



Save our Sanity

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



31 May 2023

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 50

In This Issue

[click on one of the following titles to take you to the article](#)

- Editorial Welcome
- Dear Diary dates
- Great Big Green Week – 10 to 8 June
- International Festival MK – 21 to 30 July
- Fundraising Fish and Chip Quiz – 19 August
- Heritage Days – 8 to 17 Sept
- Heart and Music Choir – 14 October
- SIGBI 3-4 Nov 2023 Conference
- Help MK Act when buying Theatre tickets
- VowMK Newsletter
- MK Community Safety Survey 2023/24
- Menopause and periods guidance
- South Africa period poverty
- No pads at school, my period leaked in my exams
- What many women face reporting rape
- Nearly 70% rape victims fall out of investigations
- Forced Marriage reports soar
- How Tina Turner broke her silence on domestic abuse
- Big Tea event to celebrate NHS 75th anniversary
- New Children’s ad Women’s Hospital for MK
- New Trees planted in MK
- SGIBI latest news/Blogs
- SIGBI Hub – regular
- Soroptimist International in Vienna
- Soroptimist International Voices and Podcasts
- Soroptimist International latest news/blogs
- Inspiring Women - Be Inspired
- UN International Days & Awareness days – June
- Our Twitter feed and web page

Editorial Welcome

Soroptimists – Standing up for Women and Girls



May and our AGM meeting. And firstly I must say thank you to all the officers for a great year and for standing for another year. Thank you all for your hard work. And what a lovely way to celebrate our AGM with the great news of our new friendship link with our sisters in Soroptimist International Krakow.

We started working with them when the Ukraine War commenced and we saw what fantastic work they were undertaking with the Ukrainian refugees who were escaping to their country. We have already sent them one donation and another one of £400 will be on its way to help with one of their

projects helping pregnant Mums coping in a new country and dealing with different customs. We are really looking forward to working with them and to learning from each other.



And this month we collected up all the unused toiletries and sanitary products from our collection points.

A big thank you to everyone who dropped off these items at our collection points:
the Red House Surgery in Bletchley
MK Snap
Great Linford Parish Council office and
The Mead Centre.

Six boxes of sanitary and toiletries will be delivered to MK Act, The Winter Night Shelter and YMCA MK. Laraine has already dropped off her two boxes to the Winter Night Shelter and received a really big thank you as they were out of these supplies. Well done Laraine and I encourage everyone to spread the word to all your friends and ask if they are able to continue to help donate a few items for our charities.

Plans are continuing to move apace with our Violet Awards 2023, on the 8 September at MK Snap, to recognize volunteers at our linked charities who have gone above and beyond. We are really pleased and privileged to announce we now have a speaker, Zoe Raven, CEO of Acorn Early Years Foundation, a social enterprise and charity which operates day nurseries and other childcare services across MK, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. Zoe is also Vice Chair of MK Parks Trust. Laraine is currently sewing away and making lovely violet hearts as part of the awards that will be presented on the night. We will have more to announce at our next meeting.

And speaking of our next meeting, June will be our 8th birthday, can you believe that. There will be a birthday cake to celebrate. We also need to think about our 10th birthday and how we want to celebrate it ourselves and with our community. In addition, we will have heard back from our Regional meeting on 3 June about the Domestic Violence study and I hope we can discuss this and how we can take it forward here in Milton Keynes. We need to start planning for the annual 16 days of Activism and as mentioned below the Orange Café membership drive. An interesting agenda.

And for our July meeting we have a speaker from Mummy's Star at our July meeting. Mummy's star is a charity providing cancer support in or around pregnancy. Helping families through birth, loss and with the beyond. They have been speaking to other soroptimist clubs around the country and have been grateful for the support they have received from them. It is their 10th anniversary and they want to try to reach groups like ourselves to help raise awareness about cancer in and around pregnancy. I hope you will all be able to make the meeting. It sounds interesting.



In last month's newsletter I mentioned May is SIGBI's membership month, and they are very keen to increase our membership numbers which have dipped especially during covid.

One initiative they have come up with is called the "Orange Café".

The aim is to raise our profile and talk about all that we do, including obviously, as the name suggest Orange the World.

We are asked to consider a venue, possibly a café, somewhere that is busy with a mixed clientele.

Do we always meet at the café on the same day every month or do we choose different days. Things to consider include making sure we have handouts, leaflets to give out. Some suggestions have included holding an activity. Clubs have said you should be ready to talk about all the different things you do. One idea is we could even take along a collection box to encourage people to bring along toiletries. But it is about making friends and hopefully encouraging new members.

Are we as a club up for this. During May a number of clubs have been holding their own Orange café, and it has been interesting to see their photos on Twitter and Facebook. I hope we can discuss this and have a go ourselves.

I sum up this month's editorial on one issue Soroptimists are known for, which is saving trees, caring about the environment.



2023 is the 50th year we celebrate World Environment Day, 5 June 2023. And this year it will be focusing on the plastic pollution crisis.

Humanity produces more than 430 million tonnes of plastic annually, two-thirds of which are short-lived products that soon become waste, filling the ocean and, often, working their way into the human food chain.

An estimated 19-23 million tonnes end up in lakes, rivers and seas annually. That is approximately the weight of 2,200 Eiffel Towers all together.

Microplastics – tiny plastic particles up to 5mm in diameter – find their way into food, water and air. It is estimated that each person on the planet consumes more than 50,000 plastic particles per year – and many more if inhalation is considered. Discarded or burnt single-use plastic harms human health and biodiversity and pollutes every ecosystem from mountain tops to the ocean floor. With available science and solutions to tackle the problem, governments, companies and other stakeholders must scale up and speed actions to solve this crisis.

This 2023 World Environment Day we are all being asked to reduce our use of plastic and to see what we can change. [Click here](#) to learn more.



Ready to reduce plastic in your life [Click here](#)

Here are just 10 ways we can all consider:

- Save water – I can now shower in under 4 minutes. Can you?
- No Plastic bags – always carry around a reusable bag
- No Plastic bottles – carry your own reusable bottle/flask
- Use metal straw over plastic
- Eat local and seasonal foods
- Eat plants
- Walk more – helps make you feel better too
- Save paper
- Save electricity – unplug items not in use
- Use public transport



Soroptimist International are holding a Webinar on “Joining Forces to beat Plastic Pollution on 5 June World Environment Day.

If you are interested to register for the event, here are the details:

[Click here](#)

Happy reading and I hope you all have a great June everyone, look after yourselves.

**Soroptimists standing up for Women and Girls
Sue Key, Chair**

Dear Diary updates

Dear Diary Dates	
3 June	SILC Northern Region Meeting, 10-2pm, Redbourn Village Hall, 63 High St, Redbourn, AL3 7LW. Click here.
Tues 20 June	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Acorn Training Centre, Westcroft
Wed 28 June	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tues 18 July	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Acorn Training Centre, Westcroft
Wed 26 July	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA

Great Big Green Week: 10- to 18 June 2023



The Great Big Green weekend started in 2021 and is the UK's biggest ever celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.

In the UK and abroad we are seeing the impacts of floods, fires and storms alongside. There are solutions out and each and everyone of us can make changes which will help and not be too expensive. Their website has a useful tool to help give ideas of what you can do or if you want to take part in an event you will be able to find one near you.

International Festival MK - 21-30 July 2023



International Festival MK is back this year from 21 – 30 July 2023.

Concerts and events for all age groups. To find out more and book events. [Click here.](#)

Our Fish and Chip Quiz Fundraising evening - 19 Aug 2023



Don't forget everyone to put the 19 August in your diary. It is our great Fish and Chip Quiz night. 7pm at Simpson Church, Simpson.

Another of our annual favourite fundraising events. Please share with friends and try to encourage them to come along to help raise funds for our good causes. More details will follow in future newsletters.

Heritage Open Days - 8 to 17 September 2023



Heritage Open Days is England's largest community led festival of history and culture, involving thousands of local volunteers and organisations. Every year in September it brings people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history. Stories are told, traditions explored, and histories brought to life. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – and it's all FREE. To find out more, [click here.](#)

Heart and Music Choir Event - 14 October



Heart and Music have kindly agreed to take part in our Music fundraising event on 14 October at The Mead Center, Newport Pagnell.

Please put this in your diary and share with your family and friends as we want to get as many people there as possible to raise funds for our charity/projects but to make it a great and a joyful evening.

SIGBI 2023 Conference - London 3-4 November 2023



Here is a date for your diary.

SIGBI 2023 Conference in London on 3 to 4 November at Friends House.

The Theme is Climate for Change. Two speakers confirmed so far are Adam Henson from BBC Country File and Tracey Horner, CEO of Lend with Care. **Click here** to learn about these speakers.

More details will follow. **Click here** to keep an eye out for updates on this conference.

To register **click here**.

You can help MK Act by buying discounted theatre tickets



Thanks to our charity partnership with Milton Keynes Theatre, we can now sell discounted tickets to the theatre. At least £9 of every ticket you purchase from us will help families at MK Act who are suffering from domestic abuse.

Discounted tickets are for Cinderella 9 Dec 2023 to 14 Jan 2024.

Packed with all of the traditional pantomime ingredients MK Theatre audiences expect, Cinderella features laugh-out-loud comedy, stunning scenery, beautiful costumes and plenty of boos and hisses. Join Cinders as she goes from rags to riches, outwits her evil sisters and meets her Prince.

