

# SIGBI President's July 2018 Blog



## Empower Today, Enable Tomorrow

Hello it is Sue back again this month with a monthly message.

Wherever I have been visiting in the last 6 months I have always been aware of listening to the members and their concerns or thoughts about this wonderful organisation.



In June I was honoured to represent the membership of Soroptimist International GBI at a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Whilst I was there I met up with two members of SI Bournemouth who had been invited because their Club had just been informed that they had won the [Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2018](#). This award is the equivalent of an MBE for groups.



Obviously the ladies were over the moon about their win, but when I told them they were the first Soroptimist Club to win such an award their joy knew no bounds. They could not believe it. I told them to enjoy their win as I firmly believe that more Clubs could win this prestigious award. The **closing date for the 2019 awards is September 14<sup>th</sup>**. Please find out more information by visiting [www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service](http://www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service).

I would also like to congratulate **Hilary Page MBE** (SI Epsom & District) and **Audrey Forster MBE** (SI Preston) for each winning an [NAWO Elder Award](#).

One of the most frequent comments I hear from members is about publicity or in our case the lack of publicity at a national level. The Bournemouth Club now have that publicity and by default so does every other Soroptimist who is working to improve the lives of women and girls everywhere.

I have often spoken this year about the need to “**empower today, enable tomorrow**”. I firmly believe that this includes ourselves as members as well as those we help. We are often referred to as “the world’s best kept secret” and the general public are amazed when they find out exactly what we do to educate, empower and enable women and girls to reach their potential.



Therefore we need to move ourselves and our Clubs into the spotlight. The public need to know what relevant and important work we carry out. We must communicate more at every level of the organisation. But communication works two ways. We need to listen as well as speak. Listening is a skill which is sometimes sadly underestimated.

Every member I have met is proud to be a Soroptimist and it is that pride we must harness as we move forward as an organisation. I spent a wonderful afternoon speaking about friendship and Soroptimism with the members of the Region of Northern England. The energy in the room was palpable and it gave me a real pride in being a Soroptimist!!!

In friendship  
Sue Biggs  
SIGBI President 2018-2019