



WILPF | UNITED KINGDOM
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM

Disarmament and demilitarisation... feminist activism for a peaceful and sustainable future



Annual report
2025–2026
110th year

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Introduction to WILPF

WILPF – the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom – is a feminist peace movement founded in 1915 to stop wars and prevent future wars by dismantling the causes of war and armed conflict.

We work through solidarity in global networks of women and feminist activists, with old, new and creative methods to build a world of permanent peace on feminist foundations of freedom, justice, non-violence, human rights and equality for all, where people, the planet, and all its other inhabitants coexist and flourish in harmony.

WILPF’s founding resolution, as vital now as in 1915, stated that “Women of different nations, classes, creeds and parties unite in expressing sympathy with the suffering of all, whatever their nationality, who are labouring under the burden of war. There can be no irreconcilable differences between them, and their common ideals afford a basis upon which a magnanimous and honourable peace might be established.”



by Dr Sophia Close,
Company Secretary

Setting the scene in 2026

Women, peace and security: WILPF into the future

Twenty-six years after the United Nations adopted Security Council Resolution 1325, recognising women's central role in peace and security, we face a well-organised and funded global backlash against women's and LGBTQIA+ rights. Women make up less than 10% of peace negotiators, and 99% of gender-related aid never reaches women's organisations directly.

But our hope remains. We believe the women, peace and security agenda can be revitalised to address overlapping risks of rising militarisation and securitisation, climate and environmental crises, increasingly hostile contexts, and declining funding for peace and equality.

The patriarchal values that exclude women from peace processes and political decision-making are the same beliefs that make war inevitable

At WILPF, we know that women continue to work for peace everywhere. In Gaza, women are documenting war crimes and demanding accountability while communities face genocide. In Sudan, women are maintaining humanitarian networks across war-torn regions. From Myanmar's women environmental defenders challenging extractive mining to Ethiopian women mediating resource conflicts, women are building peace often without recognition or resources.

In the UK, WILPF advocates for demilitarisation, connects with climate justice and food security community networks, stands in solidarity with LGBTQIA+ people seeking gender justice, and demands safe passage and support for asylum seekers and refugees.

At WILPF, we know that women continue to work for peace everywhere

WILPF in the UK and globally has campaigned for over 100 years against the systems that make war inevitable: militarism, patriarchy, colonialism and environmental destruction. Our WILPF elders understood something that today's policy-makers keep forgetting: you cannot build peace by preparing for war. WILPF's activism demonstrates our commitment to standing in solidarity with people resisting oppression in our local communities and in dangerous contexts globally.



We cannot end violence against women while glorifying militarised approaches to security



Feminist peace-making means transforming who holds power, not just representation

Getting a few women into male-dominated peace talks does not work if military power is valued over community safety and security. WILPF's feminist approaches to peace challenge the systems that enable violence: authoritarian regimes, patriarchal control and militarised institutions.

Decolonial peace means trusting local women's expertise

For too long women in conflict zones have been prevented from accessing money, decision-making power and credit for their work. WILPF focuses on redistributing resources directly to women's networks and movements.

Climate justice is peace work

Climate shocks influence conflict. Women lead adaptation and ecosystem recovery, yet they are systematically excluded from climate negotiations. WILPF connects these problems: showing how militaries are massive carbon emitters, how resource extraction fuels both conflict and climate collapse, and that women's leadership is core to climate justice.

Demilitarisation challenges the root causes of violence

The patriarchal values that exclude women from peace processes and political decision-making are the same beliefs that make war inevitable. We cannot end violence against women while glorifying militarised approaches to security or spending billions on weapons instead of healthcare, education and climate justice.

The choice is clear: accept continued erosion of gender equality globally or embrace bold, feminist action now

What next?

We insist on flexible core funding for women's movements in Gaza, Myanmar, Sudan and beyond. We will challenge our own government when they claim to support peace and human security while selling arms or remaining silent on atrocities. Our choice is clear: accept continued erosion of gender equality globally or embrace bold, feminist action now.

This article is adapted from: Sophia Close and Siad Darwish, *Status Quo or Bold Adaptation? Reclaiming the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, European Institute of Peace (2025)



by Fiona McOwan,
Secretary WILPF UK

From the Secretary Determination and a commitment to peace

As I near the end of my second year as Secretary of WILPF UK – one of three possible years in this role – I want to express my gratitude to all members of the WILPF UK Executive Committee. Their steady support, combined with the remarkable depth of knowledge, skills and lived experience across our membership, has guided and strengthened our organisation's work throughout the year.



Sheila's campaign message to the UK government is very clear

Despite our mission to prevent war and build lasting global peace by addressing the root causes of violence, conflict and inequality, the world continues to witness an alarming rise in conflict. Every day, new or ongoing wars destabilise regions and devastate communities. Peace initiatives – whether by Donald Trump or other international actors – have yielded little meaningful progress, particularly in places like Gaza and Ukraine. Predictably, it is women and children who suffer disproportionately. We also continue to watch conflict unfold between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and persist in countries such as Nigeria, Sudan and Yemen, **wars driven by power struggles, territory disputes, ideology and entrenched dogma.**

Wars are driven by power struggles, territory disputes, ideology and entrenched dogma

The gravity of this instability was underscored when I awoke one morning to the news that the USA and Israel had invaded Iran, with Trump publicly calling for "regime change". Iran's retaliation followed swiftly, placing even greater strain on already **fragile global security** efforts. This escalation was especially disheartening given that diplomatic negotiations on a new nuclear deal were underway between the US and Iran with mediators confirming that Iran had agreed to lower its stockpiles of nuclear material.



At the annual International Conscientious Objectors' Day commemoration in May. (Pictured from left) Helen, Cath, Claire and Paula. Four members of WILPF's Executive Committee are active on the planning group for the commemoration



WILPF members regularly join with Women in Black Against Militarism and War who have weekly silent vigils in London and Brighton, and who welcome all women who support the call for an end to militarism and war

Amid this turmoil, I've been reading an inspiring book by Scottish WILPF members Helen Kay and Rose Pipes about the life and work of Chrystal Macmillan (*Chrystal Macmillan, 1872–1937: Campaigner for Equality, Justice and Peace – Scottish Women Making History*). Chrystal, a pioneering suffragist, attended the 1915 International Congress of Women at The Hague and became one of five envoys who travelled across Europe and the US, armed with determination and a commitment to peace. Their mission was bold: persuade national leaders to choose negotiation over militarism in the midst of the First World War. Although many leaders privately expressed support, public consensus never materialised, and the war raged on. Reflecting on this, I find myself wondering whether it is time once again for us to move beyond discussion and take similar international action – meeting with fellow WILPF members across Europe and beyond to **challenge misogyny, patriarchy, militarism and the widening acceptance of war as inevitable**.

