

ANNUAL PROGRAMME ACTION REPORT FOR CANTERBURY CLUB (2022-3)

OVERVIEW

This year, despite some changes to the club, several of us have been enthusiastic to develop as well as to sustain a vibrant programme of work and to widen our team-based projects. The changes for us have been:

1. Plans for chartering Whitstable Club in October 2023. This will involve the loss of four Canterbury Club members and the need for these members to focus on establishing three independent projects (two national and one international) prior to club chartering (these projects are reported briefly below)
2. Changes to programme action reporting (now on the new SIGBI platform, THE HUB). The new platform should make programme action forms easier to complete for everyone in the longer term. However, not all recent projects reported by our club seem to be visible on the data-base. Our club now has a word document to assist on-line programme reporting for all club members who lead projects.
3. A change of club Programme Action Officer mid-year (November 2022).

The SIGBI Programme Action database shows 35 programme focus forms (PFFs) entered by SI Canterbury between May 2022 and 20th April 2023. These PFF reports include ongoing as well as time-limited projects.

ONGOING PROJECTS

SUPPORT FOR SURVIVERS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Purpose

Support for three local charities that accommodate and provide community support for women escaping domestic abuse. Our relationships with these charities has been developed over several years, with support varying depending on changing needs.

Team Development

Team members have attended two on-line seminars this year: on perpetrators of domestic violence; and on the current policing focus on DA and safety on the streets for women and girls.

Three team members are now trained and registered volunteers for work directly with women service-users in the Rising Sun community support services or at Liberty House (their residential accommodation).

Ongoing work

a. CANTERBURY WOMEN'S REFUGE (12 women in self-contained flats managed by Clarion Housing)

- last summer we raised around £800 for furniture, pots, and plants for the Refuge Garden.
- at the request of the Refuge, we donated stocks of toiletries and period products.
- in December we contributed to a 'pop-up boutique', with provision of clothing, accessories, and toiletries; we also delivered winter clothing for women and children; we also purchased and delivered Christmas gifts (of £180)
- On International Women's Day we provided cakes and attended a coffee morning with residents.
- recently purchase and delivery of chocolate Easter eggs and younger children's Easter toys.

b. THE RISING SUN (accommodation for eight younger mothers who are homeless or escaping domestic abuse, counselling, sign-posting and social support across Kent and Medway).

- In 2022 we donated £263 to Rising Sun for the charity's project of providing a creche for children while their mothers attend support groups.
- In 2023, £240 for their ongoing projects.

LAND & SEA (environment, biodiversity, and sustainability).

Purpose

This team was established in October 2022, growing out of their ongoing partnership to act on climate change and biodiversity issues and as part of the Canterbury Climate Action Partnership (CCAP).

Team Development

Since October, community engagement, awareness raising and club learning has grown considerably. The team have established ongoing working collaboration with the Bumblebee Conservation organisation and with the Canterbury Biodiversity Network. The team represents our club in this Network.

Ongoing work:

- Four Beach Cleans at Seasalter (with the cooperation from the city council)
- In September 2022, and in alliance with CCAP, club members manned a SI Canterbury stall at the Canterbury Climate Action Festival, where the aims, environmental campaigns and achievements of our club were promoted and new contacts made.
- In May 2022 team members took part in the Greenpeace Plastic Count raising awareness about single-use plastic.
- Team members began weeding in Dane John, Canterbury public gardens (June 2022)

- With team members, our club made a 'Plastic Free Pledge' and began a working alliance with other local organisations to obtain Plastic Free Canterbury status (this status was obtained in March 2023 and required 30 local allies to achieve this)
- Team members prepared and distributed attractive and accessible biodiversity leaflets (to raise awareness across club and region)
- Club members completed litter picks in Canterbury, cleaning up local streets as part of The Great British Spring Clean.
- In March 2023 two team members rapped a wonderful presentation of their Land and Sea achievements at the SISEE regional meeting

MASON'S COMMUNITY MILE with WOMEN'S FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Purpose:

The intention of the community walks, and now friendship group, is to socialise with women from migrant groups who want to improve their English.

Team Development:

In August 2022 7 club members trained with the MASON FOUNDATION, with 6 members receiving their CPD for leading 'Mason's Mile' community walks. Our second 'walk' was accompanied by a member of the Mason Foundation.

Ongoing Work

Since January, three walks have been organised, involving eight women who are refugees or who take English language classes with Kent Refugee Action Network (KRAN). Five women from KRAN are very keen to participate in, and to continue both the weekly friendship meetings and a monthly community walk.

TEEN MOMS' PROJECT

Purpose

Following a very successful international friendship evening, the club has developed a fund-raising alliance with SI Cape of Good Hope to raise money for one of their ongoing local projects: the 'Teen Mom's' (Beautiful Flower) project. This local project provides support and counselling for young, disadvantaged mothers and require funds for the provision of baby supplies and women's basic toiletries. Initial fund raising is scheduled to begin in July 2023.

