

**ptimist
International
Edinburgh
news
notes
anecdotes**

SIEnna 245 June and summer 2026



**SCOTLAND SOUTH REGION
CELEBRATING 90 YEARS! JUNE 2026**



From member Nikki:
Here is the group photo of all attendees
which was posted on Scotland South
Region Facebook page.

This included International President
Renata - to whom I was able to gift one of
our Orange Ribbons - which she wore with
pride all day and was fascinated by the
evolution and success of the Orange
Cafes



Nikki also sends photos of the display
SIEdinburgh created to acknowledge the
success of the Orange Cafes.



And here is the link to the video prepared
for the Region celebration - through
interviews with members, it traces the
establishment of SI Edinburgh and the first
100 years of our existence!

[SI Edinburgh Anniversary Movie
drive.google.com](https://drive.google.com)

SI Edinburgh June Business Meeting

Chair - Lindsey

Apologies - Marjory - Elaine, Elena, Irene, Judith, Liz, Gari, Nikki.

News of members - Lindsey has phoned Irene for a chat.

Minutes of business meeting of 13th May 2026 - no matters arising.

Treasurer - Dorothy had nothing to report.

Election of SIGBI post holders - Ballot 3 for Siobhan Matthews and Ballot 9 for Achata Cletus. All other solo candidates received a unanimous vote. ACTION - Chris to ask Nikki to forward the vote details to SIGBI.

Programme Action - Sue

Beach clean/survey at Cramond on 3rd July. Volunteers are now more specific on recording details of items such as plastic which helps the Marine Conservation Society with campaigns. ACTION - Anna, Lindsey, Sue and Winifred to attend.

Thanks from Marie Curie for making collections and Smalls for All for donations.

Alison and Liz have awarded the annual Art School SI Edinburgh sustainability prize; it was difficult to choose between the two short listed entrants. The winner was given the opportunity to exhibit at the Scottish Interior Design Fair. Alison has submitted a Programme Focus report. ACTION - Alison will provide more information and photos at a later date.

Judith has sent a link to consultation on draft guidelines for sentencing domestic abuse offenders.

Advocacy

Older Peoples Forum Strategy Advisory Forum (OPSAF)- Liz Jamieson of SI Glasgow has sent an email about this Scottish Government forum on which she is the Soroptimist representative.

Liz has sent on 24th June an email outlining the Survivor Information Scotland Project. Note that at the 90th Celebration there was an inspiring presentation from Hannah, a survivor and SI members.



A REMINDER: The next Orange cafe will be on 23 August at 11.00 at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall, 36 Dalmeny Street, Leith. This will be the 4th Anniversary of the Orange cafes.

Orange Cafe

Draft Orange Cafe survey - this is being done by a soroptimist who lives between Australia and Edinburgh.

Next Orange Cafe will be on Tuesday 25th August at the Canopy Cafe at Edinburgh Futures (during the Book Fair), which will celebrate 4 years of this project.

Pat raised the idea of a virtual Orange Cafe perhaps with our Friendship Link club in Perth Australia.

Sue proposed an Orange Cafe on Friday 25th September perhaps at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall in Leith to coincide with the Knife Angel sculpture in the Leith Kirkgate shopping centre which aims to raise awareness about knife crime.

It's suggested that we make orange ribbon pins at cafes which will encourage interest from passers-by. Orange the World.

Our daughter club SI Dunfermline has been most active and got orange ribbons into the Westminster and Holyrood parliaments.

SIGBI survey re women's safety on railways - Pat reported that results were reported in the rail industry magazine and raised awareness of women's safety and Soroptimism. The survey was also mentioned on TV and radio.

ACTION - members to be asked to follow up on this survey, perhaps have a speaker meeting in September.

White Ribbon Scotland who raise awareness with men of violence against

women will benefit from the raffle at the Region 90th celebration on Saturday 27th June. It was suggested that they take a stall at the Grange Fair. SI Edinburgh .

Membership - Anna - Ten people at the Grange Fair gave emails, and 1 person responded to Anna's email; she doesn't wish to pursue membership at the moment. Grace attended Gari's party; she has been a Soroptimist in Australia and hopes to attend future meetings. Gari's social gave Anna an opportunity to talk to attendees about Soroptimism.

The recent Orange Cafe at Patina raised interest from Angela.

Pat is very happy to explain matters to new members over tea and also to do an information session at a club meeting.

There are always new acronyms coming from SIGBI; Sue suggested a crib sheet and remarked that she was gradually understanding more about Soroptimism.

SI Edinburgh 100th celebrations

Perhaps celebrate in October, as December in Edinburgh is a difficult time for booking venues.

Suggestion of Liberton Kirk cafe or Novotel for afternoon tea.

ACTION - all to investigate and report at September meeting.

Memorial Bench - Christine reported that the contact in the parks department can have the memorial bench refurbished for free; it has been relocated to near the Ross Fountain in Princes Street Gardens.

