



# Save our Sanity

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



30 June 2024

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 60

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## Editorial Welcome

### Soroptimists – Standing up for Women and Girls

Welcome everyone to the 60th edition of our club newsletter and the editorial is a bumper one this edition, because we have had a busy 3 months helping our charities.



**Our “90 challenges”, celebrating SIGBI’s 90 years this year as a Federation are going well.** We have already achieved 5 challenges, which impressed the Regional Conference we hosted in June. A little more about that later.

At the end of March we donated 90 new and slightly used bras to Smalls for Us. A UK charity that collects underwear for people in Africa and the UK who can’t afford or can’t get any. Because Dignity matters.



The second 90 challenge was taking part in MK Foodbank’s MK Logo challenge for Easter. They asked communities, schools, groups and businesses if they could make up their logo or an easter picture in food items. We made up our logo with just over 90 items of food as well as donating over 100 food items to YMCA MK so that they could also take part in this challenge. MK Foodbank MK Can Logo challenge raised over 19,500 food items for the Easter period to support those in need. Can you spot our logo in this picture?

Our third 90 challenge was everyone helping to collect 90 pairs of pants, in fact we collected 93 pairs. These alongside another 68 bras donated by members and friends were donated to UnityMK. They told us they were really short of underwear, especially for women who approach them.



Next came 90 pairs of socks, men’s and women’s and these were also taken to UnityMK in June.

And we have now donated £90 to SI Wakiso, a new club in Uganda, chartered in 2023. Their first project is to fundraise in order to build a Cervical Cancer Centre, after talking to their community to see what they needed. They linked up with SI Libertas to hold a webinar asking Soroptimist clubs to help out. You can make a donation by clicking on the following link <http://tinyurl.com/yhhn97uz>



A big thank you everyone and your friends for all contributing to these challenges. Mags at UnityMK was so grateful to receive the underwear. It highlights how just small things can mean so much to helping those in need.

But we still have the rest of the year. What will be our next challenge? Let’s discuss at our next branch meeting on Tuesday 16 July at Morrisons at Westcroft.

I will leave you with this idea from one of our members. Help Ukraine are still looking for donations to ship back to the Ukraine. Could we and our friends collect 90 items from this list? What do you think?



**At the beginning of May we met at MK Snap to sort out our SOS toiletries collected** from members and our donation points at The Mead Centre, Newport Pagnell, Great Linford Parish Council Offices, The Redhouse Surgery, Bletchley and MK Snap. As a result, 3 boxes were taken to YMCA MK and 3 were taken to MK Act.



**On the 4 May we enjoyed taking part in MK Snap’s May Fayre.**

Thank you, Zita, Scottie, Laraine, Mala and Vanessa, for staffing our stall. The stall looked fantastic, we made some money and distributed out leaflets to raise awareness of what we do.



And at the beginning of May we had a huge thank you from MK Act for the donation of staple kitchen cupboard food items in the fantastic jars labelled up by Mary.

Over 60 jars of food were provided and these will be given to new residents arriving into the safe accommodation provided by MK Act. They come with nothing and so it is vital to provide them with the essentials to help them get their lives back on track.

If you want to see the reel they made on their Facebook page, [click here](#)



This month we received a lovely thank you from Pat and hubby and here is a photo of them enjoying their thank your present from us.

Don't forget everyone we have our Fish and Chip Quiz on 31 August at 7pm. Venue will either be St Thomas Church or the Village Hall in Simpson. If you can come along, book at table with Miss quiz. Contact he via [missquiz@sky.com](mailto:missquiz@sky.com)

[Click here](#) to see further quizzes she is holding on behalf of other charities in our community.



It was also our AGM in May and firstly thank you to all the officers for your hard work and for standing for another year. Thank you must also go to all our members for their continuous support and hard work. We may be a small club but all we do we know is much appreciated by our linked charities.

And what a lovely way to celebrate our AGM, here we are with our Orange Roses. Soroptimists around the world every month and every day say No to Violence Against Women and Girls.



A big thank you to Sally and her team and a couple of our members, who at the beginning of June, baked 200 cakes for MK Act's fundraising event at Broughton and MK Parish Council's residents meeting.

MK Act is one of Broughton and MK Parish Council's chosen charities this year and the event gave them a chance to spread the word with residents, encourage volunteering and raised donations.



And we have been very fortunate in being able to make other essential donations to our charities this month.

