



Save our Sanity

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



31 March 2022

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 37

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Editorial Welcome

Celebrating International Women's Day 2022



Appearing on Politics East Sunday programme

Kay Smith from MK Community Foundation telling us all about the work of their Women's Fund



What a fabulous way to celebrate International Womens Day, the day before we appear on BBC Politics East programme to celebrate IWD. And the next day we have our Afternoon tea with all our friends. Kay Smith, Philanthropy Manager from MK Community Foundation spoke to us about their Women's Fund supporting projects in Milton Keynes.

And didn't our friends do us proud. We raised a **BIG** £800 at the final count. £400 will go to the Ukraine Crisis and the rest will be split amongst our charities.

A very BIG thank you to all those who attended and made the donations but also a big thank you to all members, baking cakes, scones, organising, decorating MK Snap and serving. And we need to say thank you to MK Snap for the use of their beautiful premises and to the learners who made our wonderful floral displays for the tables (somehow, I missed out on one of them) and they were gorgeous.

And March has certainly seen some more vital steps taken around women's issues, specifically in tackling the issue of violence against women.



On 1 March, The Home Office launched "**Enough**" a **national communications campaign to tackle violence against women and girls**. The aim of the campaign is to challenge perpetrators and raise awareness of what we can all do to safely call out abuse.

The campaign includes television adverts, billboards, social media and radio advertising and will highlight different forms of violence against women and girls and the simple acts that anyone can take to challenge perpetrators of abuse. Forms of violence against women and girls represented include street harassment, coercive control, unwanted touching, workplace harassment, revenge-porn and cyber-flashing.

Click here to read the news release with further details.

There is also more information available on the campaign website: gov.uk/enough.

And we shall be promoting this campaign on our Twitter every 25 of the month and also putting it on our website. Please do share with friends and raise awareness.

This month also saw The Mayor of London start the **HAVE A WORD** campaign. Male violence against women and girls starts with words. If you see it happening, have a word with yourself—then your mates. Watch this video about how young people can step up and break the cycle of harassment of women and girls. **Click here.**



This month also saw the Domestic Abuse Commissioner publish a story as part of IWD 2022 to #Break the Bias and Be inspired

From science to sex worker to solicitor supporting survivors of Domestic Abuse

[Click here](#) to read Carole's story



And our donations continued this month. Chris was actually able to visit our linked charity MK YMCA and dropped off a donation of new single duvet covers for the residents in supported accommodation at the YMCA facilities.

Back at our planning day they told us providing new items to the residents really makes them feel valued and boosts their morale and having new items rather than hand me downs, really helps them to feel that they are getting their lives back together.

You sometimes forget the feeling of buying for the first time your own new items for your place. Just how good that makes you feel.



Smalls For Us is a charity based in Glasgow who send donations of much needed underwear to charities/projects in Africa. They help those living in orphanages, slums, IDP (internally displaced persons) camps, schools, as well as those in hospitals suffering from medical conditions like obstetric fistula. Their underwear has gone to many countries including Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia,

Zanzibar and Zimbabwe. They also help charities in the UK who focus on alleviating poverty here.

This month with the help of donations from friends we were able to send 28 bras and a pack of new underwear to help this charity.



And the Winter Night Shelter received 3 single duvets, 4 pillows, 6 duvet sets and 2 Clean Start Buckets.

One of our members is looking into the possibility of obtaining sponsorship for our "Clean Start" Buckets, which would be great so let's keep our fingers crossed.



Well done our craft stall at Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council Food and Craft Fayre – nearly £80 raised and the sun shined for us.

A busy and very satisfying month for us in supporting our charities and those in need. And our Dear Diary dates are getting busy. We will need volunteers for a stall at Windmill Hill on 22 May for an afternoon. And really looking forward to our April meeting and listening to Age UK tell us all about how they support older people in Milton Keynes. Please see below and update your diary.

I know I have already said this but a big thank you to all our members and friends for a great month. We always step up to the mark and deliver.

Sue Key, Chair

Dear Diary updates

Dear Diary Dates	
Wed 6 April	Friendship Lunch – 1.00pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tues 19 April	Branch meeting 5.30 pm for tea with 6.00 pm start. Great Linford Offices. Speakers Sue Graham Chair and Denise Stygal-Watson new Executive Director from Age UK MK
Wed 4 May	Friendship Lunch – 1.00pm Venue to be confirmed
Tues 19 May	AGM Branch meeting 5.30 pm for tea with 6.00 pm start. Venue to be confirmed.
Sat 22 May	Windmill Hill Golf Course Craft Stall Fayre 12 pm till 4pm. Volunteers required
Wed 1 June	Friendship Lunch - To be confirmed
Tues 7 June	Platinum Tea Evening Event. Details to be confirmed
Sat 11 June	Face-to-Face – SILC Region Conference Hosted by SI Slough Windsor and Maidenhead Club Details to be confirmed
Tues 21 June	Branch meeting 5.30 pm for tea with 6.00 pm start. Venue to be confirmed.

