



# Save our Sanity

SI:MK founded in 2015 with support from MK Community Foundation



28 February 2022

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 36

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## Editorial Welcome

### International Women’s Day – 8 March 2022

Imagine a gender equal world.

A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination.

A world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

Together we can forge women's equality.

Collectively we can all **#BreakTheBias**.

Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day.

We can break the bias in our communities.

We can break the bias in our workplaces.



We can break the bias in our schools, colleges and universities.

Together, we can all **break the bias** - on International Women's Day (IWD) and beyond.

Campaign theme this year is **#BreakTheBias**. [Click here](#) to learn about International Women's Day and [Click here](#) to learn more about 2022 theme.



Thank you everyone for coming along and making our annual Planning Day so interesting. And a big thank you Cheryl for navigating us through our day.

We revisited our "Values" and agreed they are still relevant to how we work, how we support our charities now and going forward and also how we support each other. We also acknowledged that from listening to our charities we could now add "**Integrity/Trusted**" to our values, as we are now trusted for what we can do and do achieve.

It was good to look back and realise just how much we had achieved. The Pandemic did not stop us and in fact you could say we were more reactive to immediate crisis's this year than ever before. So a big well done everyone.

And whilst we have not come up with a big project at present, we certainly have a number of ideas of things to do during the year. I hope like me you are all looking forward to listening to the speakers we have suggested and looking forward to being able to do some more fund raising for our charities. I came away from our January meeting with our charities realizing just what a tough time they have had but also recognizing that they still have very tough times ahead. Their normal working environment is changed and they are still having to look at how they can adapt to best meet the needs of their communities whilst also trying to retain staff. I hope we can adapt to help in whatever way they need.

I would recommend everyone to have a look at the latest news from SIGBI Programme Director. It makes for very interesting reading especially after our planning day. [Click here](#) to read more and something we can discuss over the coming months.



To our Soroptimist sisters in the Ukraine, we send our love and friendship. God bless, keep safe and know you are not alone and have friends.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month Soroptimists worldwide say "No to all forms of #ViolenceAgainstWomen".

This month we raise awareness of our Soroptimist sisters, all women and children now living with conflict in the Ukraine.



British Red Cross have launched an Emergency Appeal for the Ukraine Crisis.

Please share this with your friends to help raise donations.

[Click here](#) for the donation page.

And lastly, may I wish everyone a Happy International Women's Day and a proactive and supportive 2022 to our charities and to each other.

**Sue Key, Chair**

## Dear Diary updates

Dear Diary Dates	
Wed 2 March	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> – 1.00pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Sat 5 March	<b>Sat 5 Mar – SILC Region Meeting/Conference and Celebration of International Women’s Day.</b> For more details and to book a place, <a href="#">click here</a> .
Mon 7 March	<b>International Women’s Day 2022 IWD 2022 Afternoon Tea and cakes</b> , 3.30pm to 5.30pm, MK Snap with MK Community Foundation speaking about the “Women’s Fund”
Tues 22 March	<b>Branch meeting</b> 5.30 pm for tea with 6.00 pm start. <b>Venue to be confirmed</b>
Sat 26 March	<b>Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council Food and Craft Fayre</b> More details to follow
Wed 6 April	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> - To be confirmed
Tues 19 April	<b>Branch meeting</b> 5.30 pm for tea with 6.00 pm start. <b>Venue to be confirmed</b>

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Special Days:</u> Women’s Day Tuesday 8 March – SIGBI Action Day TBC World Homelessness Day 10 October White Ribbon 25 November</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Regional Dates for Diary</u> <b>Sat 5 Mar – SILC Region Meeting/Conference and Celebration of International Women’s Day</b> <b>Sat 11 Jun 2022 – Face-to-Face – SILC Region Conference</b> Hosted by SI Slough Windsor and Maidenhead Club <b>Sat 8 Oct 2022 – Zoom – SILC Region AGM/Conference</b> <b>27-29 July 2023 Soroptimist International Convention Dublin</b> “Challenge the Future” <a href="http://sidublin2023.com">sidublin2023.com</a></p>
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## UN International days and Awareness days- March 2022

International days/weeks are occasions to educate the public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address global problems, and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of humanity.

**UN International Days** - Just a few dates for your diary. **Click on each subject to learn more about each of these UN Days/Weeks via the UN Website.**

1 March	<b>Zero Discrimination Day</b>
3 March	<a href="#">World Wildlife Day</a>
8 March	<b>International Women’s Day</b>
20 March	<b>International Day of Happiness</b>
20 March	<a href="#">International Francophonie Day</a>
21 March	<b>International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination</b>
21 March	<a href="#">World Poetry Day</a>
21 March	<b>International Day of Nowruz</b>
21 March	<a href="#">World Syndrome Day</a>
21 March	<b>International Day of Forests</b>
22 March	<b>World Water Day</b>
23 March	<b>World Meteorological Day</b>
24 March	<a href="#">World Tuberculosis Day</a>
24 March	<b>International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims</b>
25 March	<a href="#">International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade</a>
25 March	<b>International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members</b>

**Awareness Days** – dates for your diary.

Dear Diary Dates	
1-31 March	Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
1-31 March	Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal 2022

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## 20 Feb - World Day of Social Justice



20 February was World Day of Social Justice.

As advocates of social justice for women and girls, Soroptimists are reminded of rising inequalities.