Challenging misogyny, patriarchy, militarism and the widening acceptance of war as inevitable

This past year also marked the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This landmark resolution reaffirms the **indispensable role women play in preventing conflict**, negotiating peace, leading humanitarian responses, contributing to post-conflict reconstruction, and building inclusive, sustainable peace. I would love to see its principles fully implemented worldwide, with particular attention to the rights and leadership of indigenous women.



Dr Amrita Kapur (pictured right) – a feminist legal expert with deep experience in international law, gender justice and human rights – joined WILPF International in 2025 as Secretary-General. She has worked extensively to advance women's rights in conflict and post-conflict settings, holding key roles at UN Women and the International Development Law Organization. Amrita was in London to deliver a lecture, and several WILPF members had the chance to say hello. She says: "Today, we are witnessing how the absence of war and violence does not deliver social justice, nor inclusive and sustainable peace. At WILPF, we believe peace is only possible when societies are just, equal and inclusive: that is, when social justice is the norm, not the exception."

I also want to acknowledge the powerful work of our Letter-Writing Group, founded just last year. Their efforts have only grown stronger, even as it remains frustrating that we must write to senior Labour Party officials to **advocate for better laws, fairer choices and stronger outcomes for women**. Still, receiving responses – though often delayed – offers encouragement.



In September 2025, WILPF moved to a new office above the iconic Housmans bookshop

Building inclusive, sustainable peace

Finally, I extend heartfelt thanks to the Orpington Branch for continuing to host our Connect webinars, which once again covered a wide range of subjects relevant to modern **feminist activism** and are deeply valued by our members.



WILPF members leafleting near the ExCeL Centre in September to protest against Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) – one of the world's largest arms fairs – held biennially in London. Once again, the UK's warmongers rolled out the red carpet to arms dealers and military personnel from the world's most violent, authoritarian, genocidal and undemocratic regimes to showcase weapons and tools for wars and armed violence, with the active support and encouragement of the UK government, which is keen to sell as many weapons as it can all around the world

WILPF International mobilised its #movethemoney campaign calling for funds to be redirected away from military spending and instead invested in human security including areas of health, welfare, education, climate action and gender equality. It speaks to WILPF's central aim of addressing the root causes of conflict such as inequality, poverty and the environmental crisis



In grateful memory

We commemorate and celebrate two WILPF campaigners, in grateful memory – Maire McQueeney and Valerie Mainstone – both long-term members who attended many events and vigils, and who were active in our Brighton Branch for many years.

You can read tributes to Maire and Valerie on our website at <https://wilpf.org.uk/our-history/>



Disarmament

Building bridges through inclusive feminism



by Janet Fenton, Campaign Lead for Disarmament

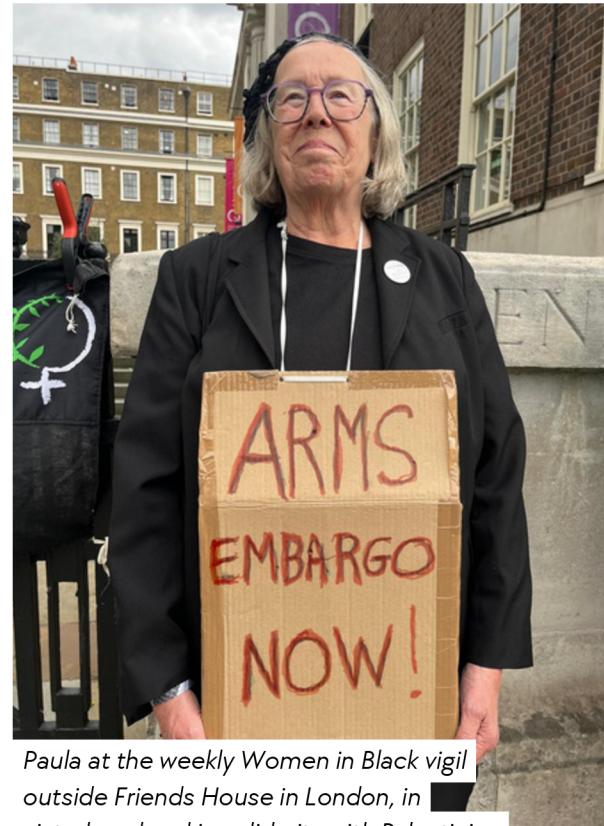
WILPF UK, following up on last year's advocacy for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, continues to set the rationale for disarmament through a gender and intersectional lens.

Last year's disarmament report promised that WILPF UK would "seek to achieve disarmament, challenge militarism, and confront violent masculinities and gender discrimination." Our means would include participating in demonstrations and vigils, writing for publication, and writing coordinated or public letters to significant figures, as well as webinars and meetings. This has been done effectively and cooperatively with broad participation by members of the UK Executive Committee and others, and has included referencing **interconnections between disarmament, economic, climate and human rights concerns.**



Reaching Critical Will (WILPF's international disarmament programme) has increased its influence as a go-to resource, and source of reliable and trustworthy information on the feminist perspective that can provide meaningful results in the field, and robust research that holds up under scientific scrutiny. It also offers a sane, humane and manageable alternative to endless cycles of violence, surveillance that war, border controls and militarism dictate. This counteraction to authoritarian and military state actions is proving effective with many states and with civil society, with marked increases in the use of gender focal points applied to negotiations and gender recognition embedded in important treaties.

A feminist intersectional non-binary and inclusive perspective recognises the importance of diverse identities and experiences in our approach to disarmament and resonates with WILPF's 20 resolutions delivered in 1915 at the founding International Congress of Women. It recognises the importance of diverse identities and experiences in dismantling "the patriarchy and oppressive power structures" as requested by António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations. This requires a commitment to diversifying delegations and **challenging gender norms on weapons and war**, not merely supporting traditional disarmament and arms control measures.



Paula at the weekly Women in Black vigil outside Friends House in London, in sisterhood and in solidarity with Palestinian women in the Occupied Territories in their struggle for justice, peace, well-being and a secure, prosperous and non-violent future for themselves and their children



At the London arms fair

At the Stop Trump rally

Interconnections between disarmament, economic, climate and human rights

In recent times, some states and civil society actors have made the effort to mainstream gender into work on small arms and light weapons, outer space, chemical weapons, cyber issues and more. However, too often, with the best will in the world, the real meaning that was present in the ideas and actions of the women who travelled to The Hague in 1915 to campaign to halt the war then raging across Europe is disregarded, instead of carefully restated for the 21st century. **Radical feminist inclusion must be the ask**, as Ray Acheson, Director of Reaching Critical Will, makes very clear in the statements she has written for this year's UN meetings – this requires time and skills for consensus-based decision-making, trust, compassionate listening and respect. This commitment and hard work pays off when we can transform the binaries that depend on in-or-out, right-or-wrong hard processes that are more appropriate for the patriarchy and its dominant processes.