ACTION - Christine to check on the current plaques and the feasibility of a new plaque. Also to enquire about a possible Floral Clock.

Forthcoming Events - Alison, Anna, Christine, Dorothy, Lindsey, Nikki and Sue to attend the Scottish Region 90th celebrations on 27th June.

Nikki has a 13 minute video of club activities over the last 100 years.

Also a display depicting Orange Cafes which she will bring to the September meeting.



CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Saturday 27th June 2026

Joint Conference and celebration.

Stirling University.

Renatta Trotman SI President

Gillie O'Rourke SIGBI President

White Ribbon Scotland

Club success stories

Summary presentation of the Survivor Information Scotland project for the 90th Celebration of Scottish Clubs 27th June 2026. Overview:

■ Inspiration and start of the project

– Presentation by Hannah McLaughlan about her experiences (poor) of the Criminal Justice System and her determination to improve that for others

■ What we did first and issues arising

– Formation of region project group now Scotland wide with reps from Police Scotland and Scottish Government.

– Initial proposed development of accessible website or app.

– Survey questionnaire of support organisations

– Discussions led to concerns re sustainability, safety, access (including equality issues) ownership and costs.

– Became aware of the ScotGov taskforce. Connected.

■ What we have done since

– Police Scotland and ScotGov engaged and regular attenders at our meetings

– Survey outcomes shared

– Reviewed and provided feedback on Police evaluation form - led to its withdrawal - now provided alternative questions which will be discussed further with them. Review of their “trauma informed” training

– Involved routinely in ScotGov consultations and review – provided reflections on questions to consider after their recent showcase of the web prototype

– Linked with Victim Support Engagement Officer – further consideration about how best to involve widest community of survivors

Scottish Government update on their “justice digital front door” development from Amanda Hollis, June 2026

■ Core components of the “hub” are being tested in phase 1

■ Also looking at identity and data matching so records can be linked across the justice journey

■ Working with Victim Support to explore user needs, test potential designs and how a web site might best support users

■ Recent project showcase, over 90 attendees, including Scottish Soroptimists

■ Further sessions to look at issues of accessibility, ethics and security

Our aim now: To support victims and survivors of rape and/or domestic abuse, by functioning as an effective pressure group to ensure that the Scottish Government and Police Scotland provide trauma informed information and continue

to meet their timescales in setting up the survivors’ digital information hub.

■ Practically speaking:— Partner engagement - Meet regularly and continue to include partners

– Information content - Review and feedback updates on the work of the taskforce and continue to support work of Police Scotland to improve practice

– Be solution focused as well as a critical friend offering a range of perspectives

– Support activities to help keep to timely delivery of the project

Publicity and comms – ensure all stakeholders aware of the work and timescales for dissemination of information about how/where to access the hub

From SIGBI Women's Safety Group

As part of core work within VAWG, we have twelve months of social media posts [to be posted on the 10th of each month] relating to Women’s Safety with ways we can open discussions and, in many instances, involve men – we need them working with us!

It really is easy to be involved - It’s all in the Library on the Hub, you simply copy and paste - and the more clubs taking part, the bigger the impact! <https://thehub.sigbi.org/filerepository?parent=6900a7a04eeeda00089f795b> (log into the Hub before using the link).

The theme for 10th August is: Safe Spaces UK Says No More. See this website: <https://uksaysnomore.org/safespaces>

What can your Club do? Find your nearest Safe Space:

<https://uksaysnomore.org/safespaces>

Check in your town for Safe Spaces and advertise them.

Watch this video from Sussex Police: [Do the Right Thing](#)

Talk about it at your next meeting!

Encourage members to share to their own social media

An interesting event:
In Her Hand is inspired by journals from women serving with Elsie Inglis.
Venue is the Haldane Theatre at Surgeon's Hall.
Time, 15:05 (50) minutes.
Date, Monday 24th to Saturday 29th August.
Cost £15.50, concessions available.
Christine

From Pat

On Saturday I attended a session led by SIGBI Past President Ruth giving details of the new SIGBI website which will involve us having to start our own SIGBI/SIE website from scratch. Briefly.....

The timescale will be as follows:

July/August one meeting per month to give an update on progress made towards the development of the whole site which will include template pages for clubs and regions.

First 2 weeks September Training for club website administrators online

Over summer clubs expected to collect colourful action photos for new website

21st Sept to 12 Oct Clubs expected to upload minimum of Home page information onto a template format about their club and as much other information as possible

end Oct Launch new SIGBI website at conference and go live

For a short period existing website information will be kept and accessible for archive purposes but access may be charged for when this period expires. A letter will be sent out to every club at the beginning of July outlining what is to be done.

From Chris

I have located the Soroptimist bench. It is on the lower path, second bench away

from the Ross Fountain and across the path from the new lion statue dedicated to the Royal Regiment of Scotland. The two plaques of equal size on the bench have been moved so there is room for another plaque for the 100th anniversary. We'll need to think of appropriate wording for a plaque. Refurbishment is free and a plaque will be about £300.00.



Especially for those members who attend the CPG on HT:

FESTIVAL OF POLITICS

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SCOTLAND

Thursday 27 August
11:15am - 12:30pm

80% of women and girls trafficked in Scotland suffer sexual exploitation.

One in three victims of modern slavery is believed to be a child.

Chaired by MSP Katie Haggmann, **this event will address Scotland's role in preventing human trafficking** and sexual exploitation. Join us at Holyrood to hear what prominent speakers have to say on the topic.

BRONAGH ANDREW
Operations Manager at Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance

ANDY SIREL
Co-founding Partner and Legal Director at JustRight Scotland

JOY GILLESPIE
CEO of Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland

For tickets and more information on the event, go to festivalofpolitics.scot or scan the QR code below

SI Edinburgh

Special meeting (on zoom) on 27 July 2026 to discuss the future of the club website (as a consequence of the imminent changes to SIGBI website)

Present: Alison (Chair for most of the meeting), Liz (Chair for the rest of the meeting), Anna, Clephane, Elaine, Gari, Judith, Lindsey, Marjory, Nikki, Pat, Sue, Susi (prospective member) and Dorothy

Pat was invited to explain the background to SIGBI website review and how SIE is affected. In summary:

- SIGBI website has been in force for >15 years and needs modernisation. SIGBI employed a website designer, whose proposals have now been accepted by the Board. The new website will comply with current legislation. It will be launched at SIGBI Conference at end October 2026.
- SIE website is currently accessed from SIGBI website and so, if we wish to continue with this set-up, we are required to update our pages in accordance with the guidelines that SIGBI has provided. SIGBI is organising training sessions. There will be a face-to-face session in Penrith on 3 October (plus another in Reading on 10 October) and also online, YouTube and zoom sessions.
- If we decide to continue operating SIE website under the SIGBI umbrella and wish to transfer some of our current content to the new version then we have to decide fairly quickly so that this can be actioned.
- Initially, all that will be required from SIE by end October is agreement on Pages 1 and 2 (club homepage and "about our club" page). As long as we have these pages ready

on time we shall have a website under the SIGBI umbrella. Most of what we need for these pages is already on our current website.

- If we decide not to operate under SIGBI umbrella then we could miss out on possible contacts.

All present agreed that SIE should operate its website under SIGBI umbrella, initially with just pages 1 and 2.

Nikki volunteered to attend the training session at Penrith on 3 October.

Pat, Nikki, Judith, Liz, Alison and Susi indicated their willingness to be involved, at least initially, in the new website arrangements.

Pat offered to do some face-to-face training at her home for the group, so that they have knowledge of the old and the new systems. This is to be arranged, possibly during August.

Nikki advised that she had asked if there was likely to be any training provided by Region and that it is being considered.

Thanks were expressed to Pat for all the work that she does for SIE, including the website and social media.

It was agreed that more members should be involved in this to spread the knowledge and lighten the load on Pat.

Other points agreed

- Depending on how we see the website looking in future, we might not need to retain SIEnna in its current form.
- We would need to have a clear editorial process.
- The photo showing the Orange Café "tree" (poster for Region 90th celebration) would be ideal for Pat to send to SIGBI (for club listing page on SIGBI website).
- We might consider paying someone to help us maintain our website in future. This is for

consideration once we have a clearer idea of what is involved.

- **All members must be involved in supplying content – whatever approach we decide regarding the website.**

A.O.C.B

1. Susi indicated that she was interested in investigating AI, especially exploring its possible bias against women, and asked if anyone would object to her taking this on. Pat advised that SI have just appointed an advisor on AI to the SI Board, and also that SI Europe have information on AI on their social media. It was agreed that Susi may go ahead with her project and Pat will pass on any relevant contact details.
2. The date for the Orange Café arranged to coincide with the Knife Angel statue's presence in Leith has been changed to 23 September, and the venue will be Out of the Blue Drill Hall, 36 Dalmeny Street, Leith at 11am. This is to avoid clashing with an official closing ceremony. Liz indicated that the Violence Against Women Group at Police Scotland may publicise the café meeting as part of their events around the Knife Angel.

Programme for meetings 2026=27

**9/9 Business Chair Nikki
23/9 Speaker Chair Elaine
14/10 Business Chair Sue
28/10 Speaker Chair Sue
11/11 Business Chair Liz
25/11 Speaker Chair Elaine
9/12 Social**

**13/1 Business Chair Clephane
27/1 Speaker Chair Clephane
10/2 Business Chair
24/2 Speaker Chair Elaine
10/3 Business Chair Elaine
24/3 Speaker
14/4 Business Chair
28/4 AGM
12/5 Business Chair
26?5 Speaker
9/6 Business Chair**