

## THE HARBOUR W.I.

President Diane Beere welcomed 55 members to the February meeting of the Harbour WI, where Committee members were dressed in Hi-Viz jackets to demonstrate the fire regulations.

Fern Lulham together with her Guide Dog Nancy, was the very inspirational speaker. Fern was born with Aniridia, a genetic disorder defined by the absence of the iris. This causes significantly reduced vision, and Fern was telling the members “What Life is Like When You Are Blind”. Fern confessed to moments of loneliness, feeling isolated, and not fitting in. She went on to explain how she copes with those moments.

She is a confident, bubbly and attractive young woman, mainly due to her parents telling her she was no different to anybody else. If she wanted to do something, she could – only differently! She studied Mixed Media for 4 years at University in North Carolina, hoping to get radio work. When the jobs didn't come, she had to reassess.



She put off having a Guide Dog because she was worried it would stereotype her. But – it explained everything to everyone! She felt liberated! People accepted her more! Fern found that her voice is her vision and has worked for Radio 4 and the World Service as well as her talks. She said she has ‘wobbles’ but encouraged everyone to use her coping methods. Focus on three things that you want to do, and do them! – But mostly “Be kind to yourself.”

During tea members were able to meet Nancy. She was the most adorable Golden Labrador and loved the attention.

After tea, there was a table Quiz set by Donna, with a February theme. The winning table were given a bag of sweets – to share!

The Annual Meeting of the ESWFI is being held in the De La Warr in Bexhill on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026, with Charlie Dimmock from Love Your Garden as one of the speakers. The Craft Club is on the 16<sup>th</sup> February; Lunch Club is at the Royal Oak and Castle on the 18<sup>th</sup> February, and the Family History Club on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February. The 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday Coffee Morning is on the 24<sup>th</sup> February at Seasons.

The next meeting is on the 9<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm in the Sovereign Suite of the Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club. Eastbourne Council will be telling members what happens to their recycling. Information on the Harbour WI can be found on the S.H.R.A. website.

<https://www.shra.co.uk/wi/>