

## Suspending a WI more details for Advisers

This document will go through the steps to help with the process of a WI suspending.

1. A WI should try to exhaust all options to avoid suspending – a guidance document with suggestions for the WI to try called 'Guidance for Suspending/Closing WIs' can be found on [My WI](#) in 'Running your WI' section.
2. If the WI thinks it may want to suspend then the WI **must** meet with its members to discuss and decide whether they wish to suspend. For virtual WIs, this would be conducted online.
3. It is strongly recommended that WIs should suspend within the same subscription year they have paid their subscription for. If a WI suspends in a new subscription year where subscriptions have not yet been paid, this makes things challenging as you must be a member in order to vote to suspend.
4. The Federation Board of Trustees **must** be informed of the intention to suspend.
5. An Adviser **must** be present at a suspension meeting. For virtual WIs, they would need to join an online meeting.
6. A Special Meeting **must** be called by the WI when a resolution is put forward to suspend. For virtual WIs, this would be done online, [virtual WI guidance](#) includes further information on this.
7. At least one quarter of the WI members **must** vote on the resolution, either at the meeting or in advance in accordance with the Constitution. Voting for virtual WIs would be done online and depends on the platform the virtual WI is using but guidance on how to vote can be found by searching the platform online.
8. **The Constitution** permits members to vote in advance of Special Meetings called for suspension by post, email (or other suitable electronic means agreed by the Committee) or hand delivery.
9. Notice of a Special Meeting **must** be sent by the Secretary to each WI member at least 10 days in advance, setting out the date, place and time of the meeting and a note of the purpose for which it is called. Virtual WIs Special Meetings will be held online. Special Meetings can be called by the committee or at the written request of at least one quarter of the WI members who have paid their subscription for the current year. Information on Special Meetings can be found on page 14 of the WI Constitution & Rules and in sections 4.5 and 13.2 of the WI Handbook.
10. A secret ballot **must** be held. For virtual WIs this would be done electronically and information on this can be found online, depending on what platform the virtual WI is using.

11. The resolution to suspend **must** be approved by a three-quarters majority of the WI members voting. If a three-quarters majority is not achieved, then the WI will continue, and a committee and officers must be elected. Virtual WI guidance includes information for how to do this online
12. If the members vote in favour of the resolution to suspend, the WI Adviser **must** notify the NFWI accordingly using the suspension notification form located on [My WI](#) within the Federation Roles area titled 'WI Adviser' section.
13. It is recommended that the minutes of the meeting containing the resolution to suspend are written at once, approved by those present and signed by the President. For virtual WIs the minutes should be typed up and signed online. Information on this can be found in the virtual WI guidance.
14. The treasurer **must** pay all the outstanding bills and the balance of the funds is forwarded to the federation. The bank account should be closed – it may take a few weeks for the final statement to be received. For virtual WIs, this would be an online bank transfer.
15. Arrangements for the disposal of any WI property **must** be made in line with the constitution and charitable objects and in consultation with the WI Adviser and federation. If the WI owns any property, the Constitution states that the members must agree a scheme (by majority vote) which sets out how this property will be cared for or disposed of. This scheme must be submitted to the Federation Board of Trustees (BoT) for its approval. If the Federation BOT objects to the scheme, the matter must be referred to the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) BoT. The NFWI BoT can amend the scheme as it thinks fit. The Decision of the NFWI BoT is final. For a virtual WI, this may include cancelling the payment of a subscription for an online platform.
16. The WI's record **must** be passed to the Federation Board of Trustees for safekeeping along with an independently examined copy of the accounts.
17. The suspension will last for three years, after which time it is officially closed, unless in the interim a new WI has been formed serving that area and then the WI will officially be re-opened and access given to any remaining funds. For virtual WIs, they may reform or another virtual WI may be formed in the federation of this suspending WI at any time within the three year period and the suspended funds held by the federation will be passed to that virtual WI.
18. The WI will need to update their Charity Commission record if registered.
19. Members should be actively encouraged to consider joining other local in person or virtual WIs or becoming WI Supporters.
20. If the resolution to suspend the WI is passed, please pass on the following information:
  - Full members from suspended WIs will continue to have access to their membership benefits including receiving the WI Life magazine and

access to My WI etc. until the end of that subscription year. If the Dual WI suspends, the benefits will continue as normal for the remainder of that subscription year (receiving WI Life magazine and access to My WI).

- Members whose primary WI suspended can choose to join a new WI as a dual member and will only pay the applicable dual rate as set by that WI.

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1	April 2024	N/A	March 2025	Membership and Engagement