We are **building bridges with disarmament campaigners** at CND and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, as well as the Soroptimists, taking part in Secure Scotland's work with the Rethinking Security network and the Nuclear Information Service. WILPF women led sessions in the Disarmament from the Margins two-day academic symposium at Glasgow University. We followed the preparatory committee deliberations on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which took place in New York. This treaty, as well as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, will both be reviewed later this year, and we are actively preparing for WILPF Scottish delegations to both reviews.

Challenging gender norms on weapons and war

We are also active in the new Scottish government-sponsored **Scottish Peace Platform**, with Janet Fenton and Dr Claire Duncanson (Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Edinburgh) as elected members of its advisory board.



WILPF Women against War and Weapons say NO...

- NO** to London showcasing weapons and tools for wars and armed violence
- NO** to the death, destruction, displacement, and violent oppression and repression that these weapons cause
- NO** to those who profit from war, killing, genocide, injustice, corruption and abusing human rights
- NO** to the UK government actively supporting arms dealers and military personnel from the world's most violent, authoritarian and undemocratic regimes
- NO** to the ways in which the military and war contribute to the climate crisis, destroying the environment, and forcing people to flee their homes
- NO** to the disproportionate impact of war and weapons on the world's poorest, particularly women, girls and minority groups
- NO** to militarism and violent masculinities, and to the consequences of the arms trade that lead directly to increased sexual and gender-based violence and abuse against women in their homes and communities
- NO** to the social and political inequalities and pressures from the increase in female-headed households when men are killed in armed conflicts
- NO** to arming and driving wars for territory and to exploit scarce resources
- NO** to the ExCeL Centre arms fair, now and in the future

WILPF's leaflet spelling out 10 reasons to oppose the London arms fair

Women, peace and security

Gender-responsive approaches to peace and security



by Eliza Broadbent,
Campaign Lead for Women,
Peace and Security

WILPF has been an advocate for the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, which originates from United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, before and since its inception in 2000.

This year – in a context of rising militarism, authoritarianism and geopolitical instability – we marked the 25th anniversary of the WPS agenda. Central to WILPF’s approach is the belief that sustainable peace requires the **meaningful participation of women**, the prevention of conflict and a shift from militarised to human security.

While we want to focus on trying to advance the WPS agenda, we find ourselves in a position where we are having to fight to hold the line. The UK government is committing more of the country’s resources to military spending and suggests we need to be on a “war footing”. Meanwhile, **women’s rights and basic safeties are increasingly under threat**. Online gender-based violence is rapidly evolving; the rights of refugees and migrants are being stripped away; Islamophobic, racist and transphobic rhetorics are perpetuated in political discourse; and funding for those working to improve gender equality has been slashed.

We seek to use our grassroots activism, advocacy and partnerships to **influence national policies** and challenge those that fail to protect women’s rights and that undermine peace. A key aspect of our work is in collaboration, as part of Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS UK), a civil society network that monitors and promotes UK government accountability on WPS commitments.

We supported the GAPS report *Assessing UK Government Action on Women, Peace and Security in 2024* which analysed the government’s implementation of its *UK Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan 2023–2027*. We attended the presentation of this report in Parliament. The report highlights missed opportunities and structural delays such as the lack of a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework, weak consultation with civil society and limited financial transparency around WPS spending. The report was informed by case studies – Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Sudan and Ukraine – which explore **the need for gender-responsive, locally-led approaches to peace and security**.



As part of GAPS, we have contributed to consultations with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Ministry of Defence in preparation for the development of the next UK National Action Plan. We are keen to provide concrete mechanisms to strengthen women’s meaningful and safe participation at all levels of decision-making and integrates an **intersectional and inclusive approach**. We want to ensure that the WPS agenda is not co-opted to advance further an increasingly militarised interpretation of national security and instead centres on the need to prevent conflict through genuine human security.

WE'RE AT A CROSSROADS.

We also advocate strongly for **the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants** as the government has proposed cruel new immigration and asylum policies, for example restricting refugee visa routes and suspending student visas for nationals from Afghanistan, Cameroon, Myanmar and Sudan. This is despite these countries experiencing the most horrific humanitarian crises and Afghanistan and Sudan being priority countries for advancing women, peace and security in the UK's National Action Plan.

We seek to use our grassroots activism, advocacy and partnerships to influence national policies

The 69th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69) took place in March 2025 where WILPF advocated for the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration on equal rights for women, highlighting the intersection of gender, disarmament and sustainable peace, and **the need to move from "commitment to action"**.

CSW, and other high level United Nations conferences, have become increasingly difficult for civil society to attend due to travel bans and boycotts in response to the United States' hostile and inhumane domestic and foreign policy. Fortunately, one of our Executive Committee members, Áine, is currently living in New York so was able to attend this year's CSW70 which focused on **Ensuring and Strengthening Access to Justice for All Women and Girls**.

The need to move from commitment to action

Executive Committee member, Keyet, has been bringing together women from the **African diaspora** to help build connections and lift up women's voices across communities. This has included collaboration meetings and hosting two events, and our Executive Committee member Cath spoke on behalf of WILPF at one of these events. Conversations have centred on supporting grassroots women and civil society, particularly those affected by conflict, inequality and governance challenges. The group is seeking to raise awareness among the public and decision-makers about the **realities of the crisis in the African continent**, and the urgent need for action. In January, Keyet also attended the landmark 80th anniversary celebration of the first UN General Assembly hosted by United Nations Association UK at Westminster Hall.



WILPF supports the Protect Progress campaign encouraging greater political action at a time when global progress on gender equality is increasingly under pressure



WILPF Breaking Bread event at CSW70, March 2026

Climate justice

Raising our voices for peace and ecological justice



by Cath Attlee, Campaign Lead for Climate Justice

Our Climate Justice Group meets online on the last Tuesday of the month at 9.30am. Everyone is welcome. Several new members joined during 2025. We focus on the links between climate change and conflict, on climate justice, and on the experience of women and children in affected areas.

