply a verification process to confirm that you are WI member and more information will be provided in the survey invitation email.

There’s been such encouraging growth in the awareness of the work of the Denman Trust over the past 19 months which has been so important for Denman and for its future. Beyond the pandemic, as life resumes to some level of normality, we have to look to the future and what the Denman Trust offers to WI members. So please encourage all WI members to tell us about themselves and be included.

**Thank you for your continued support for the Denman Trust and our organisation as a whole. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Melissa Green. Please also see attached a FAQ document to help with answering any questions about this update.**

Best wishes

Fiona

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Fiona Hughes** *Interim PR Manager* If you are not already a WI member, there are many exciting benefits. We would love to welcome a new WI member, please have a look at the [WI website for more details](https://www.thewi.org.uk/become-a-member?utm_source=signature&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email_nfwi).  **National Federation of Women’s Institutes** 104 New Kings Road London SW6 4LY 0207 371 9300 (Ext. 2012) |