



Network News Christmas 2015

Hello all,

Well that is another year almost wrapped up, it's been a fantastic one for WiRE thanks in the main to all you fabulous Network Leaders. We've added more Networks than we have lost and have ventured into Scotland for the first time. Some long-standing leaders have stepped down but new people have stepped into their shoes and the total count of WiRE Networks stands at 45 with about 5 bubbling under – at a conservative estimate that's about 450 WiRE Network meetings and probably 9,000 networkers – a fantastic achievement and an invaluable source of support for women in business all over the UK.

WiRE Networks pack a real punch and your work really does have national renown; as demonstrated recently when WiRE Network Leader Elaine Pritchard from the Burton Network met Chancellor George Osborne who said "Oh yes WiRE, we have terrific respect for they work they do," there is more information [here](#). So pats on the back and champagne all round and here's hoping 2016 will be just as brilliant for you, your businesses and your networks.

Forgive us for communicating via a Round Robin, we just wanted to extend our huge thanks to you and all the hard work you do on behalf of WiRE and for women in business and to wish you a very restful and lovely festive season.

Below is the final **Network Leader Newsletter** for 2015 with all sorts of important bits and pieces - but feel free to completely ignore it until 2016!

New Website – As with all these things it has been a bit delayed but will definitely be launched before the end of the year. We are hoping for a "soft" launch first followed by emails to all members letting them know about the new functions and how to make the most of them. We will send Network Leaders a guide soon but this is a quick precis of the changes:

- Hooray – Network Leaders will now only have a **single login** (the same as your member login) but you will see some extra options that will allow you to update your Network Page and add and amend your events.
- You can add a new Cover Photo (like Facebook) to appear at the top of your Network Page
- Events are now much easier to add and amend; can we make a plea that **you keep your events up to date**, most new people find you via the WiRE Website and it shows the world just how dynamic and busy the WiRE Network is
- Social Media links are easy to add
- Blogs, stories and information articles can be added easily and quickly and a link appears on your profile page
- The site is designed for maximum Search Engine Optimisation so keeping your Network Page and personal profile up to date and adding articles and news will be really good for marketing

Members – As you know WiRE is a membership organisation and the only income we have is the £50 joining fee. Non-members are very welcome to attend WiRE Networks once or twice before they join, but currently only about 50% of people attending are members and to stay afloat we need to explore ways of encouraging more to join (and renew). All other membership groups (from the WI to the Scouts) charge an annual subscription along with the meeting fee so we are not alone, nor expensive – we just need to find ways to make membership “the norm.” Ideally we would have an electronic beeper solution but this is probably not practical so we have been thinking about a **dated membership card** which would need to be shown at each meeting. We would appreciate your thoughts on this idea. In the meantime, it is very quick and easy for us to send you current data in time for your meeting to check who is and isn't a member – just email fiona@wireuk.org

No Shows – Not only the scourge of good networking but also potentially a big financial problem. Facebook has revolutionised event booking but has somehow discouraged commitment. The only real way to overcome no shows (or at least the financial consequence) is to take payment in advance and people seem to be willing to pay in advance for other networks. So like membership, we would like to make it the norm for WiRE. However, all payment solutions incur some costs. Paypal and EventBrite cost around 5% per transaction + a set-up fee. BACS payments are free but it is fiddly and this in itself is a cost. The WiRE Website event booking allows you to take payment on booking but the payment comes to WiRE – this means you invoice us after the event – so there is a delay but it is free. We will be emailing all members and networkers early next year to highlight the problem and encourage people to consider the consequences – but again your thoughts would be appreciated

Bank Accounts – More WiRE Networks are setting up Bank Accounts so just a bit of information about the most appropriate. We recommend that groups set up a Community Account (rather than a charity account) because they don't require a charity or company number (there is a really good explanation [here](#)). These accounts only need a constitution and two signatories, they generally don't charge or pay interest and are available at many High Street Banks (Nat West and the Coop come highly recommended) and most offer online banking along with cheque book etc. If you need a constitution just let me know – we have a WiRE template.

Twitter - #WiREHour please let your contacts know to join us **7pm – 8pm every Tuesday** it is great fun (you can eat your tea while you tweet).

FaceBook - Cheryl Turner (Network Leader for Cannock) has now set up a Network Leaders Facebook Page – do email her if you want to be added to join the conversation cheryl@taobusinesssolutions.co.uk and she will send you an invite.

FINALLY

The WiRE Conference is scheduled for Wednesday April 6th 2016 at Harper Adams. We have yet to set the theme but do have some ideas. It's not funded this year so the cost is likely to be around £60 - £70 for members and we are hoping for about 150 delegates. Network Leaders places are free but only one per group. We do hope to see you in April.