In January we reflected on COP29 in Baku, attended by one of our group. She gave a presentation explaining that women, gender-diverse and indigenous people are **disproportionately impacted by natural disasters due to pre-existing social and economic inequalities**. WILPF agreed to press our government to reallocate military spending towards climate finance, report on military emissions, take concrete steps towards fossil fuel phase-out and reflect these strategies in the UK's NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution).

We participated in the **mass lobby of Parliament on people, climate and nature** in July, and signed WILPF up to join the UK's Climate Coalition. Letters also went to the government about the impact of the Palestine conflict on the environment, in addition to infrastructure and humanitarian damage.

We encouraged WILPF members to attend local activities during the **Week of Action for Peace and Climate Justice** in September, and shared information on the WILPF International campaigns to Move the Money and the Draw the Line Campaign: Rights, Jobs and Justice. We held a UK webinar on climate colonialism in August and joined a WILPF International webinar on the Fossil Fuel Treaty in September. A press release on action for peace and climate justice was sent to national media.

Draw the Line Campaign: Rights, Jobs and Justice

What we do now will decide our future. The next five or ten years will define if we manage to keep global heating to a safe level or cross a point of no return – putting not only our planet, but us all in distress... Governments are taking away people's rights, breaking climate promises, and letting big fossil fuel companies keep polluting.... We need 2025 to be a turning point – for clean energy, peace and fairness!

In the autumn we discussed preparations for COP30 in Brazil and wrote to the government to urge high level attendance (which the Prime Minister did, in the end, heed). We encouraged WILPF members to join the campaign by War on Want to **"Demand a just transition at the COP30 climate talks"**.



In November, Cath and other WILPF members joined like-minded activists in Whitehall to press the UK government to take a strong position on climate justice at COP30 in Brazil



This world is all of ours – and we must protect it so it will protect us!

WILPF International was represented at COP30 by WILPF Colombia which fed back on the positives and negatives through the WILPF Environment Working Group. The main concern was the **failure to commit to reducing the use of fossil fuels** – oil companies and oil-producing nations were hugely represented and successful in preventing commitments on this issue. Consequently, Colombia with support from The Netherlands, hosted an International Conference for the Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels in April 2026.

There are serious concerns about the UK's food security as a result of climate change and resulting conflicts

Throughout the year we continued our discussions on degrowth – in May the WILPF UK webinar was given by Nela Porobić Isaković, of WILPF International, on **degrowth and demilitarisation**. A motion to focus on degrowth was passed at the WILPF UK AGM in May 2025.

In addition to sharing reading and podcast information, we ran an initial in-person workshop in November to expand our understanding of degrowth, what it means in practice and how we can make the concept relevant to people in the UK. **We will continue to develop our vision into a "degrowth manifesto"** during 2026. Funding is being sought to take the message out to a wider audience.



A key theme for COP30 was the need for a just transition, providing support to workers and communities impacted by the shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy

In the autumn we were alerted to a Joint Intelligence Committee Report on National Security which the government appeared to have hushed up but which raised **serious concerns about the UK's food security** as a result of climate change and resulting conflicts. Zero Hour arranged an emergency briefing and WILPF UK encouraged members to write to their MPs to urge them to attend. We will continue to pursue the issues arising from the report, and seek the full release of its contents.

Letter received from Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, September 2025

"... the UK remains committed to keeping 1.5 in reach, encouraging and supporting all parties to follow the example of the UK to submit ambitious, economy-wide 2035 NDCs ahead of COP30, and will continue to drive ambition on other important areas, including finance and adaptation."

Our **Climate Justice Exhibition** – created to coincide with COP26 in Glasgow in 2021, and which was displayed in many UK locations – is currently being updated to display in the UK during this year's COP. We hope members will explore venues to display the exhibition.

Brighton, Hove and District Branch



by Jenny Engledow,
Branch Secretary

Powerful narratives of feminist peace

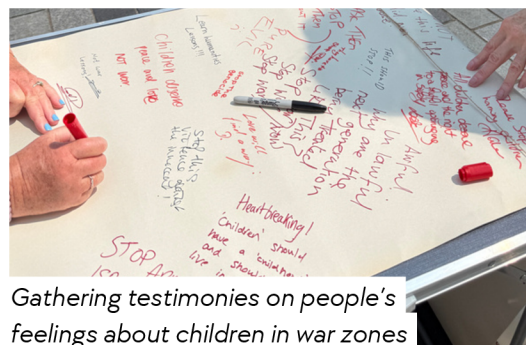
During the year, we took part in demonstrations, marches, vigils, letter-writing and collecting petition signatures, and tied messages and items on the fence at L3Harris to reinforce our campaign against this local arms factory.

We continued our activism at the weekly Women in Black Against Militarism and War vigils, to call out our government for supporting and enabling the Israeli government's ongoing genocide in Gaza, and to urge people to write to the Prime Minister. We hand out up to 100 leaflets a week spreading the message about investing in peace and ending militarism, and the urgent need to **shift from militarised security to human security**. Please join us at the vigils.

In last year's annual report, Sheila Triggs eloquently set the scene for 2025 and beyond on the importance of understanding more about the **links between feminist theory, degrowth economic policies and environmental peace-building**. We have started a regular discussion group to begin to pick apart just what this means for our campaigning. Viewing a short video on a specific topic followed by discussion seems to work well. It's very enjoyable and productive having in-person dialogues where we're all learning. Do join us if you're local.

The power of women in global peace-building

Much of our **activism focused on international awareness and campaigning** days to emphasise the harm caused by militarised security:



Gathering testimonies on people's feelings about children in war zones

- On the anniversary of the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** coming into force we sent photos and a press release to the local press, councillors and MPs.
- At our **Remembering Hiroshima Day** commemoration the speakers included the mayor, Councillor Amanda Grimshaw, who gave a very moving speech, and long-standing Brighton Branch activist Dr Rebecca Johnson from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.
- On **International Conscientious Objectors' Day** (ICOD) we listened to poems written by local refugees, and read testimonies of Russian and Ukrainian conscientious objectors. At our Women in Black vigil we handed out ICOD leaflets alongside our own, and laid a peace poppy wreath at the war memorial.
- Our stall on **International Day for Child Victims of War** had a scroll for people to write their feelings about children in war zones. Many people engaged with this.
- Anna and Jenny joined other WILPF women in London in September protesting against the **arms fair** at the ExCeL Centre and the surrounding area.



Marking the fifth anniversary of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons coming into force

Investing in peace and ending militarism, and the urgent need to shift from militarised security to human security



Mebrak talking about her life of resistance

Jenny spoke at a panel discussion for International Women's Day at the local library, which focused on human security and was very well attended. Her contribution was entitled **The Power of Women in Global Peace-building**. We made connections with women from many countries. As a result, at our summer party we heard Mebrak, an Eritrean woman, talk about her life of resistance, which led to good questions and conversations.