Read all about the day and what Soroptimists were doing in a new blog by Nupur Basu, SI Calcutta. [Click here](#)



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## Saturday 5 March SI London and Chilterns Regional Conference - International Women's Day



**Our London and Chilterns Regional Conference is on Saturday 5 March, 10am to 1pm on Zoom and will be a Celebration of International Women' Day.**

Two speakers from two very different charities and also catch up on the programme Action work from clubs and regions.

The first speaker is **Dr Sue Hills co-founder of the Alice Ruggles Trust** [www.alicerugglestrust.org](http://www.alicerugglestrust.org). Sue will talk about coercive control & Stalking.

The second speaker is **Kate O'Brien, director of business development and programmes at Kinship** [kinship.org.uk](http://kinship.org.uk) – the leading kinship charity, there for all kinship carers – the grandparents and siblings, the aunts, uncles, and family friends who step up to raise children when their parents can't. For more details and to book a place, [click here](#).

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## St Pancras station celebrating International Womens Day 2022



International Women's Days on the 8 March will see commuters and long haul travellers offered something different for IWD2022 as London's St Pancras International station becomes an opera hall that will see micro operas created by teams of female composers and librettist. [Click here](#) to read more.

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## Four Day Festival of Women in Theatre and Film



MK Gallery are partnering with The Play's The Thing to present a four-day festival of women in theatre and film from Wed 30 March to Sat 2 April.

Full festival programme (Click on red to find out more):

- Wednesday 30 March | [Tapestry \(inc. April de Angelis keynote speech\)](#)
- Thursday 31 March | [Hidden Stories Part 1](#)
- Friday 1 April | Film Night
- Saturday 2 April | [New Voices, Hidden Stories Part 2, The Well & Welcome To Mine, Tapestry \(inc. Abi Zakarian closing speech & drinks\)](#)

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## WOW Festival London 11 to 13 March at Southbank Centre



**The London Women of the World Festival 2022 is back in person 11 to 13 March at Southbank Centre**

**WOW** is the world's biggest, most comprehensive festival celebrating women, girls and non-binary people. Across the three days, WOW London 2022's line-up of world class speakers, inspirational activists, musicians, artists and comedians will take over the



Southbank Centre for discussions, workshops, performances and debates including everything from sex to politics, grandmotherhood, divorce, sexual violence, childlessness, reproductive rights, career changes, poverty, resistance and resilience, girls' education, love and relationships, football and how the pandemic has affected us all.

There will also be the return of WOW Speed Mentoring, WOW Bites, WOW Big Ideas and the WOW Marketplace.

**Sign up to our newsletter** to stay in touch about the stand-alone ticketed events and digital programme to be announced later this year. At WOW, there's space for discussions ranging from sex to politics, grandmotherhood to divorce, childlessness to career changes. It's a chance for both the most difficult discussions, and workshops that have you in fits of laughter. **Click here** to see what's on over the 3 days.

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## SIGBI Feb Newsletter



**The SIGBI Feb newsletter is out** now and includes articles on what Soroptimists are doing towards achieving Peace, how prosperity is affected by an aging population, latest Club news and more.

**Click here** to read.

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## MK Foodbank Big Little Give Appeal



Food prices & home energy costs are absolutely soaring and every single day MK Foodbank hear from dozens of people who can't keep their houses warm or who are struggling to feed themselves and their children.

Can you help MK Foodbank with their BIG little GIVE campaign? **Click here** to learn more. Help can come individually or as groups. Please share this with friends to raise awareness and get more people helping with donations.

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## Cervical Cancer Prevention



**Did you know, one in three women and people with a cervix don't attend cervical screening?**

Jo's Trust, is the UK's leading cervical cancer charity.

Every January there is a week to raise awareness around Cervical Cancer and to encourage more women and people to attend screening but also to make them aware of the support available.

Did you know there are lots of ways to make the test more comfortable? You can...

