

**Soroptimist  
International  
Edinburgh  
news  
notes  
anecdotes**

**SIEnna 222 January 2024**

**President's Message**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



Happy New Year to all Edinburgh Soroptimists and to our sisters locally and around the world. It is always a pleasure to receive news from our friendship clubs and keep up to date with the very wide range of actions being carried out.

I am looking forward to another year of SIE activity whether this is:

- taking forwards existing activity
- thinking about and planning new ideas for action
- building our advocacy profile
- creating new partnerships & of course
- the SIGBI Conference in November in Edinburgh.

At the first business meeting of the year, we already made some potentially significant changes to the scheduling of our meetings. The aim of the adjustments is to enable us to keep up the momentum

and clear focus for our meetings but at the same time reduce some of the pressure on people's time each month.

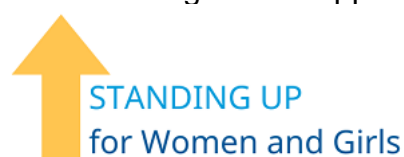
The proposal is to:

- continue to hold a business meeting on the second Wednesday of each month
- change the frequency of speaker meetings so that they alternate with an Orange café event each month
- Orange cafes will be held either on the 25<sup>th</sup> of a month or on a Saturday to make it easier for those working to join them
- to have a specific focus for our speakers on an area that we are researching or working on and where it is not possible to find an appropriate person, to use that meeting time for more in depth club discussion of an activity or issue
- friendship group meetings and other meetings will continue to be planned as before.

As we head full tilt into the Winter months here in Scotland it can be hard not to feel a bit low and lacking in energy. The great thing about our parks and gardens is that signs of Spring appear very quickly after the Autumn and even the sight of the smallest flower can be cheering!



Let's make 2024 the best year it possibly can be for "Standing Up for Women". Let's make our voices and the voices of the women and girls we support be heard.



Liz  
President 2024

### **BREAKING NEWS!!!!**

I am excited and delighted to let you know that on Thursday 18th January I heard that SIGBI has offered our very own Pat Black, lifelong honorary membership in recognition of her work and input to SI. She has accepted!

I know that you will all join me in congratulating her on what is a long overdue acknowledgement of her tireless and thoughtful contributions to Standing Up for Women and Girls.

Pat, on behalf of the club huge congratulations! I hope you take a moment to remind yourself of all of your achievements.

With very best wishes and respect  
President Liz



### **Minutes of SIE Business Meeting January 10th 2024**

**Vision & Mission** - read by President Liz  
**Apologies**- Irene, Kathleen, Elaine, Gari

#### **Matters arising from 8<sup>th</sup> November**

- Liz to write leaflet re Orange the World, explaining sextortion

**ACTION** – Liz to draft

- Contact Inspiring Leith (part of Bethany Trust) who provide community support to the 'Banana' flats in Leith, regarding helping them with e.g. fundraising, book sales

**ACTION** - Alison to contact re possible speaker and advice on how SI Edinburgh can help.

#### **Key issues:**

##### **SI Scotland South Region (SISS)**

New management structure in place.  
PAMM – Programme action, Admin., Membership, Money

Steering group meeting held on 29th November 2023 with volunteers from each-team.

Check-in meeting on 23rd January 2024 to clarify aims of each team and to discuss progress and any issues encountered.

**ACTION** – Admin Team have requested Chris as club secretary to email Scotland South Region club secretaries directly rather than via Region, if any SIE information needs to be circulated.

#### **Flax to linen**

SI Edinburgh members visited Edinburgh College of Art on 22nd November for a demonstration by Colette Paterson of the fascinating process of growing flax at the campus, then treating it to ultimately becoming linen.

**ACTION:** The customary speaker donation of £30.00 will be made with the wish for the recipient to be a student. Dorothy to liaise with Alison re payment.

There was discussion regarding funding an annual prize for student work on sustainable textiles.