We have also started working with a **local refugee-led group** called We Are The Tree (WATT) and organised a seminar with the group about displaced people to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. We were delighted to welcome WILPF Executive Committee member Maki who came to speak at this successful event, and plan to host future seminars with WATT.

We are currently reworking our 2021 **Climate Justice Exhibition**, feeding in learning from our discussion groups. We hope to display the updated version when COP is underway in 2026.

The Branch continues to hold meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at 10.15am and you are very welcome to join us.



Brighton Charity and Community Day brings together groups that benefit and support the local community and enables people to find out what the groups offer. It is held in the Royal Pavilion gardens, a popular park in the city centre. (Pictured from left) Jenny, Anna and the mayor, Councillor Amanda Grimshaw

Orpington Branch

Dialogues about feminism and peace



by Pat Pleasance,
Branch Representative

Orpington Branch has continued to organise our Connect webinars throughout the year to which we welcome WILPF members nationally and internationally, and our like-minded friends. Talks by experts are followed by lively discussions.

We have been attracting good audiences for these **conversations about feminism and peace**, including some participants from Australia! Most webinars are recorded and videos can be found on our website – at www.wilpf.org.uk – in the “Resources” section.

During 2025 we heard from a range of fantastic speakers:

- Áine Beattie, WILPF UK, about the best and worst of her experiences at **COP29**, and at the Third Meeting of States Parties to the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**
- Gurminder Bhambra, from the University of Sussex, raised questions about the **climate catastrophe** with particular reference to colonial political history
- Janet Fenton, WILPF UK, addressed the challenges in an **increasingly militarised world**
- Nela Porobić Isaković, from WILPF International, raised the question of whether **degrowth** is a feminist way forward for peace-building
- Sophia Close, WILPF UK, shared her research on the UN **women, peace and security** agenda



Ann (pictured left) and other like-minded campaigners travelled to London in January 2025 for a national protest in Whitehall against the Gaza genocide

One participant who watched Sophia's webinar wrote to say: "I am truly grateful for the opportunity to take part in this important conversation. The topic you are addressing feels both urgent and vital. In our work we constantly see how the shrinking political space for gender equality, combined with growing militarisation and securitisation, undermines women's rights and the broader peace and security agenda. In such a climate, it becomes more important than ever to reaffirm and defend the original transformative spirit of the women, peace and security framework."

We have been attracting good audiences for our conversations about feminism and peace

At the local Peace One Day event in Bromley, Sheila Triggs gave a well-received **talk on degrowth**, and sales of WILPF merchandise and jam raised useful funds.



WILPF Orpington members at the Peace One Day event. (Pictured from left) Jeanette, Sheila and Helen

While Orpington members have not been meeting as a group recently, **individual members have been very active both nationally and locally** – in the WILPF UK Letter-Writing Group, the WILPF UK Finance team, and on stalls and vigils across Bromley jointly with Bromley Peace Council and CND. Members regularly attend Women in Black Against Militarism and War vigils in London highlighting the still disastrous situation in Gaza.



Vigil and stall – Stop Bombing Iran and Free Palestine – in Orpington in March 2026



Ann Garrett (pictured second from left), WILPF Orpington member and author of the "Give Peace a Chance" play, in action at the performance at the Peace One Day event in Bromley in September. Characters include J Robert Oppenheimer, Bertrand Russell, Pat Arrowsmith and Helen John, along with Greenham Common women, conscientious objector, military man and arms dealer

Members have been very active both nationally and locally

Along with other WILPF members and other women peace activists, Sheila (pictured left) regularly hands out leaflets at the Women in Black Against Militarism and War vigils at the Edith Cavell memorial in Trafalgar Square on Wednesdays, and outside Friends House in Euston on Saturdays where the focus is against the genocide in Gaza

Scottish Branch

Feminist advocacy and activism for change



by Fiona McOwan,
Branch Co-Convenor

The Scottish Branch of WILPF expresses deep concern over global suffering caused by war, famine, ecological destruction and human rights violations. We reject the idea that violence, repression or environmental harm can ever be legitimate responses to conflict or climate challenges.

Limited capacity has led members to engage individually across various **activist networks**, ensuring that WILPF principles remain represented in emerging movements.

The Branch offers heartfelt condolences to Treasurer Kate Arnott, who suffered the sudden loss of her son, noting the collective sympathy from members.

Politically, the Branch stresses the **importance of electing a Scottish government committed to inclusion, sustainability and internationalism**, especially as authoritarian measures increase elsewhere in the UK. We highlight differences between UK-wide counter-terrorism law and new public order measures in England and Wales, emphasising the need for cross-border solidarity as well as opportunities for distinct Scottish approaches.



"Meeting needs of us all" – strong messaging at Faslane, home of the UK's Trident submarines, by Scottish Branch Co-Convenors Fiona (pictured left) and Janet

Members actively support **humanitarian and peace efforts** related to Gaza, Sudan and Tigray – an Ethiopian region once notorious for famine and now suffering renewed conflict, starvation and climate-related setbacks. We continue to promote the women, peace and security agenda (United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325), highlighting Scotland's stronger human rights-based approach compared to the UK government.

Deep concern over global suffering caused by war, famine, ecological destruction and human rights violations

Scottish Branch works closely with disarmament groups such as Scottish CND and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, contributes to academic and advocacy networks including Rethinking Security, and participates in Scottish government initiatives like the Scottish Peace Platform. Janet, with others, offers presentations, consultancy and advocacy internationally, and with Scottish civil society and government on feminist transnational relations, and with GAPS on the Scottish perspective in the UK's National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

Janet took **peaceful direct action** leading to arrests and court appearances, a contribution to the Scottish judicial review of the Palestine Action proscription, referencing her previous human rights advocacy at the United Nations.

In 2025, Áine took part in a series of significant international and UK-based events focused on peace-building, gender equality and youth advocacy. Hearing testimony from Hibakusha – survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – further strengthened her **commitment to nuclear abolition**.

We reject the idea that violence, repression or environmental harm can ever be legitimate responses to conflict or climate challenges

In March, she represented **The Young Women’s Movement** at the parliamentary launch of *The State of Girls’ Rights in the UK* report by Plan International. The findings – especially that 93% of surveyed girls do not feel completely safe in public – underscored the urgency of addressing safety, mental health and inequality. She was moved by the creativity and passion of young advocates and welcomed the contributions of MPs committed to improving conditions for girls.



