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Treasurer Notes

I have combined the feedback I have had from the Surrey Independent Financial Examiners and the queries I have had from WIs over the last couple of months. The following is a collection of points you might find helpful.

Lloyds Bank

For those of you that bank with Lloyds you might have got (or shortly get) a letter telling you that your account is being converted to a community account. Under this they are going to charge you a monthly fee and for each cheque used (and probably for other things). Your WI is a charity, and you can stay on free banking on your charity account. You need to call them on 0345 300 0075 and tell them you are a charity. If you are a small WI, you probably do not have a charity number, but you are a charity (and per the charity commission website you are not currently allowed to obtain a registration number if you are small). If they will not accept your word about this ask them where you can send a copy of the constitution or a letter to confirm the position.

Gifts to retiring committee members

It has recently come to my attention that there has been an error in point 1.3 in the Treasurer's Handbook since before I became treasurer. (You cannot use WI money to buy a gift for your president (or any other committee member) on their stepping down. Under the rules of being trustee (which is the legal term for committee members) you cannot receive anything that is perceived as being a benefit for being trustee and a thank you gift comes under that. (see 10.8 of the members handbook).

There is nothing stopping the members or committee members contributing to a collection for such a gift

Small payments

You will notice on invoices sent to you recently that we now say on them : - *"Where you owe SFWI under £5, please hold on to the invoice until you are making a larger payment and pay altogether"*.

This is due to how much the bank charge us for each credit into the bank account, so for small amounts the charge is out of all proportion to the money we are being paid. All WIs should make a payment of subscriptions in April. Many will make payments for subscriptions received in each calendar quarter, so you are making quite frequent payments to us, so please hold back small amounts you owe us and pay with your next subscription payment or when a larger invoice is received. I understand several years ago you were encouraged to send a separate cheque for each invoice, but please combine as SFWI pay a charge for each cheque we bank.

President is signing agreeing bank, not the whole accounts

When the president signs on the annual accounts for her WI she is stating that she agrees the bank balance is correct and not that the accounts are correct.

Accounts to be signed before passing to IFE

If you are questioning why the accounts must be signed by both the treasurer and president before the accounts are examined. The reason for this is the charity commission document "[Independent examination of charity accounts: examiners \(CC32\)](#)" which all independent financial examiners have to follow. This states: -

13.16 The examiner must not sign their report before the trustees have approved and signed the trustees' annual report and the accounts. Until the trustees have approved and signed the accounts, the accounts are draft and not final.

You will notice that you don't have to have them signed before you send them to the Examiner, but before the Examiner can sign report, but this should be exception not the rule so please try and send signed accounts to your examiner.

Pre-signed cheques

You must **not** pre-sign a cheque, even with one signature.

There are several reasons for this:

A If your bank discover you do this, they could close your account immediately as you are breaching the terms of your account, as the signatory is meant to confirm what is being paid and cannot do so if the cheque is blank.

B You are putting your money at risk. If a fraudster got hold of this cheque and added one signature the bank would still honour the cheque as it has been signed by one valid signatory who has basically said "I am happy for you to pay anyone you like any amount of money". If the fraudster adds both signatures you are protected.

C Under the independent examination rules an examiner must qualify your accounts as it is considered as not taking proper care of the funds of the charity.

Single online authorisation/ debit and credit cards

Please remember that the WI constitution requires that bank accounts are set up with 3 signatories and any 2 to sign. This is to protect the money of the WI, so no person can spend on their own, but it's always approved by another

As a debit card requires only one signature it cannot meet the requirements of the constitution. Many banks do issue them. The reasons they can is that they see it as our responsibility to make sure we obey our rules, they don't have to make sure we obey them. Some WIs have been told that they need a debit card to bank at a post office so have requested one. Your bank might offer as an alternative a "banking card" which allows banking but cannot be used to spend money.

If you use on online banking for your WI, you should use dual online authorisation. Some banks only offer single online authorisation, in which case see the Treasurers' handbook for guidance in how to reduce the risk to your money. If you have single online authorisation, please check with your bank if they can now offer you dual authorisation as some have updated their systems in the last couple of years.

Account spreadsheet (May 24)

An updated spreadsheet was issued in May 24. This is the one on the SFWI website.

<https://surreyfedwi.org.uk/resources/document-library-2/>

By the time you look at the website I might have uploaded a newer version, but this only have changes to formats etc and not the main working pages. It accessed from the same place

The major changes are

A Balancing accounts – to help you realise when your accounts do not balance a rather scary red box appears on the financial statement when they do not. When your bank reconciles, with PI on the payment sheet being the same as the bank statement, all you need to put the bank statement balance into F62 on the financial statement. Once you have added your closing petty cash and deposit accounts amounts as needed the financial statements should balance.

B Petty cash sheet. I've added a petty cash sheet that feeds to the receipts and payments pages. For those that use petty cash please let me know of any changes needed. To make this work, if you bank money from your petty cash you need to put it in your payments page as a negative payment not on your receipts page. There is no subscription received column on the petty cash sheet – this is to encourage you to bank all subs as received and only retain small other receipts, if you have to. Where possible you should bank all receipts and not retain any in your cash tin.