Normally tickets bought individually in Band B would cost up to £31.50, Band C £28* plus fees if applicable. We are selling tickets for £24 each. MK Act will receive between £9 - £12.50 for every ticket purchased, which will go to our Last Resort Fund.

You can pick either of these dates and times:

1. Tue 2 Jan =2.20pm
2. Tue 2 Jan= 7pm
3. Sat 6 Jan= 2.30pm
4. Sun 6th Jan =7pm

When you have purchased your tickets on our Local Giving Page, please email your receipt/email from Local Giving to LucyB@mk-act.org and state the number of tickets you purchased and your chosen date and performance time. Your tickets will arrive by email via pdf eticket in December 2022.

Click here to buy: <https://localgiving.org/charity/.../project/mkactpantotickets/>

VOW MK - latest newsletter



The June edition of VOW MK newsletter is here. It includes items on Empowering women in Security, can you help the local health service and upcoming events and news clippings. To read the full newsletter **click here**.

Safer MK Community Safety Survey 2023/24

Do you have feedback on anti-social behaviour and crime in Milton Keynes?

SaferMK wants to hear from you



Scan the QR code for the SaferMK Community Safety Survey



The Community Safety Survey 23/24 is out for response. The survey allows residents, employees and visitors to provide feedback on anti-social behaviour and crime concerns across all of Milton Keynes.

To complete the survey, [click here](#). It is nine questions and should only take 5 minutes. Help to give feedback to make our city as safe as possible for all.

Menopause & periods guidance is a magnificent step forward



New guidance to support women with periods or going through menopause has been described as a "magnificent step forward".

The British Standards Institution (BSI) has published a workplace standard to tackle taboos and help employers keep talented people in work. It suggests more training for managers and offering flexible work patterns. It also recommends introducing comfortable seating and desk fans to help with menopause symptoms.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

South Africa period poverty: "I don't want anyone else to use rags for sanitary pads"



Tamara Magwashu was bullied at school because her family was not rich enough to afford sanitary pads.

She would take at least a week off school while she was on her period and had to learn how to fold and use rags, which were uncomfortable. That scarring experience has motivated her as an adult to set up her own business to help supply free sanitary pads to schools. Read her story, [click here](#).

No pads at school, so my period leaked during my exams



Four out of every 10 pupils have difficulty accessing free period products in UK schools, research shared with BBC News suggests.

Government schemes to reduce stigma and improve access have been running for several years – and many schools say these have benefited pupils. It says 97% of secondary schools in England have ordered free products.

But some teenagers are still feeling upset, angry and embarrassed about dealing with their period at school.

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

What many women face reporting rape



Kafka-esque nightmare – what many women face when reporting rape. Netflix documentary looking at the experiences of American women and examines a broken system that too often turns women from victims of sexual assault to suspects of false claims. To read the full article [click here](#).

Nearly 70% of rape victims fall out of investigations in England and Wales



The number of sexual offences in England and Wales reached a record high of 193,566 in the year ending March 2022, according to the ONS.

Nearly 70% of rape survivors dropped out of the justice system in the fourth quarter of last year. Amid court delays, low police conviction rates and fears over the trauma of reliving the crime in court, 69.2% of those subjected to a serious sexual assault withdrew from investigations.

The figure, which was unearthed by the Labour party, compares with a 55.5% dropout rate in 2016 and 66.9% in 2021. Labour has increased pressure on Rishi Sunak over rape conviction rates over recent weeks after a **highly critical report** on misogyny in the Metropolitan police by Louise Casey. [Click here](#) to read the full article.

Forced marriage reports soar but true scale of problem still hidden, experts fear



“Devastating” reports of forced marriage to the national helpline have surged as experts warn the issue remains “rife” but it is difficult to see the true scale of the problem due to people not coming forward.

Exclusive data from Karma Nirvana, which supports forced marriage victims, shows its helpline dealt with 42 per cent more cases between April 2022 and March 2023 than they did in the same period two years before – up from 380 cases in 2020-21 to 536 this year.

This means cases are back to pre-pandemic levels when they handled 533 cases between April 2019 and March 2020. [Click here](#) to read the full article.

How Tina Turner “broke the silence on domestic abuse”



When Tina Turner first spoke out about the violence she endured during her marriage to Ike Turner, it was an act of bravery to expose herself so publicly.

"I was insanely afraid of that man," she told People magazine in 1981, revealing the painful reality behind the hugely successful musical duo.

Tina's scorching description of their marriage included being made to watch a live sex show in a brothel on their wedding night, and being beaten with a shoe stretcher while she was pregnant. [Click here](#) to read the full article.