- Ask to book a longer or double appointment
- Ask for a smaller speculum
- Put the speculum in yourself

There are lots more tips you can read on the [Jo's website](#)

However, cervical cancer prevention doesn't stop at screening. 220,000 women and people with a cervix every year are told they have **cervical cell changes** after their screening, and many more are given a HPV diagnosis. Most people don't know anything about this before it happens to them, and it can make for a very hard time. Everyone deserves access to information and support. **Click here** to visit [Jo's website](#) to find out more

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## Rape Cases should be tried in specialist courts



**Specialist courts dealing solely with rape offences are needed to reduce a large case backlog and reduce victims' trauma, a watchdogs' report urges.**

The BBC understands that Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab is taking advice on the feasibility of such courts.

Victims of rape are being failed by a system beset by delays and poor communication, the report by the police and prosecution service watchdogs says.

One victim told the authors her court experience had been "horrendous". The report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and HM Crown Prosecution Inspectorate looked at issues in England and Wales. To learn more [click here](#).

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## 100 victims of Domestic Abuse will be helped to return to work in Milton Keynes?



MK Council is investing £66,000 in support services to help 100 victims of domestic abuse return to work following the pandemic – offering training and work experience as well as money for travel and interview clothes.

MK-Act which supports victims of domestic abuse will run the programme. They'll also be offering debt advice, support with job

applications, training, childcare advice and can even help people set up their own businesses.

The one year programme is part of the Council's £3.1m Economic Recovery Plan and is expected to cover support costs for 100 women.

Deputy Leader of MK Council, Cllr Robin Bradburn said: "I'm incredibly proud that we're working with MK-Act to provide this support. Domestic abuse can leave a devastating effect on people and returning to work can seem like an impossible challenge. More people will be able to reach their potential through this programme."

CEO of MK-Act, Sue Burke said: "During the Covid pandemic we found that many of our clients were in a more desperate situation as they were living with their abuser often 24 hours a day with no break. This support through the MK Economic Recovery Plan means women will have that extra support they really need."

MK-Act is commissioned by Milton Keynes Council to help local victims of domestic abuse, and the Council has been working with them over the last year to raise awareness of the services on offer. Twice as many people are now stepping forward to seek help than previously, which the charity believes is both down to higher awareness of the service and an increase in need over the past year.

If you or someone you care about is affected by domestic abuse contact MK-Act on **0344 375 4307** or find out more about what they do <https://www.mkact.com/>.

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## Violence against Women and Girls set to become a serious crime



Priti Patel is set to tell police that attacks on women and girls should be given the same priority as tackling terrorism, saying: 'I do not accept that violence against them is inevitable.'

The Home Secretary's plan will aim to improve the record low conviction rate for rape, amid scathing criticism of police and criminal prosecutors.

Last week, senior police officers slammed Ms Patel for rejecting attempts to make misogyny a recognised hate crime, like racism and homophobia.

The move comes ahead of Thursday's first anniversary of the rape and murder of Sarah Everard by Metropolitan Police officer Wayne Couzens.

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## StopTopp - because drink spiking stinks



Spiking is a hugely under reported problem. Whether done by a friend as a prank or with the intention of committing a far more serious offence, its wrong: we all have a right to know exactly what we're putting into our bodies.

10,000 drink protectors are being distributed to clubs and bars in Central Milton Keynes after MK Council funded £2,500 to the CMK Bar Watch.

All customers need to do is simply ask a member of the bar staff for a free cover to place on top of their drink. Please share this initiative with your friends and family. To learn more about StopTopp [click here](#).

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## YMCA - pathway of support for residents and staff



"I know that a quick conversation on a stairwell with one resident can have the same impact as an hour-long support session with another. As staff we can make an impact in so many ways."

Read about Emma and her Supported Housing Coach role she took up when joining YMCA MK in 2019. [Click here](#) to read more

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## New CEO at Parks Trust Milton Keynes



The Parks Trust was formed as an independent charity in 1992 to care for parks and green spaces in Milton Keynes. This adds up to 6,000 acres of river valleys, woodlands, lakesides, parks and landscaped areas...

Happy 30<sup>th</sup> birthday Parks Trust. And in it's 30<sup>th</sup> year it appoints only its 3<sup>rd</sup> Chief Executive. Brian Salter was its first Chief Executive until 2003. David Foster took over and this year is retiring in June.

Victoria Miles has been appointed. She is currently Chief Executive of the Northamptonshire Community Foundation and was recently awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List in recognition for services to the community.

[Click here](#) to read more. And to find out what events are going on in our Parks this year [Click here](#).

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## New President at MK Community Foundation



Milton Keynes Community Foundation are excited to announce Fola Komolafe MBE DL CMgr CCMI as their new President.

Former Chair of Trustees for MK Community Foundation, Fola, has worked for many years with large multinationals in the private sector as a strategy consultant, a business leader and a partner with one of the top accounting firms in the UK. On top of this, she has extensive experience within the non-profit sector, and in international development where she led multimillion pound award winning projects across Africa and South Asia. Fola is the current Chair of MK Foodbank and played a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of the Foodbank throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. She is a member of Milton Keynes Christian Centre Oldbrook and was key to establishing a £40K fund to celebrate the Christian Centre's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2019.