In March, Áine represented The Young Women’s Movement at the parliamentary launch of “The State of Girls’ Rights in the UK” report by Plan International

Áine joined 34 young women from across Europe for the Making Change: Gender Equality and Peace-building in Europe study session in Budapest in May. The programme explored **feminist leadership, discrimination, racism and well-being in activism**. A visit to the embassy of The Netherlands, as well as opportunities to lead discussions, enriched her experience, leaving her deeply motivated to advance feminist and anti-racist peace-building.



Áine gave a presentation in May focusing on youth involvement in peace-building and feminist advocacy during the European YWCA Study Session “Making Change: Gender Equality and Peace-building in Europe”

In September, at the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly and during Climate Week New York City, she engaged in a wide range of panels and events focused on gender justice, environmental rights, global governance and women’s leadership. Despite a busy schedule, she viewed the experience as a powerful and formative start to her new role in New York, strengthening her **dedication to international feminist advocacy**.

Membership

Campaigning for change



by Claire Poyner,
Membership Secretary

We have enjoyed meeting and campaigning with members, and prospective members, and continue to develop services to support our membership.

Some members of the Executive Committee attended **meetings of the Stop the Arms Fair group**, which was planning campaigns against the DSEI (Defence and Security Equipment International) arms fair in London in September 2025. We decided on a walk from Stratford station to the ExCeL Centre while distributing leaflets about the arms fair. Several non-members came along and at least one subsequently joined WILPF. We hope that many in the local population, having been informed about this arms fair, will join us in campaigning to Stop the Arms Fair should DSEI take place again in 2027.

We had an informal drop-in event in Housmans bookshop (which houses our new office) in January 2026 with a 'bazaar' to sell our merchandise, with some refreshments while **getting to meet some of our members** and supporters. This was also an opportunity to hand out information leaflets about WILPF to shoppers visiting the bookshop.



We enjoyed meeting our members and supporters

The WILPF Communications Lead, Eliza Broadbent, compiles and circulates a very informative **monthly newsletter for members**. This includes a message from the Secretary and information about events and activities organised by WILPF UK as well as by like-minded campaigning organisations. She also circulates information about our regular webinars and makes sure that these events run smoothly. Although we only have three active Branches – Brighton, Orpington and Scotland – members who do not live near a Branch have appreciated the opportunity to attend our informative webinars.

London members are warmly invited to come along to our monthly get-togethers, usually on a Saturday in a café with good public transport links. Join us – keep an eye out for details in the monthly newsletter or send an email to ukwilpf.info@gmail.com

WILPF UK ended 2025 with 210 paid-up members. New members joined us throughout last year. Sadly, a couple of members passed away. If your **membership subscription** is due, please help us out by renewing as soon as you can. You can do this on our website (<https://wilpf.org.uk/join-wilpf/>) using a debit or credit card, but we do encourage you to set up an annual or monthly standing order. Please get in touch with our Membership Secretary for further details at membership.wilpfuk@gmail.com

We could double our membership if each member could recruit a friend

Ideas, please, on how to recruit more members. Why not invite a friend to join? Are you attending an in-person event or conference with like-minded people? We can supply information leaflets for you to hand out to any likely future members. Contact us on ukwilpf.info@gmail.com

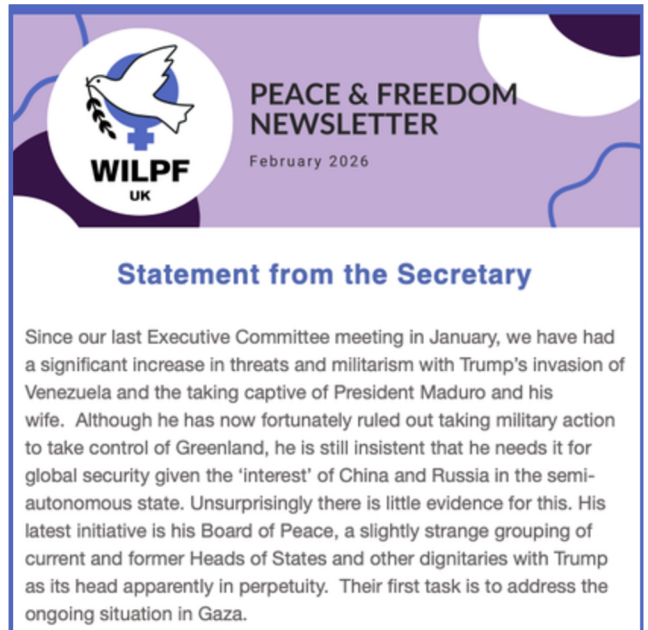


by Eliza Broadbent,
Communications Lead

Communications Showcasing our powerful movement

Our communications efforts offer opportunities for engagement and activism, sharing our vision for feminist peace.

Our **new website** has now been running for over a year, which is very exciting. We have seen increased engagement with our pages, posts and online shop where membership and merchandise are on sale. We keep the website fresh and up to date and showcase our latest campaigning, advocacy letters, publications and webinar recordings as well as promoting upcoming events. We aim to encourage active involvement in our campaigning – by engaging with joint activism in person, joining us online, taking actions such as letter-writing from home, campaigning with our working groups, donating or volunteering.



Promoting our campaigns for feminist peace, justice and equality

We also keep members and supporters updated with our free **monthly online newsletter** (see above) where we highlight our campaigning and advocacy activities (more information on page 20).

We use **social media** platforms to amplify our work and activities promoting our campaigns for feminist peace, justice and equality. We regularly post on Instagram, Facebook, BlueSky and LinkedIn, and share our webinar recordings on YouTube. Follower engagement has increased, for example with 914 subscribers on Instagram, compared with 788 last year. **Please follow and engage with us!**

Our **leaflets** are designed to communicate our vision for peace. We hand these out at stalls and events, including at street actions such as opposing the London arms fair.

We encourage members to share their activities and perspectives about topics on which WILPF campaigns. Examples include blogs, reflections, artwork and poems. Please contact ukwilpf.info@gmail.com if you would like to **share a contribution on the website**.



A recent snapshot of WILPF's Instagram channel

Letter writing

Challenging government on its laws and actions



by Sheila Triggs, Convenor, Letter-Writing Group

IRAN WAR

Britain must not give an inch to US warmongers

THE Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF UK) responds with horror to the unilateral military attacks by Israel and the United States on Iran.

Diplomatic negotiations on a new nuclear deal were underway between the US and Iran with mediators confirming that Iran had agreed to lower its stockpiles of nuclear material.

Yet the US and its warmongering ally, Israel, consider they can pre-empt negotiated outcomes and United Nations processes and use force against a sovereign state in a clear attempt to bring about regime change.

