

Annual Programme Action Review

SI Canterbury AGM – 25th April 2019

SI Canterbury has had another very successful year with regard to our Programme Action work. In this review, I have referenced the various projects and work with other organisations in the same way as the new layout for the Monthly Programme Action Report for ease of reference.

Club Projects

Domestic Abuse – The Women’s Refuge – our work with the Women’s Refuge has gone from strength to strength this year with many new initiatives such as cookery with the women, arts and craft work and most recently mug painting. Crabtree & Evelyn kindly provided Christmas gifts for the women and the club provided gifts for the children. £146.88 collected at the Gulbenkian in 2017 for the 16 Days of Activism was earmarked for expenses incurred by the DA team’s work at the Refuge. The team are continually looking at new ways in which they can support the women and their children.

Domestic Abuse – Rising Sun – we have continued to support the work of the Rising Sun through Nancy’s weekly attendance at the One Stop Café, to which she takes lovely cakes kindly made by her husband, Ian. Nancy spends time listening to the attendees who present a variety of problems, some of which can be quite challenging. Maggie has now completed her shadowing at the One Stop Shop in Canterbury and will soon be starting at the One Stop Shop in Herne Bay, also helping out at Canterbury if they are short of volunteers.

Modern Day Slavery/Human Trafficking – the highlight of the year for this team was the Conference held on 18th October – International Anti-Slavery Day. Speakers included representatives from Stop The Traffik - Kent Group, Kent Police, the Salvation Army and the Sophie Hayes Trust. The event was attended by over 120 delegates from a wide range of organisations. The team has started 2019 by obtaining funding for lorry stickers with details of the Modern Slavery Helpline to enable members of the public to report possible cases of human trafficking. There are also other plans for fundraising.

Elderly People’s Isolation – following training with Expression Arts in Canterbury, Millie volunteered with the Cognitive Therapy Group in Swalecliffe and Age UK in Herne Bay and Jill volunteered with the project at Thanet Resource Centre in Canterbury working with people with early dementia. This culminated in an art exhibition ‘Our Work of Art 2019 – With These Hands’ at the Garage Café in Canterbury. Catherine Arnell, Project Leader with Expression Arts also came to speak to the club at our February meeting.

Regional Project

Jacque Emery Award – the aim of the project is to encourage literacy and essay writing in Year 6 pupils. The theme of the essay for this year is ‘To what extent have women worldwide achieved equality?’ There has been a very mixed level of response from the Region and our club has only received 6 essays from one primary school – St Peter’s Methodist School in Canterbury. We are currently judging the essays for our club’s winner, whose essay will then go forward to the Regional judging panel. The final winner, runner up and winning school will be awarded their prizes at the Regional Meeting on 8th June.

Federation Project

The Meru Women’s Garden Project – we are now in the final year of the project and club members have continued to support the project with a range of fund raising activities. A balance of £624.21 was held in the club’s account at the end of December, which consisted of proceeds from the barn dance and sale of merchandise. £500 was donated to the project in January 2019. A further donation of £1,000 was made following the ‘Grease Singalong’ and the International Women’s Day dinner. Donations from the club since the beginning of the project are now approaching £14,000.

Organisations SI Canterbury Supports

Amnesty International – we have continued to support Amnesty International in Canterbury through letter writing campaigns and by signing cards at Christmas. We have very recently renewed our agreement with them and hope that in the future we can increase the reciprocal support of each other's events.

Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement – members provided toiletries for women in this refugee camp in north-western Uganda.

Canterbury Sustainable Development Goals Forum – Jane W, Dawn R, Carol T and I attend meetings of the Forum. The work of Soroptimists has been referred to in a comprehensive report recently published measuring Canterbury against the SDGs and making recommendations to city and county councils.

Foodbank – members continue to volunteer at the local foodbanks and a total of £690 was donated as at 31st December. Monthly donations from members stand at £55.

Macmillan Cancer – Mary kindly hosted the coffee morning in 2018 and a total of £147 was raised for the charity.

Prison Reform Trust – we continue to receive reports from the Prison Reform Trust and lobby government to increase the funding made available for women's services organised by the community, which are key to providing solutions to women's offending.

Save the Children - members of the club supported the Sale Trail held in Harbledown last August and £150 was donated from the proceeds of the Trafficking Conference. 2019 is the Centenary Year of the charity with two key events taking place, which it is hoped members will support:

- 19th May – Choral Evensong at Canterbury Cathedral
- 15th June – Centenary Gala Dinner

Target Ovarian Cancer – we have continued to support the charity in a number of ways. Donations totalling £675 were made up to December 2018, which included the proceeds of the International Women's Day dinner in 2018. In October, several members walked the Crab & Winkle line from Canterbury to Whitstable raising £85 and I volunteered at the annual sponsored walk in London. I have also attended a research briefing in March of this year and will be acting as a host at the reception for their 27 runners in the London Marathon and their families on 28th April.

Via Francigena - Soroptimists from Canterbury, Folkestone and Croydon walked the first leg of the Via Francigena from Canterbury to Shepherdswell in March and there are plans to complete the remaining section of the walk to Dover later in the Spring.

I have really enjoyed my two years as Programme Action Officer for SI Canterbury and I will be continuing my Programme Action work as the Regional Representative for South East England. Hopefully, I will be passing the reins on to Jan Tebbett, who I am sure will be an excellent Programme Action Officer for our club and I wish her all the best in her new role.

Yvonne Freeman

Programme Action Officer – SI Canterbury

23rd April 2019