

How did you manage to find new members for the branch?

“Back in the 1980’s, we were all just being introduced to video recorders. I didn’t have very much money and I didn’t have a video recorder, but I saw an offer at a local shop, that they would deliver a video recorder to your house, and if you didn’t like it, you could ask them to come and take it away again the next day.

So I arranged it and set up a meeting at my house in the evening. I invited some women I already knew from the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, plus women I knew from local toddler groups around the neighbourhood and my next-door neighbours. I just thought, ‘I’ll see what they make of it. They may not be interested at all but I can only try.’

I had a copy of Helen Caldicott’s video about Three-mile Island that someone lent to me, so I actually had my front room filled with about 15 women and they all watched it with varying reactions. Some of them were obviously too shocked to want to do anything about it and just enjoyed the coffee and the biscuits, but others were keen to meet again. So I got their names and then I said I’d be in touch.

The following morning I set about returning the video recorder. I phoned the shop and said ‘I’m sorry, I didn’t like it. I didn’t understand it at all. You’ll have to come and take it away.’ And so they did!”