



Surrey Federation of WIs

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Guidance Notes for Tellers

Tellers in a WI have very important duties to perform at the Annual Meeting because they are independent witnesses to the ballot. They are appointed to take charge of the arrangements at an election, to see that all is done in order, to count the votes and to make out a list of those elected during the meeting. They must be aware that the ballot is absolutely confidential and should not be discussed with anyone.

Please note that there are separate instructions for:

- election of the committee; and
- election of the President.

Election for Committee

Before the Meeting

Tellers should arrive at least 15 minutes before the ballot room opens, and find out from the secretary the number to be elected to the committee. Members may vote for any number of candidates up to this total. Please note that dual members now have the right to vote for committee members and Presidents in both WIs.

During the Ballot

Tellers are in charge of the ballot room and must not allow anyone in except those actually casting their votes. If any member cannot see to mark her paper for herself the Teller may read the names to her and then record her votes. It may be necessary to wait until everyone has voted in order that her vote may be recorded in privacy.

The ballot papers should have been printed or photocopied so that there is no chance of error.

Counting the Votes

The Secretary should have made out the Tellers Chart, which is marked out in blocks to help with the counting. Accuracy is extremely important and all results should be very carefully checked.

A Tie for Last Place

In the event of two or more candidates tying for last place the Tellers should decide by a draw, and nobody should be told that there has been a draw.

After the Ballot

Only the names of the successful candidates should be read out by the WI adviser (if present) or the Tellers, and then written up for the members to read. The number of votes should never be revealed.

Nomination and Election for President

Nominations for President

After the new committee has been introduced, the Tellers should explain that they are going to take nominations for the President from among the newly elected committee.

They should distribute to every member entitled to a vote a small piece of paper on which to write the name of the committee member they wish to nominate as President.

The Tellers then collect all the nomination slips and, in a private place, make a list of each person nominated.

The number of nominations is not important at this stage, only the names of those nominated.

The Tellers should read to the members the names of those nominated and hand them a slip of paper on which the Tellers have written the nominee's name. Those willing to stand for election as President should write 'Yes' on the piece of paper, or 'No' if not willing to stand.

The Tellers should then collect the nominees' slips. If only one person has accepted her nomination, the Tellers should inform the WI adviser (if present) who will announce her as the new President. If no WI adviser is present, one of the Tellers should make the announcement.

If more than one has agreed to stand, then there will be an election for President.

Election for President

The Tellers announce that there will be an election between A and B and give each WI member entitled to a vote a small piece of paper. The votes should then be collected and counted in a private place. The member with the greater votes will be President for the coming year. If a WI adviser is present, the name of the new President should be given to her to announce. If no WI adviser is present, one of the tellers should announce the name of the new President, congratulate her, and thank the others that stood for election. In the event of a tie, the Tellers should decide by a draw, and nobody should be told that there has been a tie.

If no-one agrees to stand for election, the Tellers and all WI members present must try very hard to persuade someone to be President. If this fails, the previous President should notify the Surrey Federation immediately, and a WI adviser may have to suspend the WI if a President cannot be found.

All voting papers and Teller charts should be put in a sealed envelope and passed to the WI adviser or posted by the Tellers direct to the Federation Office.

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