Two black sacks of clothes and shoes were donated to the Greenleys Community club supporting those residents most in need. And another sack and shoes were dropped off to UnityMK.

One of our members was given a brand-new microwave, which we donated to MK Act to help a resident when they are able to move out and set up their new home.

And at the beginning of June we received a lovely message from our friendship club SI Krakow and an update on the latest project we have helped them with.



As a result of a zoom meeting held with Krakow back in the autumn of 2023, when they told us of a home near Krakow where there were orphaned Ukrainian children, we agreed it would be good to do something for these children. It was decided to make the children a gift for Children's Day, which falls on 1 June in Poland. SI Krakow asked the children what would make them happy and it turned out that they would most like to receive a Barbeque or they call it a gas grill. On the last day of May, two soroptimists from Krakow Club took part in a picnic for the children and the newly purchased barbeque, which our funds helped to purchase, was used.

SI Krakow have told us that the Ukrainians will need long term support to acclimatise to a new culture and to get support to be able to get jobs and a home. And so, we hope we can continue to help them.



**On the 11 June we provided a buffet meal for the homeless at UnityMK. We usually provide a buffet at Xmas, but the feedback was so positive that we said we would provide another during the summer.**

We teamed up with the Tuesday Unity Park Community Club. Every Tuesday and Wednesday they provide hot food, drink and company and many turn up, both past and present. This day we said we will do the food to give the Tuesday Club volunteers a chance to just rest and chat with the clients. A disco was also provided by the Tuesday Club and a lovely time was had by all. By 2pm we had served over 70 people. And we received a lovely thank you message on UnityMK Facebook page thanking us for our time and food donations to help brighten up everyone's day.

And we were also able to make a donation of chocolate's, not only to the UnityMK clients, who loved the bars of chocolates last xmas but to the families at MK Act and to the children looked after by the Ukraine Appeal charity here in MK. A very kind and generous business man, when we asked for chocolates to give to our charities said come along and see me and very generously donated 28 boxes of various chocolates. He wanted no thanks but

was happy to help and we are most grateful and I know our charities are too. A most humbling experience and we thank him for his generosity on behalf of our charities.

**And this month we were delighted to be able to host the Soroptimist International London and Chiltern Regional meeting on 15 June at MK Snap, celebrating inspirational women.** Thank you, Angie, for letting us host it at MK Snap, everyone loves this venue. Thank you also to Steve at MK Snap, for being our IT genius and helping to set up so that we could provide a hybrid zoom and in person meeting. It went well and is a possibility for the future but does rely on the venue having the facilities. A big thank you to Sue P for managing the event and organizing all the food and thank you to all the helpers, you all made this a fabulous day.



The meeting was opened by Kate Belinis (pictured in the first picture, on the left top row), our Regions current Chair, and whose theme is Celebrating Inspirational Women. Summer (2<sup>nd</sup> picture top row) was our next speaker, reading our SIGBI mission and values as a starter. And then we were very privileged to have the new High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Kurshida Mirza BEM (third picture top row) talk to us. Kurshida is the first British Muslim woman of Asian heritage to take this office on. Kurshida spoke to us about her childhood and the many challenges she faced but how her faith and being inspired by her mother kept her going. In her year of office her plans include prioritizing activities to tackle social exclusion and strengthen communities. It was a truly inspiring speech and you can listen to it at the London and Chilterns soroptimist page. And it was lovely to be able to present Kurshida with a domed indoor plant garden made by the learners at MK Snap.

The event also included our club talking about our Violet Awards, our 90 Challenges projects and the work we are doing with the Ukraine refugees here in MK and with SI Krakow in Poland. We think the presentation went down well. We have now been asked to put the Violet Awards forward for the best in practice awards to be announced at the Edinburgh Conference, so we will see if we can. We ended the morning session on a high with our friends from Ukraine Charty (4<sup>th</sup> picture top row and 2<sup>nd</sup> picture bottom row), coming to sing for us and getting everyone out of their seats to sing along, a truly uplifting morning and we thank them. For all they are going through they remain positive and full of joy and this is what they brought to the regional conference.

In the afternoon we had two speakers. Ann Child, a trustee of the SIGBI Diamond Education Grant (EDG) who explained how clubs could support the work of this grant.

And our last speaker was the ever-inspiring Dishy Attwood, SIGBI Director of Membership (3<sup>rd</sup> picture bottom row). Always full of enthusiasm and giving us many ideas on how we can go out there and drum up more members. And she also spoke about the changes SIGBI is preparing to undergo.