**ACTION** - Alison and Liz to meet with Colette to discuss a possible proposal. Potential to use money from the legacy fund to support this.

#### **Communications**

Discussion on how to streamline distribution of the many emails received. Headline email e.g. for action, information, future discussion.

Send emails on a given day.

Judith asked for an idea of what to expect on a monthly basis - useful for new members.

SI Edinburgh email inbox - used by Liz, Anna, Nikki.

**ACTION:** Liz, Anna, Nikki to discuss streamlining when they have membership meeting. Anna to set up meeting.

#### **SIGBI Conference 1-3 November 2024**

No contact received yet.

**ACTION:** Liz to send New Year welcoming message to SIGBI President Ruth Healey.

#### **Other Updates**

1. **Orange cafes** - next at Red Cockerel cafe at St John's Church on 25th January 2024.

Discussion on:-

Having fewer cafes, perhaps quarterly.

Have more cafes on a Saturday.

Don't necessarily meet on 25th of the month.

Anna suggested having one cafe on 25th and next cafe on a Saturday.

Invite new members to an Orange cafe - this is happening on 25th January

Lindsey suggests a friendship meeting if not an Orange cafe month.

First cafe in Australia which provided info on domestic violence was held before Christmas.

## **2. Speaker meetings**

Liz suggested having a cafe and a speaker meeting alternate months.

This would mean 4 instead of 7 speaker meetings per year.

There is no official stipulation regarding SI meetings.

Only have speakers who are relevant to the club's activities.

Thea, a 3S trust candidate to speak about her work in Ghana on Zoom on 25th January

ACTION - Liz to discuss with Alison. (Post meeting note – discussed and agreed with Alison that speaker meetings would be alternate months to the Orange café meet ups going forwards and that if it is providing hard to find a speaker for a relevant subject area we use that time for other discussion.)

## **3. The Welcoming** (support in Edinburgh for refugees) conversation group

ACTION: Dorothy and Elaine to meet the team at The Welcoming on 19th January 2024, regarding SIE support to conversation cafes in 2024

Nikki to arrange a Zoom meeting with Liz, Dorothy and Elaine to discuss approach.

## **4. Orange the world campaign**

Thanks to Lindsey for distributing posters to a range of venues.

Liz sent posters to Heriot Watt head of safeguarding with covering letter explaining Orange the World as well as the other local Universities.

Judith has also distributed posters.

ACTION - Liz to send posters to Edinburgh college,

Chris to deliver to Fountainbridge Library, and the office of Joanna Cherry (MP)

Anna to deliver to north side of the city.

## **5. Women's hostel**

Lindsey delivered the gifts which were wrapped at SI meeting on 8th November 2023.

**6. Kids Love Clothes** (a charity that collects and distributes quality, donated clothes to children in need)

ACTION: Lindsey will put into SIENNA dates in February, March and April for possible help with ironing and sorting clothes. Members to let her know when they might be able to help.

## **Treasurer - Dorothy**

Donation to Childline who help re online abuse - part of our pledge for the 16 Days of Action – Donation of £50 sent.

Easyfundraising - £79.73 received.

ACTION - Nikki to put information in SIENNA to remind members how to sign up for EasyFundraising

## **Membership - Anna**

Membership - awaiting Judith's badge.

Dishi, SIGBI membership Director: Anna sent details of possible new member.

All Scotland Zoom meeting 15th January

## **Friendship Links**

SI Kirkintilloch - Liz to make contact

SI Scarborough asked Liz at the Belfast Conference re a Link - to pursue in 2024

## **SIENNA**

Articles to Gari by January 19<sup>th</sup>

## **AOCB**

- Discussion about our Phoenix Pledge – ACTION: agreed to amend final paragraph to reflect INTENTION to develop a campaign in 2024
- ACTION - Liz to keep in touch with City of Edinburgh Council re working together on prevention of violence against women/orange the world campaign