Inevitably Iran has responded in kind. These attacks violate international law and have already resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians, including children – and risk putting the whole region in a potential state of war threatening the lives of millions.

The government has stated that it had no military involvement in the US/Israeli action. WILPF considers this is disingenuous since Britain has continued to provide essential parts for F-35 bombers used to arm Israel in spite of the pleas from many British non-governmental organisations to stop arming Israel.

WILPF objects strongly that the US has been allowed to use British bases to launch airstrikes on Iran. We urge the government to withdraw this permission immediately and withdraw all support for this reckless and illegal aggression. The British people do not want to be involved in an illegal war in the Middle East nor for Britain to pander to the wishes of warmongering and self-interested "allies" – the US and Israel.

This action puts the lives of millions of civilians, millions of us all, at risk of increased danger and insecurity. "Security" built on militarism is both fragile and false – diplomacy is the only way peace can be achieved.

True security is demilitarised and grounded in the rule of law.

FRONA MCGOWAN
National Secretary
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF UK)

WILPF was lead letter in the "Morning Star" in March 2026

WILPF UK's campaigning work challenges government and those with power on their laws, policies and actions on disarmament and war, women, peace and security, the climate crisis and human rights issues.

To this end, we established a Letter-Writing Group, which is open to all WILPF members. The group grasps opportunities in the news when we can **challenge government with our feminist anti-militarist analysis of their actions**. Over 16 months we have written 40 letters to the Prime Minister and Secretaries of State in different government departments covering issues from the Gaza genocide to climate inaction, and from the DSEI (Defence and Security Equipment International) arms fair held in London to the crisis in Sudan.

The letters are uploaded on our website so that members can adapt them to send to their MPs, other decision-makers and local media. The letters **keep WILPF in the eye of decision-makers**, force them to reply and provide an example for our members to follow. We know that MPs take note of letters received and use them to take up issues within their parties. Through the letter-writing activism, our members protest, campaign, advocate, agitate, encourage and persuade, partly in a spirit of solidarity and sisterhood, but also to demand changes to policy, practice, legislation and governance.

We challenge government with our feminist anti-militarist analysis of their actions

Individual members have also had letters published in the *Morning Star* and *The Guardian*, and some local newspapers, **raising awareness** within the community nationally and locally.

The Letter-Writing Group welcomes new members.

You do not need to be the woman who initiates a letter. You can suggest a topic, help to modify the text of a letter, or just observe what we say and how we work in the group. **The pen is mightier than the sword!**

Tools for advocacy

WILPF advocates for matters relating to disarmament, climate justice, human rights and women, peace and security. Below you can find and read the letters we have sent to parliamentarians to encourage change and support new policies to build sustainable peace.

We hope that these advocacy letters will be useful as templates to lobby your local Member of Parliament and other politicians. TheyWorkForYou.com helps you find out all the details of your local MP by just checking your postcode.

We also encourage you to contact local media outlets and share our perspective. You can use this [Newspaper directory](#), or [radio postcode checker](#).

If you have a topic you think WILPF should write about, or are interested in writing or editing, please contact us and consider joining our letter writing group.

All

Disarmament

Women, peace and security

Climate Justice

Human Rights

Letters are uploaded on our website so that members can adapt them to send to their MPs, other decision-makers and local media



by Anne Eggleton,
Treasurer

Accounts

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM UK SECTION LIMITED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

COMBINED BANK ACCOUNTS		
2024	INCOME in £	2025
2,721.50	Subscriptions (membership fees)	2,537.00
1,851.00	Donations paid with subscriptions (fees)	1,425.00
1,737.75	Other donations (fees)	3,826.30
425.63	Sales	405.30
1,341.93	Interest on investments	1,152.76
2,928.62	Grants	0.00
	Income raised for We Are The Tree at Brighton seminar	317.00
4,713.60	Tindlemanor office (total income)	9,004.66
ADJUSTMENT TO ACCOUNTS FOR ACCOUNTANCY PURPOSES (ACCRUALS)		
-98.00	Subscriptions received October–December 2024 for 2025 – deduct from receipts for 2024 and add to receipts for 2025	98.00
	Subscriptions received October–December 2025 for 2026 – deduct from receipts for 2025	-161.00
15,622.03	FINAL TOTAL INCOME (combined accounts)	18,605.02

2024	EXPENDITURE in £	2025
412.14	Purchase of items for sale (cost of sales)	101.57
2,634.21	Campaigning including relevant printing (other direct costs)	339.75
2,541.42	Payments for new website (final payment 2025)	2,901.76
4,576.00	Wages and salaries (office administrator)	4,992.00
0.00	Travel and subsistence (all travel costs)	324.24
7,905.00	Rent (Tindlemanor total expenditure)	9,955.82
	Rent No Sweat (new office share)	640.00
662.59	Internet (internet, phone, advertising and communications)	870.81
433.56	Postage (non-campaigning printing and stationery)	43.30
843.18	Subscriptions (section fees to WILPF International)	696.63
215.00	Subscriptions (affiliations and donations)	251.03
38.93	Bank charges (WooCommerce, PayPal and SumUp)	39.08
374.96	Insurance	384.46
714.50	Accountancy fees	742.94
	Transferred to We Are The Tree minus SumUp fees	311.62

ADJUSTMENT TO ACCOUNTS FOR ACCOUNTANCY PURPOSES (ACCRUALS)		
-374.96	Insurance paid 2024 for 2025 – deduct from 2024 expenditure and add to 2025 expenditure	374.96
	Insurance paid 2025 for 2026 – deduct from 2025 expenditure	-384.46
2,160.50	Service charge to Tindlemanor due 2024 outstanding at year end – add to 2024 expenditure and deduct from 2025 expenditure	-2,160.50
	Office rent paid 2025 for 2026 – deduct from 2025 expenditure	-150.00
	Salary owing at end 2025 – add to 2025 expenditure	620.00
23,137.03	FINAL TOTAL EXPENDITURE (combined accounts)	20,895.01
-7,515.00	EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME	-2,289.99

ASSETS in £		
	CURRENT ACCOUNTS	
9,269.05	Cooperative Bank main account	6,006.70
1,847.43	Cooperative Bank office account	0.00
	RESERVE ACCOUNTS	
39,439.43	Triodos Bank	40,282.17
20,000.00	Cambridge & Counties Bank bonds	20,310.02
70,555.91	TOTAL	66,598.89
	FIXED ASSETS	
0.00	Tables, chairs, storage unit (written down value minimal)	0.00
250.00	Computer purchased – written down value 2025	150.00
	STOCK	
1,667.50	T-shirts and other items for sale	762.20
72,473.41	TOTAL ASSETS HELD CENTRALLY	67,511.09
	WILPF UK BRANCH ACCOUNT BALANCES (not held in central accounts)	
414.31	Brighton	332.58
735.86	Orpington	559.86
972.65	Scotland	732.65
2,122.82	TOTAL	1,625.09
74,596.23	TOTAL ASSETS INCLUDING BRANCH ACCOUNTS	69,136.18

Notes about our accounts

Thank you!

WILPF UK would, once again, like to express our thanks and appreciation to all who have contributed in so many ways.

Our basic income comes from annual membership subscriptions (£2,474 in 2025), and generous additional donations from members (£4,251.30 in 2025), including £995 in response to our special appeal for additional support for the new website. We are also grateful for a donation of £1,000 from Women for Refugee Women.

During 2025 Brighton Branch started a collaboration with a refugee-led organisation called We Are The Tree. This included a successful seminar that also raised funds specifically for women asylum seekers housed in a local hotel.

We have been able to move our office from Tindlemanor to a one day a week office share at 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DY. This is working well and has significantly reduced our monthly expenditure, as well as simplifying our accounting.

Format of 2025 accounts

As forecast in our annual report for 2024–25, we have continued working to simplify our accounting format. We have amalgamated our current accounts, and also changed some of the category headings. This makes the format correspond more closely with that reported to Companies House and HMRC. We hope this new format still retains clarity, especially when comparing one year to another.

Our accountant will be submitting our accounts to HMRC and Companies House in compliance with the format required, but the same figures will be used. Any member is welcome to have a copy of these formal accounts when they are available, on request to the Treasurer (ukwilpf.treasurer@gmail.com).

Finance team

Members of the Finance team meet online regularly to discuss all aspects of WILPF UK finances. Any interested member is encouraged to come to one of these meetings.

WILPF Charitable Trust

Promoting women's human rights



by Deirdre Leask, Secretary,
WILPF Charitable Trust

The WILPF Charitable Trust was founded to promote human rights and, in particular, women's human rights.

The Trust maintains independence from WILPF, but is committed to supporting WILPF in any way that is compatible with the Trust's charity status.

Trust meetings in 2025 focused on small-scale fundraising, making best use of charitable platforms, reviewing our successful management of the generous **Iranian diaspora donation**, which provided learning and development for trustees and selecting beneficiaries for our annual donations.

For a small fee, trustees delivered **training in restorative practice** at Tindlemanor with representatives from women's organisations such as Network for Eritrean Women and Women for Refugee Women. Feedback from trainees was positive. Trustees also learned from trainees – while restorative practice is fundamentally about repairing harm and avoiding further harm, working restoratively across and within different cultures requires adaptable processes.

One trustee again led **women's walks** for fun, fitness and fundraising and hopes to lead more in 2026!

The Trust is always looking for new trustees and can train up future board members. Please contact us if you are interested!

The Trust contributed towards the **WILPF UK website** and acted as a conduit for the United Nations Association to donate to it. UNA and the Trust welcomed the WILPF UK feedback report about use of our donations and trustees are appreciating the new website.

The Trust donated to the Leicester-based Zinthiya Trust which **supports and empowers** local global majority women and to the Waging Peace for Sudan Fund.

Trustees responded to enquiries about legacies, tax and charitable donations and the benefits of Gift Aid. As always, the Trust would like to remind WILPF members and friends that donating through a charity can make money go further! Maki Kimura has settled into her role as Treasurer ensuring that **financial processes and accounts are responsibly maintained**. Trustees thank Maki for undertaking this role.

Gift Aid and the **Give As You Live** (donations through internet shopping) scheme still provide the Trust with a small but steady financial bedrock. We thank our generous donors, mainly WILPF members, and those who make good use of internet shopping to raise money for the Trust. Please remember to use Give As You Live for the benefit of the Trust (and WILPF UK). If you are an internet shopper, here is how: <https://www.giveasyoulive.com>

Remember also that WILPF may be able to use the Trust for fundraising, ring-fencing funds for specific projects. The Trust can be contacted with any comments or questions at wilpftrust@gmail.com



Getting involved



Take part in one of our campaigns

We welcome volunteers who want to join with others to work on one of our campaigns. If you are interested, let us know. You can contact the Secretary at ukwilpf.peace@gmail.com

Join the WILPF UK Executive Committee

If you have been a member of WILPF for more than six months, and feel you would like to be more involved, you could become a member of the Executive Committee. This is where all the major decisions are made between AGMs. Members can be nominated for election or co-opted onto the Committee if there is a vacancy.

Members of the Executive are expected to contribute in some way, and they are expected to attend Executive meetings, which are held about five times a year, for two to three hours, usually on Saturdays. Matters that will not wait until the next meeting are dealt with by email discussion, and Executive members are expected to respond.

Meetings are currently held on Zoom, and any member who is interested can join any meeting, whether or not they are a member of the Executive Committee. Try it and see if it is for you! Contact the Secretary (as above) for the Zoom details.

If you would like to know more about the Executive Committee, please get in touch with the Secretary.

While campaigning is our purpose, there are many tasks that need to be done to keep us going. So whatever your experience, it may be that you could help.

We look forward to welcoming you!

WILPF UK Executive Committee

The current Executive Committee was elected or co-opted from May 2025. The current Directors (who must be members of the WILPF UK Executive Committee) are marked (D).



Cath Attlee



Áine Beattie



Eliza Broadbent



Sophia Close (D)
Company Secretary



Anne Eggleton (D)



Janet Fenton (D)



Maki Kimura (D)



Keyet Makonnen



Helen Martins



Fiona McOwan (D)



Pat Pleasance (D)



Claire Poyner



Paula Shaw (D)



Sheila Triggs (D)



Taniel Yusef (D)



WILPF | UNITED KINGDOM
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM

Disarmament and demilitarisation... feminist activism for a peaceful and sustainable future

Annual report
2025–2026
110th year

Getting in touch

WILPF UK
5 Caledonian Road
London N1 9DY

Email: ukwilpf.peace@gmail.com
Website: <https://www.wilpf.org.uk/>
Facebook: @UKWILPF
Instagram: @wilpf_uk
BlueSky: @wilpfuk.bsky.social



Subscribe to our free online
newsletter to stay updated with
our campaigns and activities



Front cover photo shows WILPF member Cath leafleting outside the Department for Business and Trade in September. WILPF women against war and weapons joined other like-minded activists to protest against Defence and Security Equipment International – one of the world's largest arms fairs – held biennially in London