1. REENGAGE (formerly Visit the Elderly).

Purpose

Following a club presentation by REENGAGE several years previously, the club has again followed up the possibility of working with this local branch of the national charity to contribute to services for older women, or women's older family members. REENGAGE organise monthly, hosted Sunday tea parties for people who live alone and are over 75 years of age. Volunteers host an event or drive guests to the event.

Team Development

One club member is now trained to work to participate in hosting Sunday tea parties for single elderly people in Canterbury/Whitstable, and a second has training in progress.

The first tea party hosting by a club member (for five older people and their drivers) is scheduled for summer 2023.

LOBBYING and RAISING AWARENESS

1. Between 2019 and 2003, two club members participated in the END POVERTY WORKING GROUP (that grew out of club participation in the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FORUM). With local politicians and academics, they have designed and distributed an in-depth survey of 30 relevant local organisations to identify the scope and issues of poverty in Canterbury. The report is now published and makes recommendations to local and central government and the voluntary sector on strategies to reduce poverty. This report is a significant achievement for our club, and for soroptimists more widely.
2. We organised our third 'SILENT MARCH' through Canterbury as part of the 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE and involved the local domestic abuse charities in this event.
3. We continue to represent the club in the Canterbury Social Development Goals Forum since its establishment in 2018. This forum includes over 40 partner organisations.
4. We posted and signed multiple on-line petitions, primarily to government to manage climate change and improve biodiversity; reduce sewage discharge into our seas and rivers; and in support of health service workers were circulated to the club in 2022-3. However, very few acquired sufficient individual signatures to be reported as collective club action.
5. Our partnership with Amnesty International, Canterbury Branch was revived last year and is ongoing. However, there have been few signed petitions with Amnesty this year, and the Write for Rights campaign did not gain sufficient interest within the club for it to become a collective club action.

FUND RAISING

1. The charity car park (used by many charities across the Canterbury and Whitstable areas) has been wo(manned) by SI Canterbury 3 times this year and raised about £1,700 (with 50% of proceeds to Whitstable Primary School and 50% to our chosen charities (including Age International, Ukraine; The Rising Sun; and the Regional President's fund).
2. Following a club speaker event (with a donation of £50), two club members completed a sponsored walk, raising £94 for CONCILIATION RESOURCES.
3. The CHRISTMAS CAROLS LUNCH is a significant and regular event for Canterbury SI in several respects: as an opportunity of raise awareness of Canterbury SI with regional members, local organisations, and dignitaries; and a way of raising significant funds for an international charity (with £601 raised for SAVE THE CHILDREN fund); and as a Christmassy event for us!
4. One member cooked for friends and raised £330 for RED CROSS, UKRAINE
5. Our epic '5 Pence-in-a-Bottle' was cashed in, raising £19.85 for WATERAID.

Where possible, we have aimed to raise cash funds from a wider circle of contributors, rather than always calling on club members and their families.

DONATING

1. Following two very successful 'in club' 'Orange Tabletop' Sales (to mark 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM (see above)) we raised money for the Women's Refuge (see above); and for CATCHING LIVES homeless charity (see below)
2. We also organised the donation of Christmas chocolates from ASDA to ALL SAINTS' COMMUNITY LARDER
3. In addition, our club continues to support:
 - MEDAILLE TRUST: Club members donated underwear, bedding, towels, breast feeding bras and period products as requested by the Trust for women in the safe house. We also donated £50 to the charity when workers from the safe house spoke at our July meeting.
 - CATCHING LIVES: In addition to money raised from our 'Orange Tabletop' sale (£48.50) we donated packs of winter underwear for homeless women.
 - THE FOOD BANK: Five members make regular donations through our club (amounting to about £40 a month).

-LEND WITH CARE: The club loans about £15 a month to this charity and receives repayments on this money that is distributed to women entrepreneurs in disadvantaged countries. Loans have been granted to entrepreneurs in Asia, Africa, South America, and Palestinian Territories. There have been no defaults on any loans to date.

-In addition, we donated to the following charities: Age UK Ukraine Appeal (£137); Language Lessons for Ukraine Refugees (£25); DEC Red Cross Pakistan Appeal (£100).

WHITSTABLE CLUB NEW PROJECTS

Members of the pending Whitstable Club have also completed the following projects:

- 'KEEP WHITSTABLE TIDY': Members partnered with Canterbury City Council and Keep Britain Tidy and collected 12kg of rubbish from along the Crab and Winkle public way.
- 'WALK FOR WATERAID': Members raised about £70 with a sponsored walk.
- LEND WITH CARE donation with over £250 raised from the Charity Car Park.

Mary Adams (Programme Action Officer) 19.4.23.