- Judith to research current issues and govt proposals re domestic homicide
- Vote for SIGBI Director of Finance – unanimous  
ACTION - Liz to send vote result to SIGBI by 17<sup>th</sup> January
- Membership booklet –  
ACTION: Nikki to produce and send to Edith for checking

#### **Date of next SIE meetings:**

24<sup>th</sup> January: Speaker meeting ZOOM only (Thea 3S trust candidate)

25<sup>th</sup> January: Orange café Red Cockerel, St Johns Church

14<sup>th</sup> February Business meeting in person and Zoom

#### **Recent communications from Chris November '23 to January '24**

SI Perth Zoom meeting about 16 Days of Activism - sent by Chris 12/11/2023

Invitation to Romanian club charter event - sent by Anna 13/11/2023

Invitation to Phoenix Pledge event on 20<sup>th</sup> November - sent by Liz 17/11/2023

SIGBI response to modernisation proposals - sent by Chris 18/11/2023

SIEnna 221 - sent by Gari 20/11/2023

Police Scotland advice on safety for women - sent by Alison 12/12/2023

Photographic line up of the gifts for the hostel in Hill Lane - sent by Lindsey 12/12

#### **Our Phoenix Pledge – update January**

For the 16 days of activism, and beyond, SIEinburgh pledge the following actions in support of the eradication of violence against women and girls:

- **A poster and social media campaign to raise awareness about online abuse and sextortion and the agencies who can be contacted for support. Posters will be offered to local libraries and community venues as well as to all colleges and Universities locally – achieved November 2023**
- An “Orange café” event to be held in the Parliament building café with an invitation to local MSPs to join

us in marking the start of the 16 days of activism – held and invitations sent November 2023

- **We will continue to raise awareness of the campaign through our cafes and by seeking publicity from the local press – ongoing.**
- Connecting with the Edinburgh Violence Against Women partnership group with a view to supporting their 2023 campaign and to developing collaborative events for 2024.
- **Taking part in Suzy Lamplugh Trust training “Stand up against street harassment” attended by several members of SIE 2023.**
- A financial donation to Childline provided December 2023.
- **Christmas gifts for the residents of the Edinburgh Women’s hostel – delivered December 2023.**
- In 2024 we intend to contribute to raising awareness about the issues involved and frequency of femicide in Scotland/Edinburgh. We intend to consider how best to do this in a way that draws attention to the issue whilst also commemorating those women who have been killed by a spouse or partner.

#### **Easyfundraising**

Through this initiative there are many popular companies offering to donate a percentage of your on line spend (at no extra cost to yourself !) and if you set it up right, every time you click on your favourite site (John Lewis, Sainsbury, Tesco, JD Sports, Amazon etc etc) it will automatically remind you to request the donation.

Click on Link below then scroll down the page and select sign-up. Now Search Cause – type in *Soroptimist International of Edinburgh* and click when the organisation is found. Select *Soroptimist International of Edinburgh* from the options available and it will take you to a

page that will give you the option to 'sign up and support'. Click on this button and simply follow the sign-up instructions.

You should also see a 'set donation reminder' in the top right hand corner (not always visible if signing on through Phone or Tablet. It is visible if signing on through your laptop/desktop). Click on that and it will ensure that when you click on the website of any participating retailer you will automatically be asked if you want a donation to be made. You are all set! [Support a Good Cause | Easyfundraising](#)

#### **KIDS LOVE CLOTHES**

**Christine from KLCs has offered us the following sorting dates for the Spring**

12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, or 19<sup>th</sup> February

5<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> March

2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> April

At the business meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> January, it was suggested these dates be made available on **SIEnna**

I would suggest that you pick 2 dates and hopefully we can agree on something suitable – please be aware that we meet at Ratho for about 10am – when Christine arrives - and you can stay for as short or as long as you can manage – and it may be a bit warmer out there in the barn by March or April though there is heating!! I will collate your availability by the next business in February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Lindsey

#### **SIGBI President's Message**

##### **Standing Up for Women in 2024: Empowerment Advocacy and Solidarity**

As we usher in the year 2024, the global pursuit of gender equality and women's rights stands as a critical imperative. From the corridors of power to local communities, the call to stand up for women has never been more resonant. In the wake of unprecedented challenges and shifting societal landscapes, it is essential to reinvigorate our commitment to empowering women, advocating for their rights, and fostering solidarity. In this blog, we will explore the significance of

standing up for women in 2024, the evolving dynamics of advocacy, and the collective actions needed to drive meaningful change.