It was a great event and I think we all came away inspired in one way or another. You can read more about the event and listen to the speakers just [click here](#).



And we had a wonderful meeting on 21 June which started in the best possible way by welcoming our new members Summer and Scottie with their new members badges and certificate.

We hope they will enjoy being a part of the club, make new friends and enjoy what we do.



**Dobbie's, Bletchley have kindly let us continue to hold our Orange Cafes there. We are now going to hold these between 10am and 1pm.**

But we do need more volunteers to help out. We need at least two people to cover the time we are there. Here are the dates for the rest of the year, even if you come for just an hour to have a catch up and chat it would be great:

Tuesday 23 July  
Tuesday 27 August  
Tuesday 24 September

Tuesday 22 October  
Tuesday 26 November  
No December date



**Did you know World population Day is celebrated every year on the 11 July.**

49.7% of the global population are made up of women and girls and yet they are often ignored in discussions on demographics, with their rights violated in population policies.

This pervasive injustice keeps women and girls out of school, the workforce and leadership positions; limits their ability to make decisions about their health and sexual and reproductive lives; and heightens their vulnerability to violence, harmful practices and preventable maternal death, with a woman dying every two minutes due to pregnancy or childbirth.

We must advance gender equality to create a more just, resilient and sustainable world. The creativity, ingenuity, resources and power of women and girls are fundamental to addressing demographic and other challenges that threaten our future, including climate change and conflict.

When women and girls are empowered by societies to exert autonomy over their lives and bodies, they and their families thrive, as the UNFPA 2023 State of World Population report illustrates. What women and girls wants matters. Unleash the power o gender equality: uplift the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities.

**Three reminders for you.** Firstly, we are organizing another Afternoon Tea on 18 September because this seems such a popular event. Please tell friends and why not book a table. Let's make it another sell out event. Secondly a reminder we have the Musica Choir singing for us on Saturday 14 December at the Mead Centre, Newport Pagnell. Again, we will be raising important funds for our charities and would love to be able to fill the hall so tell your friends and come along. And thirdly,



don't forget registration for the Soroptimist Edinburgh 2024 Conference is now OPEN.

Book your ticket here [thehub.sigbi.org/events](https://thehub.sigbi.org/events).

Further information about the conference and what to do in Edinburgh is on the conference website: [sigbi.org/edinburgh2024](https://sigbi.org/edinburgh2024).

As always, happy reading everyone. Don't forget, if anyone has any interesting articles, they think the rest of us would like to learn about or hear of any upcoming events would be a good social for us, please send to me or if you want write an article for the newsletter, that would be most welcome.

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

Here are the next few months Dear Diary dates.

Dear Diary Dates	
Tue 16 July	<b>Branch meeting. 5.30pm</b> , Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Tues 23 July	<b>Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley</b>
Wed 31 July	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tues 20 Aug	<b>Summer Party - 5.30pm, Jean's House, bring some food and drink</b>
Tues 27 August	<b>Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley</b>
Wed 28 Aug	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tue 17 Sept	<b>Branch meeting. 5.30pm</b> , Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Wed 18 Sept	<b>Afternoon Tea – 3.30pm to 5.30pm at MK Snap. Tickets TBC £15 or £20 per person</b>
Tues 24 Sept	<b>Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley</b>
Wed 25 Sept	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tue 15 Oct	<b>Branch meeting. 5.30pm</b> , Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Tues 22 Oct	<b>Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, MK College TO BE CONFIRMED</b>
Wed 30 Oct	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
2024 Regional and SIGBI Conference Dates	
<b>19 Oct</b>	SILC Region Conference AGM/Conference. 10am to 1pm on Zoom. Details to be confirmed
<b>1-3 Nov</b>	<b>SIGBI Conference Edinburgh Details to be confirmed</b>

## Future Miss Quiz Quizzes



Our lovely Pat, Miss Quiz, is busy as ever with her quiz's raising money for local charities. Just for everyone's diary our quiz is on Sat 31 August at 7pm. It will be either at the Church in Simpson or at the Village Hall. We will let you know. We are looking to have a table of quizzers so please let Jean know if you can come and please tell your friends.

