



Federation of Women's Institutes of Northern Ireland

The Coronavirus pandemic has severely affected our branches with many not having met since March 2020. Restrictions are easing, although the cases of Covid-19 are not, and some Institutes are planning a return in September. The Executive are issuing the following guidelines for a return, bearing in mind that Government Guidelines can change quickly and if they do they must be followed.

1. Halls – Institutes meet in a variety of Halls and need to enquire as to what the rules for their particular hall is. Some may no longer be available or suitable for meetings to take place, in that case alternatives need to be sought.
2. Risk assessment – this must be completed before any meeting of more than 15 people indoors takes place and must be kept up to date.
3. All Government guidelines must be adhered to
 - a. Hand sanitizers provided
 - b. Masks to be worn
 - c. Social distancing – currently down to 1 meter
 - d. Keep hall ventilated
 - e. Sanitize touchable surfaces before and after (foggers can be used if available)
 - f. Ask members to bring their own supper if required – tea & coffee can be provided using pump flasks and disposable cups
 - g. Discourage close interactions
4. It is a good idea to contact all your members prior to the meeting to encourage attendance.
5. AGMs
 - a. Some have already taken place successfully
 - b. If at all possible hold the AGM in September or early October
 - c. If face to face meetings are still impossible try
 - i. Zoom/Team meetings
 - ii. Voting by post
 - d. If all these options are not viable the existing committee can stay on for a further season if agreeable
 - e. Accounts should be completed and audited as usual prior to the AGM and give to the Executive member on the night for delivery to HQ
 - i. If no AGM takes place these accounts can be posted in to HQ
6. Membership Fees have to be paid as usual, even if meetings are not taking place, as this keeps you a W.I. member and covers you for insurance.

These are not definitive guidelines, others may be applicable to individual Institutes, but we have a duty of care to keep our members as safe as possible while trying to return to some form of normality.