

Reflection on UK WILPF and its organisational attitudes

Well, I found WILPF as an organisation a bit strange. I thought it was rather archaic at the time, given that I was a woman of just 29, and its practices seemed to be somewhat behind the times. Then as time went on, there were a few little hints of things that I didn't really understand.

One was that there seemed to be, amongst a few older members not so much in Worthing but in other parts of the UK, a bit of reticence about getting involved with Greenham Common activities or contributing in any way to them.

Another thing they used to do was having residential Annual General Meetings (AGM), which lasted a few days. I felt this was quite unfair. How could women, let alone afford to go because they were usually at quite pricey places, organise their child care and family life around the arrangements? Hazel and some women from Greenham Common did get a slot to go speak at one of these; I believe it was at Swanwick in Derbyshire. But they all came back very disappointed, because they all felt they'd got a rather cool reception. I couldn't understand that at all.

Of course the issue about the residential AGM's went on and on for years, with me trying to bring it up, trying to change things. Finally, at some point, only in this century, they agreed that they could give it a whirl. Lo and behold, we did attract quite a different audience, most of them younger, which is what we were saying we wanted for years, in order to keep WILPF afloat.