



## **ACTIVITIES OF ASHTON UNDER HILL WI DURING JANUARY 2015**

Marjory welcomed members to the January meeting. She reminded everyone that subscriptions were now due and hoped that the inevitable increase would not deter us from what promises to be another full and interesting year and also where we will all be celebrating 100 years of Women's Institutes in the UK. Lists for signing included the NFWI observer tickets for the AGM at the Albert Hall on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> June. Also there will be places available for a "live link" showing of this important event at local cinemas.

The programme secretary, Ruth Clarkson gave out information regarding a proposed cycling/walking weekend in Devon some time in early April. We shall all have to get on our bikes beforehand for a bit of practice! The outing to Coventry last November where we had a guided tour of the Cathedrals, proved most enjoyable and interesting. Marjory thanked Andrea Garland for organising the visit and our driver Sarah Lane who negotiated the City extremely well.

We were then introduced to the speaker, Mark Heesom who is a Community First Responder. Mark lives in Ashton and arrived with his large and heavy first aid bag together with a defibrillator. He first explained that teams of volunteers are trained by the West Midlands Ambulance Service to a recognised level and provide life saving treatment to people in their local communities. They are always backed up by the nearest available emergency vehicle. In partnership with the British Heart Foundation the West Midlands Ambulance Service set up Community First Responder schemes across the region.

In the UK 135,000 people die each year due to what is commonly known as a heart attack. Two thirds of these deaths happen outside of the hospital environment. One important treatment found to treat this

condition is a defibrillator and any person off the street can easily use this - if there is access to one. Recently one has been placed at our own Village School and community centre, so it was timely that Mark was able to show us how they work. He also gave us some simple advice as to how to recognise the symptoms of a heart attack or a stroke. Mark lightened his talk with some of his experiences and played some recorded messages received by the ambulance service where in one case the "patient" requested a lift home and was obviously tipsy! They often have to deal with non-serious and bogus calls, and have to recognise the "red alert" messages that take precedent over less urgent and serious conditions. After answering many questions Mark was thanked by Gail Cook.

The January walk was organised by Dianne and began at Broadway Tower. Nine members enjoyed a frosty sunny circular walk taking in lovely views overlooking distance hills. On our downward journey we encountered a rather treacherous muddy embankment where cattle had congregated. Our bold leader, forging ahead, ended up to her knees in mud trying to locate a path for the rest of us! We managed to pick our way out of this eventually and back on to the hard ground. We arrived at the café looking forward to a hot drink and lunch, which was very much appreciated.

On 29<sup>th</sup> January Andrea organised a visit to the Everyman Theatre to see a performance of Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None". One of Agatha's typical thrillers where we were all kept in suspense until the end to find out who the murderer was!

JEN CREESE