#### **The Imperative of Standing Up for Women**

In 2024, the imperative of standing up for women reverberates across a multitude of arenas. Women continue to confront systemic barriers, gender-based violence, economic disparities, & entrenched social norms that impede their full participation and advancement. It is incumbent upon us to recognize the intrinsic value of gender equality, not only as a matter of justice and human rights but also as a catalyst for societal progress and prosperity.

Amidst the ongoing global challenges, including the pandemic's disproportionate impact on women, the imperative of standing up for women has been underscored. Covid-19 has exacerbated existing gender inequalities, from the increased burden of unpaid care work to rising rates of domestic violence. Therefore, 2024 presents an opportune moment to redouble our efforts in addressing these disparities and building a more inclusive and equitable world for women of all backgrounds.

#### **Evolving Dynamics of Advocacy**

The landscape of advocacy for women's rights has evolved significantly, propelled by grassroots movements, digital connectivity, and intersectional approaches. In 2024, advocacy for women extends beyond traditional activism to encompass a diverse array of platforms and strategies. Social media, in particular, has emerged as a powerful tool for amplifying women's voices, raising awareness about gender-based issues, and mobilizing collective action.

Further, the intersectionality of women's experiences has become increasingly central to advocacy efforts. Recognizing the diverse and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women has reshaped the discourse and action plans. In 2024, efforts to stand up for women



must be inclusive, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by all women and working to address these challenges in a holistic manner.

**Collective Actions for Change** In the pursuit of standing up for women in 2024, collective actions at all levels are indispensable. Civil society organizations and non-governmental entities, such as Soroptimist International, continue to drive change through advocacy, service provision, and community-based initiatives.

At the societal level, fostering a culture of respect, equality, and inclusion is paramount. This involves challenging harmful gender norms, promoting positive representations of women in media and popular culture, and engaging men and boys as allies in the quest for gender equality. In workplaces, striving for gender parity in leadership, addressing pay gaps, and eradicating workplace harassment are critical steps toward creating environments where women can thrive.

This is why we exist as Soroptimists; to stand up for women by being an ally, listening to women's experiences, and using our collective voice to advocate. Let's make 2024 the year our voice is heard. Happy New Year!



**A BIG THANK YOU EVERYONE** Let's acknowledge the wonderful response from the members for the Christmas gifts for Hill Lane, safely delivered in

**good time. The total number of toiletry bags was 18**

**Other donations of toiletries, cards, travel packs scented candles and extra socks from Joe Cool and not forgetting the members' individual gifts totalling 30 - a splendid amount which was most welcome by the hostel. Well done all!!**

Mainstreaming the Eradication of Child Poverty: A Scottish Parliament event

Wednesday 22 February 2024



The Human Rights & Poverty team is hosting an event in The Scottish Parliament on 21 February the 6pm to 8pm. The event is titled Mainstreaming the Eradication of Child Poverty and will focus on ensuring that child poverty is the focal point of all policy decisions going forward. There will be a panel discussion with MSPs, community activists and charities, followed by networking opportunities.

We have hosted two roundtables, on child poverty, (recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q68raSyM99I>)

Our most recent was held in October 2023 titled Eradicating Poverty in Scotland: A Roundtable For Change (viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YPUIqYzJjo>)

To register to attend: Click the eventbrite link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mainstreaming-the-eradication-of-child-poverty-a-scottish-parliament-event-tickets-799894625357>