<u>Special Days:</u>	<u>Regional Dates for Diary:</u>
SIGBI Action Day TBC World Homelessness Day 10 October White Ribbon 25 November	Sat 8 Oct 2022 – Zoom – SILC Region AGM/Conference 27-29 July 2023 Soroptimist International Convention Dublin “Challenge the Future” sidublin2023.com

UN International days and Awareness days- April 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.**

2 April	World Autism Day	
4 April	International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action	
5 April	International Day of Conscience	
6 April	International Day of Sport for Development and Peace	
7 April	World Health Day	
7 April	International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda	
12 April	International Day of Human Space Flight	
14 April	World Chagas Disease Day (WHO)	
20 April	Chinese Language Day	
21 April	World Creativity and Innovation Day	
22 April	International Girls in ICT Day	International Mother Earth Day
23 April	World Book and Copyright Day	English Language Day Spanish Language Day
24-30 April	World Immunization week	
24 April	International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace	
25 April	World Malaria Day	International Delegate's Day
26 April	International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day	World Intellectual Property Day
28 April	World Day for Safety and Health at Work	
30 April	International Jazz Day	

Awareness Days – dates for your diary.

	Dear Diary Dates
1-30 April	Stress Awareness Month
1-30 April	Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

SIGBI 88th Conference - Belfast 27-29th Oct 2022



SIGBI 88th Conference will be taking place in person in Belfast 27 to 29 October.

The conference will be held in the improved and extended ICC, Belfast. This will be the first physical face-to-face conference since Bournemouth 2019 and SIGBI hope everyone will be pleased to get together again. And Belfast is just the city to do that.

Click here to go to the website which will be updated in the coming months as the details are finalised so keep an eye on this.

The Conference Committee is busy planning a vibrant Conference to enthuse and excite everybody. The theme of the Conference is **'Climate for Change'** and SIGBI have four dynamic Keynote Speakers (focusing on Education, Health, Environment/Climate and Women (gender equality)) together with Programme Action and Membership workshops.

Soroptimist International Convention - 2023 Dublin



And after our SIGB Conference in Belfast then in 2023 there is the Soroptimist International Convention in Dublin Face to face.

Another great event to look forward to.

Click here for the website and to keep up to date

MK CAB and Works For Us merge - 1 April 2022



MK Citizens Advice celebrate 50 years of working for the community of Milton Keynes 1972 to 2022.

From 1 April MK Citizens Advice and Works For Us merge into one to provide:

- Advice
- Advocacy Guidance
- Learning support
- Coaching
- Training

and all because the world of work is changing. More people than ever before are working for themselves or in jobs with greater flexibility and that's a good thing but it also comes at a cost, with many people being at risk of having an insecure or unstable income, not understanding their rights at work or feeling they don't have the skills they need to do a better job. The goal of the merger is not just to make work fairer or more sustainable. We'll be there to help anyone who is taking their first steps back into work whether that is by helping them put a CV together or to preparing for interviews or helping to understand how their benefits and money will change when they start working.

And once the merger is done, Works For Us will not disappear. From 1 April it will become the new specialist employability service for MK Citizens Advice Milton Keynes. By working together as one team the goal and hope is to help more people across Milton Keynes.

Once this merger has settled down, we will be in contact to see how we can continue to support Works For Us.

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)**

MK Food Bank - Charity of the Year



And a BIG well done to MK Food Bank at this month's MK Business Achievement Awards 2022, sponsored by P J Care.

MK Food Bank picked up "Charity of the Year Award", and considering the really tough times all charities have been through these last couple of years, what a lovely way to have all your hard work recognised. Well done to all the staff and volunteers who have kept on going and feeding our community.

MKYMCA pick up award at MKBAA 2022 Awards



And our linked charity MK YMCA has picked up two awards this month. See the article below on the Hospital Navigation Scheme.

At the MK Business Achievements Awards 2022 in partnership with Green Rook MK and their project to put a green space on the YMCA building roof for the residents to relax in and to also learn to grow food and plants, they picked up the "Environment Sustainability Award. Well done both. [Click here](#) to read more about the project.

MKYMCA Hospital Navigator wins 2022 National Crime beat Awards



On 15 March 2022, our Hospital Navigator Scheme was recognised for the important work it is doing to help young people aged 13-35 affected by serious violence in Milton Keynes.

National Crimebeat is a youth crime prevention charity of the High Sheriffs' Association in England and Wales. An awards ceremony takes place in London in March each year to recognise innovative and effective crime prevention projects led by young people. [Click here](#) to read more

Healthwatch - Let's talk Hormones



Healthwatch have been hearing from women about the improvements needed to women's health services in Milton Keynes.

Their latest Let's talk workshop is on Wed 30 March 6pm to 9pm at the Bar Bar Black Sheep Café in Wolverton to talk about Hormones from puberty to Menopause and what support women and girls need. Why not pop along

Winter Night Shelter Big Sleep Out 2022 is back



Winter Night Shelter Big Sleep Out fund raiser is back and now is for adults and children. It will take place in the secure surroundings of one Winter Night Shelters corporate supporters, Cranswick Foods.

Will you join in sharing this with family and friends and asking them to sponsor someone to sleep rough for a night so that others don't have to?

WNS have been at the front line of helping people in need throughout the pandemic and their work to meet the need continues to grow. Over the last 12 months their welfare team have had a record caseload and helped around 200 people each week accessing support services at Unity Park Station. WNS are gearing up for what looks to be their busiest summer yet so the funds from this fund raiser raise will enable them to continue to help those who have nowhere else to turn.

Event details

Date: Friday 29 April 2022

Time: 8pm

Venue: Cranswick Foods (DELICO), Steinbeck Crescent, Milton Keynes, MK4 4AE

Open to: Children and adults. Participants under 18 years must be with an adult or group with a responsible adult in charge. [Click here](#) to find out more and how to donate. Please share with your friends.

MK Community Foundation and Its Whats Next IT bringing laptops to students



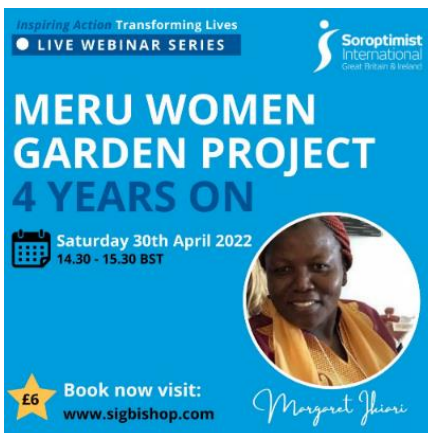
MK Community Foundation have partnered up with Its What's Next IT to ensure that more children have access to a computer.

Businesses and residents can donate an old laptop.

It's Whats Next IT will refurbish the laptop clearing it of all past data and will then pass it onto a child who needs it.

[Click here](#) to find out more and how you can donate your old laptop.

SIGBI Inspiring Action Transforming lives webinars



In the SIGBI shop you can find some little gems.

Here is one a webinar 30 April to inspire you, looking at a past SIGBI project, learn from their experiences and maybe be inspired to think of a new project for your club.

Saturday 30 April 2022. 14.30 - 15.30 BST

Hear from **Margaret Ikiari** about the **Meru Women Garden Project, 4 years** on, the challenges CIFORD has faced over the last few years and the impact her team and partners are having despite the pandemic. Listen to their exciting focus for 2022 and how you can help to inspire action and transform lives. [Click here](#)

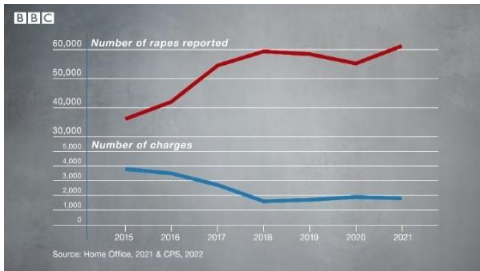
Domestic Abuse - the forgotten victims failed by the system



Many women arrive in the UK in a happy relationship and the legal right to live with their partner. But some of those relationships break down and turn into a life of physical and sexual abuse.

For those with an insecure immigration status, it can be difficult to escape, with very few legal rights and limited access to help. One charity is calling for better support for these "forgotten" victims of domestic abuse. To read more [click here](#)

BBC Panorama - Britain's Rape Crisis



Five years ago, the number of rape charges in England and Wales made by the CPS began to fall, despite a big increase in the number of cases reported.

Panorama's programme: Beyond Reasonable Doubt: Britain's Rape Crisis shows the devastating impact of delays to cases, plummeting charge rates and the distressing adversarial court process.

[Click here](#) for the link to the programme.

Every woman is capable of becoming a leader -



#Break the Bias inspiring story

Syrian refugees in Lebanon have elected women as leaders in some camps, breaking traditional social norms. [Click here](#) to read the story

Almost 2 million children regularly missing school



Almost 1.8 million children missed at least 10% of school in the autumn term in England, according to new estimates.

The number of children missing at least half of school is also greater than previously thought, at 122,000.

The figures are based on information gathered from 145 councils for the Children's Commissioner.

Dame Rachel de Souza said urgent action was needed to identify the children most at risk, and the reasons why they miss school. [Click here](#) to read more.

Young girls dropping out of sport for fear of being judged



More than 1 million girls who thought of themselves as sporty at primary school lose interest in physical activity as teenagers, according to estimates based on a new survey.