As President, Fola will oversee the Honorary Structure, which supports the Community Foundation's Philanthropy Programme, working in partnership with the staff and trustee team to inspire philanthropy from all communities across the Borough. [Click here](#) to read full article

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## Crisp packet project helping the Homeless



I popped over to see Angie at MK Snap to get some PAT testing for some equipment prior to our first craft stall event and whilst there had a little look round. Angie wanted me to see what some of the learners were up to.

I met a lovely group of 6 learners all making felt roses, they were beautiful and it made Angie and I think what a lovely way to decorate our table at our International Women's Afternoon tea event, and so we asked the learners would they be happy to make some more for us and the answer came back, yes.

And then Angie showed me all these crisp packets, all empty, clean, flat and drying on a clothes horse. Ahh said Angie, these are blankets for the homeless. I was bemused but one of the learners showed me how it works. They need 300 crisp packets for one blanket. They clean them all, open them out to dry and once dry they iron them together and then line them with plastic.

Want to learn more [click here](#). [Click here](#) to view the video on how to make a thermal blanket.

This could be a project for us to all work together. If you or your family and friends want to help out, then let's ask Angie if she wants us to save our crisp packets. For her learners to make the blanket and we can then ask Kathy at the Winter Night Shelter if she can use these.

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## MK Blue Light Walk to say thank you to emergency services



On Friday 25th March, two years after the start of the pandemic, people from across Woughton and the rest of Milton Keynes will be walking to say 'thank you' to those who have worked so hard to keep us safe.

Throughout the pandemic, NHS staff, blue light responders and many others put themselves in harm's way, risking their lives to help keep people safe. Working under immense pressure, the staff and their families have been there, all day, every day.

This event, organised by Woughton Community Council, gives people a chance to show their gratitude and their ongoing support for all that they do. Councillor Brian Hepburn, said: "We wanted to do something to show our thanks to all those who have been there through the recent pandemic. The NHS staff, alongside the police and fire service are the front line and this walk celebrates them alongside everyone else who has done so much". With the hospital sitting in the middle of the parish, local people often talk about how important our NHS and frontline services are – these are the backbone of our communities that have been pulled and stretched even more during the last couple of years.

Starting at the new Hub on Ashland (housing the police, fire and ambulance services) and walking through to MK Hospital, people will have blue lanterns, glow sticks and lights, aiming to send a strong and loud message of support.

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## Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) - 14 to 25 March



The sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place from 14 to 25 March 2022. Due to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CSW66 will take place in a hybrid format. All side events and parallel events will be fully virtual. Themes are:

- **Priority theme:** Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes;
- **Review theme:** Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work (agreed conclusions of the sixty-first session);



Here's your chance to join the virtual 66th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women! Dates are March 14 to 25, 2022. [Learn more:](#)

## New Charity Hub to come to Milton Keynes



Multiple Milton Keynes charities are about to benefit from a new permanent home at a 'charity hub' courtesy of MK Council's £1m charity funding.

Last year, charities including MK FoodBank Xtra, Baby Basics MK and St Marks Meals were gifted a temporary base at a council-funded warehouse so they could concentrate on their important support for local people instead of worrying how to fund accommodation and other bills. Each of the charities had seen demand rise during the pandemic.

Now, the Council is due to approve a 20-year lease to a new facility in Granby, working alongside the MK Community Foundation to bring together multiple voluntary organisations. The new hub will allow more space for the charities to store essential goods, save costs and enable them to get supplies out faster to people in need. MK Council has also agreed to pay rent and utility bills for FoodBank Xtra, so they can concentrate on putting more resources into helping people that need it the most. In the meantime, the Council will continue to manage the previous temporary warehouse in Kiln Farm. Local tech firm and social enterprise 'It's What's Next IT' has also recently taken up residence in Kiln Farm to set up a new drop off point for donations of unwanted laptops and other IT equipment, helping to reduce digital poverty. [Click here](#) to learn more.

## Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



Portrait of Dorothy Hodgkin, 1985, British Chemist who deciphered the structure of insulin among many other major achievements and won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1964.

[Click here](#) to learn more. Artist – Maggi Hambling



On Feb 18th 2021, the Perseverance rover landed on Mars and began recording the surface. The guiding voice heard by viewers watching footage was that of engineer Dr Swati Mohan, in control of guidance, navigation and controls for the vehicle.

## Our Twitter feed and web page - don't forget to have a look



[Click here to see our Milton Keynes Soroptimists Twitter feed and what we are currently talking about](#)



[Click here to see our Milton Keynes Soroptimists web page and what we are currently talking about](#)

[Click here to go Back to the top](#)

## SI:MK support these local charities:

