

Sewing Bee



Washing bags and hearts

When we heard about the need for washing bags to enable nurses to take home their uniforms and put them straight in the washing machine avoid the potential spreads of the virus, we knew this was an area in which we could help. In two weeks, President Jenny has been able to take 163 bags which we have made with help from Soroptimist clubs in Tamworth, Burton, Sutton Coldfield, Wolverhampton and Wrekin. The bags, originally destined for the Nightingale Hospital have been delivered QE, Heartlands and Good Hope by the military.

We've also knitted/crocheted pairs of hearts, one to be given to the relative of a deceased person and one to stay with the deceased.

More are already available for this week's delivery!

Dresses for Manila

64 dresses were handed to SI Sutton Coldfield in March to be taken to the clinic in Manila which they support.

The following message has been received: 'Jane thanks members of SI Lichfield for your support. Because Manila is under lockdown and martial law there is very little movement in terms of shipments so just to let you know there will be a delay in when the items get to Tondo'.



Ongoing work

In addition to the washing bags and hearts, we still need the following:

- Days for Girls kits for Baraka in Zambia and the 'Empowering Girls in Nepal' project
- Dresses for girls in Manila
- School jumpers for children in Zambia (V necked in red, navy or dark green)
- Jumpers for young children in Zambia
- Knitted/crocheted shawls and blankets – any size

Planet



Stop Food Waste Day 29th April

Suspect we have become more conscious about food waste in recent weeks as it isn't so easy just to go to the shop and we have to plan what we want/eat more.

Food waste figures are horrendous worldwide.

- 33% of all food produced globally is lost or wasted every year
- 45% of root crops, fruit and vegetables produced globally is lost or wasted per year
- 25% of the food wasted globally could feed all 795 million undernourished people in the world
- 8% of all greenhouse gas emissions each year are due to food loss and waste

Gardens

We're unable to do anything at Chapters and the City Station garden at the moment but will let you know as soon as we can – there will plenty of weeding to do to get the gardens up to scratch again!

In the meantime, we're looking into buying signs for both gardens to promote Soroptimists – should be good marketing as the sign at Chapters will be seen by all those eating and drinking in the garden and the sign at the City Station garden will be seen by everybody driving through the centre of Lichfield. The sign there will be big enough to be noticed!



Rainfall Rescue Project

Several members contributed time to this online citizen science project which is now complete thanks to an astonishing response from the public. The data will significantly improve flood protection planning for homes and business in the UK.

Recycling

The revised recycling list has been circulated. Please continue to collect the items required. More information will be available shortly as to when and how we will be collecting and delivering the items on the list.



Next meeting-12 May

Domestic Abuse



driven by abusive and coercive relationships

Domestic Abuse bill

The second reading of the domestic abuse bill is due on Tuesday 28 April. A number of members sent a letter to lobby our MPs to support the amendments. This is a unique opportunity for the government to take action to strengthen the legal protection for women whose offending is

Domestic Abuse and Covid-19

Domestic abuse victims are particularly vulnerable during the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown. The UK's largest domestic abuse charity, Refuge, has reported a 700% increase in calls to its helpline in a single day, while a separate helpline for perpetrators of domestic abuse seeking help to change their behaviour received 25% more calls after the start of the Covid-19 lockdown.

Dame Vera Baird QC, the victims' commissioner for England and Wales, told MPs: "Counting Dead Women has got to a total of 16 domestic abuse killings in the last three weeks. We usually say there are two a week, that looks to me like five a week, that's the size of this crisis."

Locally, Pathway has now reopened after being closed for a few weeks. We will ask them again if there is anything we can do to help.



Football clubs

We held an awareness raising session on 'Healthy Relationships and Keeping Safe' for 20 young boys, aged 16-18, at Lichfield Football Academy last October. We are looking to run another session – or two! – as we already have the funding for c50 Buddy bags which the boys pack at the end of the session.

We're currently trying to identify additional football/rugby clubs so this exercise can be repeated. If you're aware of any clubs who may be interested, please let Pauline know.

Specialist Domestic Abuse Courts Project

The debrief at West Midlands Police HQ scheduled for June 2020 has been cancelled. The new date will be announced when we are more certain of the date on which we will be able to have such meetings.



Gambling in older women

Marisha attended a "Gambling" course recently and about the effects on women and on domestic abuse.

Per GamCare "There is an established link between domestic violence and problem gambling. A 2016 [report](#) by the University of Lincoln found that those who gamble are more likely to act violently towards their partner, with 45% of participants struggling with problem gambling having been in some form of physical fight in the last 5 years. We also know that 25% of women and 14% men in the UK experience domestic abuse during their lifetime and that only a minority of this is reported to the police.

Gambling is also used by people to escape other issues in their life, such as mental health problems and relationship issues. For women especially, gambling may offer escapes from difficult emotional experiences, such as domestic abuse. In any of these situations, gambling is never the answer and whilst you may feel that it provides a temporary escape, it will only make these issues worse over time."

For further information, see the GamCare website www.gamcare.org.uk

Next meeting - 8th June 2020



heard