The [study](#), by Women in Sport, found that a fear of being judged and a lack of confidence were the main reasons cited for a waning interest in sport among teenage girls. Its poll of more than 4,000 teenagers found that 43% of girls felt they were sporty at primary pupils but no longer saw themselves this way. This would equate to 1.3 million girls across the UK, the survey pointed out. To learn more [Click here](#).

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) -See the Blogs



The sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women has finished but there are lots of blogs to catch up on and learn about what was discussed during this big event. Both Soroptimist International website and the SIGBI website have some very interesting blogs to read. Here are the links below:

[Soroptimist International](#)
[SIGBI](#)

Joint CSW66 and IUCN policy brief on tackling violence against women

The infographic is divided into two main sections. The left section, titled 'Violence against women and girls (VAWG) and climate change are two of the most pressing global emergencies of our time.', features several statistics: 'Following Hurricane Maria, the rate of RAPE ROSE 53 TIMES. The baseline rate in Montserrat for that year among women displaced in exile past.', 'Between 2015 & 2019 1,800 ACTS OF VIOLENCE were recorded in Mexico and Central America against women environmentalists, union leaders, and rights defenders.', 'In Ethiopia there was an increase in girls SOLD INTO EARLY MARRIAGE in exchange for livestock with the impacts of prolonged droughts.', 'In Vanuatu, after two tropical cyclones in 2015, there was a 300% INCREASE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE cases reported to the Taro Women's Counselling Centre.', 'Globally, VAWG affects 1 IN 3 WOMEN in their lifetime.' The right section, titled 'ACTION FOR TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE.', lists five key actions: 1. Create an enabling policy environment for the elimination of VAWG in the context of climate change. 2. Promote strategic cross-sectoral partnerships across the climate change and ESWW sectors. 3. Generate data to understand the impact of climate change on VAWG and risk factors. 4. Increase investment in flexible and adaptive approaches to VAWG prevention and response, prioritizing funding for women's rights and civil society organizations. 5. Prevent violence against women, environmental human rights defenders and ensure perpetrators are held to account. The infographic also includes logos for UN Women and IUCN.

At the CSW66, UN Women and ICUN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) issues a joint policy brief to explore strategies for tackling violence against women and girls in the context of Climate Change.

[Click here](#) to read more

UN Ocean Conference - 27 June - 1 July 2022



The Ocean covers 70% of the Earth's surface:

It is home to up to 80% of all life:

Generates 50% of the oxygen we need.

Billions of humans, animals and plants rely on a healthy ocean, but rising carbon emissions are making it more acidic, weakening its ability to sustain life underwater and on land.

Plastic waste is also choking our waters, and more than half of the world's marine species may stand on the brink of extinction by 2100.

But it is not all bad news. According to the UN [Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean](#) Peter Thomson, momentum for positive change is building around the world, with people, especially youth, mobilizing to do their part to reverse the decline in ocean health.

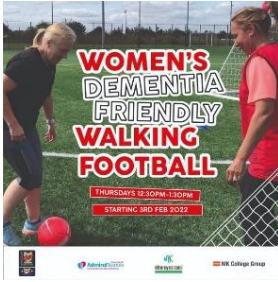
The [UN Ocean Conference](#) which will take place from 25 June to 1 July, in Lisbon, Portugal and will provide a critical opportunity to mobilize partnerships and increase investment in science-driven approaches. [Click here](#) to read more.

Age UK MK new Music and movement club in Bletchley



Music and movement 4 memory is a new club for people with mild to moderate dementia now being run. They will be holding a free taster session on Monday 4 April 2.15pm to 3.15pm at Water Eaton Church Centre, Bletchley, MK2 3RR. For further information contact mm4memory@gmail.com or ring 07598457651

Age UK and MK Dons Set team up to provide Women's Friendly Dementia Walking Football



This month saw both our MK MP's visit Age UK MK to find out more about the work Age UK MK do to support older people here in Milton Keynes.

And they learnt about the recent partnership between Age UK MK, MK Dons Set and Dementia UK Admiral Nurses to provide Women's Dementia Friendly Walking Football.

Every Thursday between 12.30 and 1.30pm, Women's Dementia Friendly Walking Football sessions are held at Sports Central. For details contact admiralnurseteam@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



Soroptimist International Tunbridge Wells have been making masks for their community during the covid lockdown. They also made their "Story Tree", made from recycled mask fabric, 1 leaf for every year of the club's 75 years and made by every current member during lockdown.



On March 25 1870, Marianne Hainisch – founder of the Austrian women's movement – spoke "On Education of Women", calling for the city of Vienna to institute parallel school classes for girls. Her demand led to a bank donating £40k gulden to found a girl's school. To read more about her [click here](#)

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](#)

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SI:MK support these local charities:

