



Report March 2023

OUR PURPOSE

Activate exists to equip, resource, train and inspire Christian women to be active in sharing God's love in natural, meaningful ways.

For nearly 60 years, we've been active all over the country. We do everything we can to encourage you to make connections and develop friendships with people outside your church circle, equipping you to journey alongside them and confidently share your faith.

The talks are available as podcasts through our website.

Future Plans

Plans are already well underway for next year's weekend. The theme is By Faith, based on Hebrews 11. We'll have another amazing keynote speaker, and we'll be back at Staverton Park, Daventry for our third year running.

OUR ACTIVITIES

There are six main streams of activity:

1. The Weekend Away

As far as we know, there's always been an annual weekend away. It's a fun conference encouraging each other in our faith, friendship and outreach. This year we have 220 women attending. We know these events are a highlight of your year and several people bring large groups.



"The balance between practical advice and spiritual guidance was spot on. Also, to have the teaching and leading from an all-female team is such a great inspiration for all of us but especially the Miss Activate leaders of the future."

2. Days Away

We're invited to run mini versions of our weekend away at local churches across the country. We provide the speakers, the programme and the activities and collaborate on the pre-event admin. We've visited groups from Hazelmere and Sidcup to Tamworth and Nottingham. It's the perfect way to gather the women in your local area; it's a great way to get a feel for the Activate vision; and it's a welcome support for small teams or individuals keen to jump-start their women's ministry.

Themes are personalised to your preference. Currently, we run Restart, Emerge, Night and Day, and Stand Strong.

If you're interested in finding out more or would like to book a provisional date, we'd love to start the conversation with you.

Future Plans

We aim to run four days away in 2023, with Woking and Littlehampton booked in so far.

"It helped me to know we're not alone and there are plenty of other people in similar situations. **I was given tools to move on.**"

3. Speakers and Book Tour

The days aways have also merged with a book tour this year – Fiona has been in great demand all over the country, most recently in South Devon where over 100 women joined us for breakfast with Fiona.

"The talks pointed us to Christ and away from ourselves **encouraging us to spend time in God's Word** and knowing that whatever we do can only be done by the Holy Spirit enabling us."

Future Plans

Our next event is at Moorlands Bible College on 1st April: A morning with Fiona Castle.

If you think a morning or evening with Fiona would suit your setting please get in touch. You could also request a speaker for events in your church. Please see the team profiles on our website.

4. Vlogs and Video Meetings

Apart from our events, there's a lot going on behind the scenes and online. Over Covid we enjoyed several Click events – these were a real blessing when we were isolated and missing interaction. These Click meetings took place on Zoom. A real highlight was our Christmas party at the end of our Christmas Island Discs series in 2021. If an online event is something that would still work best for you, please let us know.

We also compiled a series of vlogs for 2022's series, The Christmas Edition. This featured writers, devotions and discussion based on our Be devotion book. You can catch up on all these videos on our YouTube channel. All the resources, including handouts and talks from our Click events are now available to download and buy on our online shop.

Last summer we produced a very well received series on end-of-life issues, grief, and death, called The Last Taboo.

Future Plans

We are happy to deliver further online events if or when these are needed.

5. Social Media

Our social media reach is growing. We generally reach over 1000 people a week through our activity on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We have 653 followers on Facebook, 338 on Instagram and 437 on Twitter.

In the last 90 days our posts reached 6,400 people. Our engagement has increased by 75% in the past three months.

We've been receiving training from a funder finder this year and the key takeaways for us have been to showcase our impact, and to use social media to our best advantage in promoting our charity and our areas of expertise.

"I feel I've been challenged and transformed as well as rested and refreshed. Praise God. Hope to get the team down to our church and spread the love!"

Future plans

We aim to increase our reach, through releasing more content across all platforms and increasing our engagement through connecting with our followers and encouraging our supporters to share posts.



6. Written Content

We're still keen to produce relevant and helpful articles inspiring you to friendship evangelism and a closer relationship with God. If you would like to contribute, be interviewed, or know of an inspirational woman you feel we should profile, please get in touch.

You can also read our past articles in the archives online.

2025 will be the 10-year anniversary of our *Unlocking the Door* book.

Our most recent book, *Be: Godly Wisdom to Live By*, by Fiona Castle and Friends, was published by Authentic Media in Feb 2022.

This has been a really exciting project and its impact has exceeded expectations. Over Christmas it appeared on several bestseller lists for daily devotionals.

Copies were shared with our weekend away delegates in 2022 and many bought additional copies (and in some cases a box of 50 books) as gifts for friends and neighbours.

Future Plans

Some of our articles and blogs will tie in with our weekend theme from Hebrews 11, looking at characters who lived by faith.

We're in the early stages of planning a new book. Producing quality writing and publications will remain central to our mission as we move forward.

OUR IMPACT

"Don't despise the day of small things, be **natural authentic and be yourself** - you have a voice"

"Thank you so much to the speakers for being so **open and honest** with their life struggles - made the sessions relatable and not just theoretical."

"**Keep being me! Keep being open and honest** about my life and my faith; let God put you in the right place for the right conversations."

"At the meeting I felt that God is asking me to organise a **community event**. So I really appreciate the opportunity to step back and hear from God - thank you."

"So glad to hear such relevancy and realness that makes the message one that **I feel easily able to respond to in my everyday life**."

"That God can use simple friendships to encourage people, **step by step**, towards having a faith of their own."

STAYING RELEVANT

The 2022 Talking Jesus Survey from the Evangelical Alliance indicates that the activity of evangelism needs to be taken by the congregation.

Making friends with non-Christians is one of the main topics we cover at all of our Activate Your Life events. We're passionate about bringing this message to women all over the country.

The survey shows that more people want to know more about Jesus. After a conversation about Jesus with a Christian friend, 33% of not-yet Christians wanted to know more about Jesus.

However, 44% of non-Christians who know a Christian have never had a conversation with them about their faith.

So much of the relational work happens with those close to us. We provide training and encouragement to help with these conversations.



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