Please find dates for forthcoming quiz's:

- 29 June - QUIZ NIGHT with LASAGNE SUPPER at 7.00 p.m. Proceeds to N.S.P.C.C. £15.00 p.p. £7.50 p.p. without the food. Village Hall,
- 6 July 7pm STARS & STRIPES Concert, St Thomas's Church. If you want to sing, play or recite please [missquiz@sky.com](mailto:missquiz@sky.com)
- 13<sup>TH</sup> July – Tinkers Bridge Community Fridge
- 27<sup>th</sup> July – SUDC - Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood
- 31<sup>st</sup> Aug – Soroptimists Quiz and supper, 7pm
- 7<sup>th</sup> Sept – Angel Tree

To find out more and book places please contact [missquiz@sky.com](mailto:missquiz@sky.com)

## President's Blog - June 2024

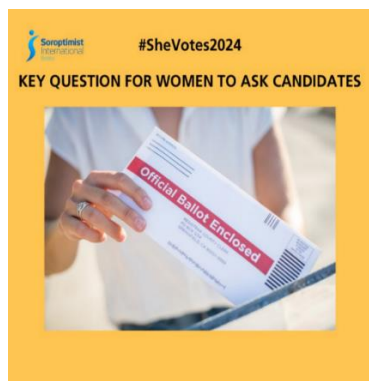


Read Ruth Healey's latest blog to inspire us against adversity with her story of the "Tin full of Tarts" and talking about team work and what we can achieve when we work as a team.

**Click here** to read her full blog from the SIGBI Hub.

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## SIGBI General Election questions for your MP



**The 4 July General Election is fast coming upon us and what do we want to see from our candidates.**

As a club we have written to all the prospective candidates in Milton Keynes asking what they think about the issues women face in MK, especially about safety, health and equality and what they would be able to do to help if they were elected.

SIGBI have now confirmed the top three questions, chosen by clubs, please see below. If you see any of your prospective candidates for your area, here are the questions to ask. Please let us know what response you get.

1. How will your government ensure that domestic abuse services for women and children are properly funded
2. How will your government work to develop a women's health strategy
3. How will your government ensure that the efforts of volunteers, charities and civic society are properly valued and maintained

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## Danish women's footballers to receive equal pay after men refuse pay rise



**Denmark's Euro 2024 squad have refused a pay rise to ensure their female counterpart's ear equal basic pay when they play for the national team.**

The Danish Football Association wanted to offer equal pay for both teams, but neither squad was in favour of a move to reduce money spent on the men's side in order to enhance earnings for the women.

The men's side have instead refused a pay rise to enable both teams to receive the same basic match fee in a new four year plan. And the plan includes creating a new clubhouse which can be used by all national teams and a development fund for youth. [Click here](#) to read the full Independent article (picture – Getty Image).

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## 30 July - World Day against Trafficking in Persons



**1 in 3 victims  
of  
human trafficking  
is a child**

30th July is the UN Day against Trafficking in Persons and it means that globally organisations and groups will be coming together to raise awareness of Human Trafficking.

Sadly, a lot of people still don't understand that this crime still happens in the world, even more so that the crime is happening in the UK. Young people are incredibly vulnerable to county lines or abuse due to the increase in technology and the number of children now wanting phones and iPads etc at such a young age. For more information on UN Day against Trafficking in Person you can go to their official site via the link below.

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

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime, also hosts the Blue Heart Campaign which is linked to the 30th July. [Click here](#) to read more.



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## I could have ended up homeless after my parents died



Two young girls tell their story of how they could have been living on the streets, if they had not been able to get accommodation in a supported living facility.

To read the full BBC article [click here](#). (picture BBC/Look Ahead)

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## New Blood test “can predict” breast cancer return



An ultra-sensitive new blood test can predict if breast cancer will return years before the disease shows up on scans, researchers say.

It picks up traces of a tumour’s DNA before a full relapse and was found to be 100% accurate at predicting which patients would see their cancer return. It is hoped that the test can allow treatment to start earlier and improve survival rates.

To read the full BBC article [click here](#). (picture Institute of Cancer Research)

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## Domestic Abuse drove our daughters to suicide, say families. So what stops coroners acknowledging that?



As the number of abuse victims in England and Wales taking their own lives rises, pressure is mounting on coroners to acknowledge the role violence, control and coercion can play.

For lawyers and families dealing with domestic abuse related suicides the weaknesses in the coroner’s service are well known. The mean that major challenges impede the delivery of justice for bereaved families who face long and often fruitless battles, and the women who no longer have a voice.

Last year for the first time, the number of domestic abuse victims taking their own lives was at 93, higher than as a result of intimate partner homicides (80). To read the full Guardian article [click here](#). (picture farknot-Architect/Getty Images)

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## Cold case detectives vow to solve historical sex crimes



With so few rape cases making it to court across the UK, one police team has made it a priority to revisit 50 years of unsolved sex crimes.

Operation Painter, run by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit, started in 2016 and began by combing through 5,407 unsolved rape and sexual assault cases. It is using the latest forensic science to bring some justice to victims who believed their rapist would never be caught.

So far, the operation has led to 10 cases reaching court and nine successful convictions. To read the full BBC article [click here](#). (BBC/Brinkworth Productions Images)

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## Sex offences against young women up 33% - British Transport Police



Young women and girls are being urged to report sexual offences and sexual harassment that have happened on London's transport network amid a 33% increase in reported offences.

New data from British Transport Police (BTP) shows in 2023, 320 young women and girls aged between 10 and 19 came forward to report incidents of sexual offences and harassment in London, increasing from 240 recorded in 2022. And BTP said it believed many incidents were still unreported.

[Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (picture – BTP).

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## Grandmother becomes oldest international cricketer



A grandmother of 3 plans to “play as long as possible” after recently becoming the oldest ever international cricketer.

Wicketkeeper Sally Barton made her debut in Gibraltar's second T20 international against Estonia at the age of 66

The words “too old” just aren't in my vocabulary, Barton told BBC Sport..

[Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (picture – Sally Barton).

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## Soroptimist International Global Voice newsletter

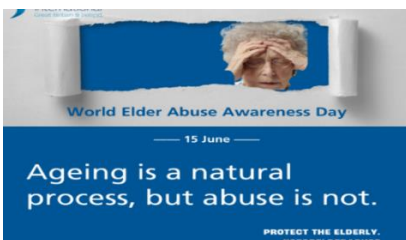


The May 2024 issue of Global Voice is now available. Articles include an announcement of a brand-new project kicking off in Mali that will help a hundred women and girls to gain literacy and food production skills as well as updates on the Youth Forum.

[Click here](#) to read the newsletter in full

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## SIGBI latest News/blogs



[Click here](#) to read all the latest news articles and blogs. Includes:

- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – 15 June
  - World Food Safety Day – 7 June
  - World Environment Day – 5 June
  - Global Voice Newsletter
  - International Day of Living Together in Peace – 16 May
  - World Earth Day 2024
- 

## Soroptimist International News and Blogs - read the latest



[Click here](#) to read the latest Soroptimist International News articles including:

- AGM meeting SI – 13 July 2024
- SI Foundation Announcement – Cambodia Community Dream Organisation
- SI Foundation Announcement – Rose Academies
- SI Foundation Announcement – World Vision Georgia

[Click here](#) to see all the Soroptimist International blogs, including:

- SI Europe – Transforming lives in Kabekel Village, The Gambia

- SI Africa Federation: Leading Environmental initiatives across the continent
- Decarbonising Organised Crime: The role that women and girls play in accomplishing this goal
- Feminist Climate Justice: A framework for Action
- Celebrating World Water Day
- Creating a Coalition of International and Grassroots NGOs
- Monitoring progress towards Global Education

## Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



Malala Yousafzai – born 12 July 1997)

*“If we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness”*

Malala began speaking for education rights at the age of 11. In 2011 she was given Pakistan’s National Peace Award for Youth. In 2012, aged 15 she was shot by a Taliban gunman. On July 12, her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday she made her first public speech after the attack. Appearing at the United Nations, she stated “The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage was born.” To learn more [click here](#).



“Embroidery has been the means of educating women into the feminine ...it has also provided a weapon of resistance to the constraints of femininity.”

- Rozika Parker WSPU embroidered Women's Suffrage Banner UK, 1910.

Brought by WomensArt1, Twitter page link is <https://twitter.com/womensart1>

## UN International days and Awareness days - July 2024

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.**

6 July	<b>International Day of Cooperatives</b>
7 July	<b>World Kiswahili Language Day (UNESCO)</b>
11 July	<b>World Population Day</b>
12 July	<b>International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms</b>
15 July	<b>World Youth Skills Day</b>
18 July	<b>Nelson Mandela International Day</b>
20 July	<b>International Moon Day</b>
20 July	<b>World Chess Day</b>
25 July	<b>World Drowning Prevention Day</b>
28 July	<b>World Hepatitis Day (WHO)</b>
30 July	<b>International Day of Friendship</b>
30 July	<b>World Day against Trafficking in Persons</b>

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## 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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to go Back  
to the top

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## SI:MK support these local charities:

