

The London Chilterns Challengers 2021/2022
“Respecting Differences, Celebrating Similarities”

Regional Newsletter – July 2022
Mid - Summer Greetings from Your Regional Executive Team!



Our first Face to Face Meeting since November 2019 and it was great. Nearly 40 Members meet on Saturday 11th June 2022 at a venue in Sunningdale that was amazing, and enabled two of our speakers to join us on Zoom with a cinema style screen audio system! Judy Nixon and her team from **SI Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead** were the perfect hostesses ~ a big thankyou to everyone who helped to make the day memorable. For more see <https://sigbi.org/london-chilterns/2022/06/12/jun22/>

And what talent and expertise we have in our region!

Our first speaker was **Amanda Findlay from FLAG DV flagdv.org.uk** the charity is a **Free Legal Advice Group** for domestic abuse victims in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire. Amanda is a new Soroptimist Member of our Newbury Club and was able to join us for the morning on Zoom at short notice.

In the afternoon the session was **“Celebrating our Programme Action Work”** and was led by **Pam Robertson**.

Rose Simbo from SI Thames Valley gave a wonderful update on the **Kori Women’s Development Project** in Sierra Leone; it was a fitting tribute to Johanna Raffan as the 15th June marked the 1 year anniversary of her passing. Next we had an update about support for **Ukrainian Refugees** by SI Krakow by **Gill Curry**, of the SI Thames Valley Club. Gill posts regular updates in the SI Thames Valley Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/477392799514685> Many of the Clubs in the Region have been supporting Ukrainian Refugees through links to Clubs in Poland and other Eastern European countries. Following the presentation via Zoom in the morning by our second speaker **Nicki Nalton** from the **Alzheimer’s Society**, **Sue Granshaw** from **SI High Wycombe & District** provided an impressive update of her work both with the club and as a volunteer with **Alzheimer’s Research UK**

Pam Robertson, the Region’s Programme Action Officer, delivered the presentation from Soroptimist UKPAC – Violence Against Women & Girls: UKPAC Orange Day Initiative followed by an update on the **“Specialist Domestic Violence Courts Observations”**, the research project adopted by Clubs in our Region. For a full account of the day Jane has produced a brilliant account on the Regional Website <https://sigbi.org/london-chilterns/2022/06/12/jun22/>

Region Officers for 2021/2022

Reminder ~ we have no Regional President this year so meet The London Chiltern Challengers!

Post	Post Holder	Club	Contact Details
President	No President	Regional Executive	Correspondence to Rita Beaumont Email: r.beaumont3@ntlworld.com Telephone: 01234 401475 Mobile: 07764500116
Immediate Past President	Helen Byrne	SI St Albans & District	helenbsorop@yahoo.co.uk
Secretary	Rita Beaumont	SI Bedford	r.beaumont3@ntlworld.com
Minute Secretary	Linda Shall	SI St Albans & District	Linda.shall@outlook.com
Treasurer	Denise Powell	SI St Albans & District	denise.m.powell@googlemail.com
Programme Action Officer	Pam Robertson And Jen Simpson	SI Hertford SI High Wycombe & District	pamelarobertson807@btinternet.com jensimpson@blueyonder.co.uk
Membership Officers	Helen Byrne And Pauline Panter	SI St Albans & District SI Bedford	helenbsorop@yahoo.co.uk pauline.panter@hotmail.com
Public Relations Officer And Communications & Website Administrator	Jane Slatter	SI St Albans & District	pinkyslatter@hotmail.com
Federation Councillor	Rita Beaumont	SI Bedford	r.beaumont3@ntlworld.com
Benevolent Fund Trustee	Rita Beaumont	SI Bedford	r.beaumont3@ntlworld.com
63 Representative	Barbara Diamant	SI London Central & South West	barbdiamant@gmail.com

Executive Group Meetings ~ Your Region Needs You!



We are ~ a friendly group who would like new members to bring fresh ideas to the management of the Region so why not join us for a meeting ~ just let Rita know so we can send you the papers and meeting link All the meetings are via Zoom so you do not even have to travel into London



The Regional Fees ~ just a reminder the Club Fees are now due, if your club has still to pay them please could you do so as a matter of urgency. Acknowledgement to be sent to SLondonChilterns.Treasurer@gmail.com.

Denise Powell: Regional Treasurer

➤ Programme Action ~ Pam Robertson & Jen Simpson, Programme Action Officers

We are sending you The Orange Day on 25th of each month presentation shown at the Regional Meeting on June 11th for the information of all club members. ~ this is quite a large file so will follow as a separate email

Pam Robertson pamelarobertson807@btinternet.com

Jen Simpson jensimpson@blueyonder.co.uk

Update on Kinship

You will remember the excellent presentation Kate O'Brien, director of business development and programmes at Kinship kinship.org.uk spoke to us at our March IWD meeting <https://sigbi.org/london-chilterns/2022/03/05/iwd22/>

Last week they have had lots of powerful media coverage with the publishing of their Financial Allowances Survey for 2022 <https://kinship.org.uk/financial-survey-2022/> "This year's survey results from 1,435 kinship carers caring for 2,006 children show that the situation for kinship families is getting worse. As the cost of living continues to soar, we need to see urgent action to prevent many more families from being plunged into poverty."

The report includes findings and recommendations - details are on the website.

Kinship is calling on the Government to ensure all kinship carers:

- Receive immediate financial support to help a child settle in.
- Receive a universal, standard, non means tested allowance that matches the current national minimum fostering allowance until the child reaches 18.
- Have a right to [#KinshipCare](#) leave (on a par with adoption leave).



Important News! Call for Posters!

We are counting down to 27 July next year when the 2023 Dublin SI Convention will open and together we will **Challenge the Future**. We cannot wait to welcome you all!

We are inviting you to play an important part during the Convention by showcasing posters which illustrate recently completed, or current projects your Clubs, Unions, Regions Federations and National Associations are passionate about. This will be an exciting new addition to Soroptimist International Conventions.

Poster presentations have been routinely included at academic and professional conferences for many years, but this is **your** chance to share your Soroptimist project activities and initiatives with all Soroptimists. Please join in and share your wonderful, innovative, exciting, and varied work that is being carried out across the world.

For full details and instructions to submit your entry please visit: <https://sidublin2023.com/programme/posters/>

Please do not forget this important date: **Submission Deadline is 31st July 2022.**

We are really looking forward to hearing from you and seeing your amazing work!

In Soroptimist Friendship,

Rita Beaumont
Secretary, Dublin 2023 Organising Committee

➤ **Membership and Social Media ~ Helen Byrne & Pauline Panter, Membership Officers**

Social Media & Membership Workshop - an inspiring morning highlighting how easy it is for everyone and how important it is for our future <https://sigbi.org/london-chilterns/social-media/>

Those lucky enough to be at the **Regional Social Media & Membership Workshop on Sat 25th June** were treated to a Tour de Force: a fabulous walk through by committed Soroptimist Rachel Weinhold of GrowTraffic of the aims and practicalities of using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Linked In and Tik Tok, both to attract new members and to promote and develop club programme action.

Each Social Media platform has its own features and needs to be used appropriately to gain best advantage e.g. Twitter is perfect for campaigning and building your Club's reputation and connections with councils, MPs and other campaigning organisations, whilst Instagram is where the influencers are, mostly younger women, using image-based posts to reach a wide audience of other women. Linked In is the "professional" platform which can build reputations and connections with working women and organisations. Tik Tok, the new kid on the block, is all about short videos and is where younger people gather to share ideas and stories. With the dramatic rise of Tik Tok and keen to keep their markets, the other main platforms have rapidly added short videos to their range of options and thus the story continues.

Whilst all are useful in their different ways Rachel sees Facebook, for the moment at least, as the most valuable for Soroptimist Clubs, as women of all ages use it and it is a great way to start a conversation and build a community (Facebook's Raison d'être). That community can be of supporters sharing ideas and your club's activities with their own communities , taking part in fundraising and other PA activities as a result, it could be a community of potential permanent members for your Club where you show off your values, aims and achievements and attract like-minded women, or it could be a community of Soroptimists keen to make a difference but lacking the time to be part of an on the ground club i.e. an E-Club. And it might even be aspects of all three at the same time.

Using one Club's existing Facebook content, Rachel was able to illustrate what makes a good post , the vital importance of hashtags and how to use them to widen the reach of posts and the way to develop conversations by adding open-ended questions and requests in the final wording.

I briefly highlighted our personal and Club responsibility to safeguard Club members , partners and supporters when using social media and will be sending out a video produced by the SIGBI Safeguarding Officer very soon. This gives simple guidance for everyone on the issues and how to keep yourself and others safe - watch out for the email.

Though from a range of experience and knowledge we all learned a great deal in an inspiring and enjoyable morning. The session covered not only the nuts and bolts but also how to make membership work in a world of social media and how it changes the way we do and promote our Programme Action. Rachel was able to show that Social Media is easy , you just need to understand the rules, and vital for the future of our Clubs, organisation and the women and girls we support : something that everyone needs to understand and be on board with.

*As Estlyn Davies, Membership Officer of SI Slough Windsor & Maidenhead beautifully put it ,
" What a wealth of useful information , you have inspired me to have a go : this is the future".*

Rachel has generously offered her expertise if any clubs have questions and kindly shared all of her content, including a recording of the session, which will be of interest to all members whether they use Social Media or not. The content is now available via the SI London Chilterns website so you can explore the wealth within. <https://sigbi.org/london-chilterns/2022/07/08/social-media/>

If you have any questions about Social Media or membership feel free to get in touch.

Helen Byrne, Regional Membership Officer Email: helenbsorop@yahoo.co.uk.

Communications Report for International Women's Day Meeting 11 Jun 2022
Jane Slatter, SILC Communications Officer

Orange the World on 25th of Every Month

UKPAC launched the Soroptimist **Orange** Campaign at the online "Domestic Abuse Conference IT COULD BE YOU!" run by SI Yorkshire on 21st May 2022. I think I spotted 8 Members of our Region at the Zoom meeting which was great!

UKPAC wants us all to join with the UNiTE campaign and mark the 25th of each month as "**Orange Day**", a day to raise awareness and take action to end violence against women and girls.

Say NO–UNiTE mobilises people around the world to support the **#OrangeDay** initiative. It calls on people everywhere to wear the colour orange and take action to end violence against women and girls in every community, at home, in public spaces, in schools and workplaces, during conflict and in times of peace.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/unite> As a bright and optimistic colour, orange represents a future free from violence against women and girls

There will be resources made available to Clubs and Clubs can be involved as little or as much as they want. The presentation from UKPAC ended with "**LET'S RAISE SOME AWARENESS AND HAVE SOME FUN !! #Soroptimist #OrangeDay initiative**".

This can be in addition to the Global **Orange the World Campaign** - 16 days of activism to end gender-based violence from 25 Nov to 10 Dec [16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence](#) – marking the 25th of every month could be a useful way to lead up to the 16 days of activism starting 25 Nov.

If you want to join in with the campaign being run by SI St Albans and District updated resources are now available on the website: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/2022/orange22/>

This campaign is a great way to raise our profile. I'm always happy to help, so please just ask.

Jane (Pinky) Slatter – SI London Chilterns Region Communications Officer
Email: pinkyslatter@hotmail.com
Tel: 07834345796

SIGBI Day of Action 16 July 2022 - this year's focus is on climate change and particularly on reducing our dependence on single use plastics. Social Media images are available in the Members' area of the SIGBI website (you need to sign in with your Membership number):

<https://sigbi.org/members/prmarketing/social-media/smtoolkits/>

If you are doing anything to mark the day (or days before and after) then please share on social media with the hashtag **#soroptimistdayofaction** - it doesn't matter if it isn't related to the SIGBI theme. If you are following the SIGBI theme then please use the images on your own or your Club's social media platforms. SIGBI will be posting on all the platforms so please share the posts far and wide!

Looking For a Speaker? - we have had the following message via the website from author Susanna Beard :

*I wondered if you might be looking for speakers? I'm a published author, with six psychological thrillers to my name, some of which are best-sellers.
Based in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, I started writing late in life and am absolutely loving my second career. I've given many talks about my route to publication — to WI groups, U3As and at literary festivals around the country — and have always been well received.
You can see more about me and my books on www.susannabeard.com. I'm happy to provide references if needed. I look forward to hearing from you*

Susanna lives in Marlow & is willing to speak on Zoom or travel within a 50 mile radius for Face to Face meeting
E Mail info@susannabeard.com>

News From Clubs

SI High Wycombe & District

At the Club AGM Immediate Past President Sue Granshaw presented cheques to Alzheimer's Research UK and Wycombe District Dementia Action . An Afternoon Tea in November raised £400 for Alzheimer's Research UK and £175 for Wycombe District Dementia Action

Sue began to volunteer with Alzheimer's Research UK as a result of hearing them at one of our Regional meetings and she was heavily involved in setting up Wycombe District Dementia Action to raise awareness and support among local organisations and businesses for dementia sufferers and their careers and to invest in prevention and cure.



Sue Presenting the cheque
For £400 to Claire Wathes
Representing ARUK



Sue with the cheque
For Wycombe District
Dementia Action

News from Club member Kathleen Martin



In May the Mission to Seafarers published a report that considers the unique challenges faced by women at sea and how organisations can tailor their support to contribute toward a better future for female seafarers.

The launch on the Mission Website states:

The impact of the pandemic is still being experienced by seafarers as a whole. However, in light of the first International Day for Women in Maritime, the Mission feel that now is an opportune time to focus on the experiences of women at sea. Despite many initiatives, women are still under-represented in the maritime industry and makeup just 2% of the world's estimated 1.2 million seafarers. More needs to be done to attract and retain women in the industry.

Both male and female seafarers experience a range of challenges when working at sea, but there are some that are specific to women as they must adapt to a male-dominated working environment. The Mission aims to highlight some of the difficulties that women still encounter at sea in this report, including challenges specific to different vessels, such as cargo ships, cruise ships and superyachts.

As an international organisation, The Mission to Seafarers is well placed to discuss these challenges and share ideas within our global Mission family. This report will hopefully act as a catalyst and help people generate ideas which can then be implemented across the Mission family.

Read the report [here](#)

For more information about **The Mission to Seafarers** visit www.missiontoseafarers.org

SI Bedford

Tree Planting in the Park

Before our lives were changed by the pandemic Daphne one of our longest serving members sadly died and to our amazement we found we were the recipient of a bequest in her Will. Daphne lived near the towns beautiful park and spent many happy hours enjoying the peaceful environment. The Victorian Park was created in 1888 and is Grade 2 listed by English Heritage; it is very well maintained by Bedford Borough Council and a safe haven for all ages to enjoy. We decided that a fitting use for our bequest would be to play our part in adding to our town heritage as part of both the celebrations for the 100 year anniversary of the founding of Soroptimist International and in being part of the towns Queens Green Canopy project, helping to promote physical and mental wellbeing in a clean healthy environment locally.

Contact was made with the Borough Council and James, Team Leader Open Spaces, Infrastructure & Community Engagement, and Tristan the tree expert could not have been more helpful and in next to no time we had ordered 10 semimature trees ~ Eight British Flowering Cherry, a Yew and a baby Redwood who one day will be a giant!



Our trees were delivered ~ Tristan led the planting of our avenue of trees, planted each side of an established path complete with a seat and in May we had the official unveiling and here we are with The Mayor of Bedford sitting near "Our Tees"

The Mayor suggested we should have a Picnic in the Park every year to celebrate the planting and that seems an excellent idea!

SI Hertford and District



Members, friends and neighbours enjoyed a fun evening on Friday May 13th when Karin hosted a **Wine and Cheese event to celebrate (belatedly) World Water Day**, with proceeds going to WaterAid.

Wine and water tasting, impossible quizzes and a bottle raffle with prizes ranging from fine wines through to bleach and washing up liquid, made for a lot of laughter. Over £500 was raised.

We celebrated **HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee** with a champagne afternoon tea hosted by Jenny in her beautiful garden. We were delighted to welcome members from SI Bedford and St. Albans as well as friends and neighbours of Jenny's. Although the purpose was to celebrate and enjoy ourselves, our donations box revealed £800 which is to be divided between The Living Room (a centre supporting those living with addictions) and Safer Places (our local women's refuge)



An Invitation from SI Winchester & District to help them Celebrate their Diamond Anniversary

SI Winchester & District are delighted to advise us of their programme to celebrate our diamond anniversary
30 September to 2 October, the club website link has more information and the programme and booking form to
download [60th Diamond Anniversary Celebrations | SI Winchester and District | SIGBI](#)

Please note that we are already receiving bookings and hope to see as many of you as possible.

End Snip-Its!

Dates for the Diary

- Saturday 8th October 2022 on Zoom - [SILC Region AGM/Conference](#)
- Thursday 27th October – Saturday 29th October 2022 – [SI Great Britain and Ireland \(SIGBI\) Conference Belfast "Climate for Change" \[www.sigbi.org/belfast2022\]\(http://www.sigbi.org/belfast2022\)](#)
- Saturday 10th December 2022- [SILC Region Meeting/Conference and Celebration of Human Rights Day - 10am to 1pm on Zoom](#)
- Saturday 11th March 2023 - [SILC Region Meeting/Conference and Celebration of International Women's Day - 10am to 4pm in person](#) at Cecil Sharp House 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY www.efdss.org/cecil-sharp-house

More details will be available nearer the time

Reminder re Dear Diary ~ do not forget to send entries to Jane at silondononchilterns@hotmail.com

- **SIGBI Conference 27th -29th October 2022 in Belfast "Climate for Change"**
Reminder ~ Early Bird Booking Now Open!
<https://sigbi.org/belfast2022/>

London Chiltern Region Delegates

We are hoping SI London Chilterns is going to be well represented at this year's Annual Conference in October. Whilst we wait to hear more about the four dynamic Keynote Speakers on Education, Health, Environment/Climate Change and Women/Gender Equality now is the time to book your hotel. It should be quite easy to book now with the option to cancel for free should your plans change.

The Conference webpage provides a good hotel list however I and many other regional members have booked into the Premier Inn Cathedral Quarter having found it good value , comfortable & convenient when the SIGBI Conference was last in Belfast.

<https://www.premierinn.com/gb/en/hotels/northern-ireland/antrim/belfast/belfast-city-cathedral-quarter.html>

As the Conference will be a great opportunity to meet up after such a long time meeting only on Zoom Regional Exec will be organising a get together during the Conference - probably a meal on Friday evening. If you and your Club members are interested in joining us please let me know.

Helen Byrne, Regional Membership Officer Email: helenbsorop@yahoo.co.uk

Let your Club be Part of the Next Newsletter

Copy Date for the **October 2022 Edition of the Newsletter is 18th September 2022**
If you have a speaker that you would like to recommend then send details to me for inclusion.
Send me your news on r.beaumont3@ntlworld.com