BIG Tea event to celebrate NHS 75th Anniversary



Celebrate NHS 75th anniversary this year by raising a cup of tea and fundraising for your local hospital at the same time.

Everybody has their own reason for saying thanks to the NHS. This July, they are asking us to come together and take part in the biggest NHS Big Tea ever to celebrate 75 years of our NHS – and raise vital funds for your local hospital.

Any time during the week of 5th July (or whatever date in July that works for you!) you are invited to raise a cuppa and help make a difference to your local hospital by hosting a Big Tea party of your own. Pop the kettle on at home,

share a pot with your colleagues, or rally the whole street with a brew and slice of cake.

Every pot of tea, each penny and every pound raised will go towards making a big difference here at MKUH, so no matter what your event looks like you'll be having an impact. To find out more [click here](#).

New Women's and Children's Hospital for MK



IN May Milton Keynes University Hospital was delighted to hear that it is to receive essential funding to deliver a new Women's and Children's Hospital and enhanced surgical capacity by 2030.

To read the full article [click here](#).

New Trees planted in MK



You may have noticed near you some new trees have been planted. These trees need lots of water to establish, especially when its warm.

If you see a hydration bag round the bottom of a new tree, MK City Council are asking you to top it us. Any water is fine - rain, tap and even dishwasher.

Help the trees and help our environment.

SIGBI latest News/blogs



This month our President looks at the current situation relating to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and achieving the targets by 2030 and there is a blog on UN Peacekeepers.

[Click here](#) to read her full May message. [Click here](#) to see the latest blogs.

SIGBI HUB - Please sign in, update your details to receive regular digest of what's happening



Just a reminder. Please everyone make sure you have signed into the new SIGBI Hub and updated your details. A

And the regular Hub digest will provide you with up to date details of what is happening. This will be sent out to you twice a month on the 7th and 21st.

Soroptimist International in Vienna



Soroptimist International UN Representatives in Vienna work closely with the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the UN Industrial Development Organisation to advance women's rights and eliminate gender-based violence.

Discover their advocacy work, [click here](#).

Soroptimist International Voices Webinars and Podcasts



Soroptimist International Voices of webinars commenced in 2020, established to recognised 100 years of our global organization. [Click here](#) to listen to the latest SI

webinar from SI President Maureen Maguire on “Empowering Women in a changing world”.

The SI latest Podcast is on Gender and Climate. To listen to this and previous Podcasts [click here](#).

Soroptimist International Blogs - read the latest



Read the latest Soroptimist International Blogs including:

- Climate change in the making: Asia Pacific Country commitments and challenges
- Looking back on 61st Commission on Social Development and its priority theme to create productive employment and decent work for all as a way of overcoming inequalities.
- CSW67 in Numbers: just what did Soroptimists achieve at the latest CSW-
- Its Important to Regulate Digital Platforms
- CSW67: Agreed Conclusions
- Rally for Older Women to Age with Rights in Rural Communities
- Violence against Women in Leadership
- Technology, Water and Women

[Click here](#) to see all the blogs.

Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



This month in May, to celebrate women who made a difference to wildlife and the environment. We recognize Manchester Emily Williamson. Horrified at the killing of birds for feathers on ladies hat's, in 1891 she co-founded the RSPB. To learn more about her inspirin life [click here](#). To learn more about the RSPB [click here](#).



Georgia O'Keeffe, Red Poppy, 1927. Georgia Totto O'Keeffe was an American modernist artist. She was known for her paintings of enlarged flowers, New York skyscrapers, and New Mexico landscapes. O'Keeffe has been called the "Mother of American modernism" [click here](#). Brought to us by WomensArt1, Twitter page link is <https://twitter.com/womensart1>

UN International days and Awareness days - June 2023

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 June	Global Day of Parents
3 June	World Bicycle Day
4 June	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
5 June	World Environment Day
5 June	International Day for the Flight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
6 June	Russian Language Day
7 June	World Food Safety Day
8 June	World Oceans Day

12 June	World Day Against Child Labour	
13 June	International Albinism Awareness Day	
14 June	World Blood Donor Day	
15 June	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	
16 June	International Day of Family Remittances	
17 June	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	
18 June	International Day for Countering Hate Speech	Sustainable Gastronomy Day
18 June	International Day for Biological Diversity	
19 June	International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict	
20 June	World Refugee Day	
21 June	International Day of Yoga	International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice
23 June	United Nations Public Service Day	International Widows Day
24 June	International Day of Women Diplomacy	
25 June	Day of the Seafarer (IMO)	
26 June	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking	United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
27 June	Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprises Day	
29 June	International Day of the Tropics	
30 June	International Asteroid Day	
30 June	International Day of Parliamentarism	

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:

