



Save our Sanity

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



31 March 2023

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 48

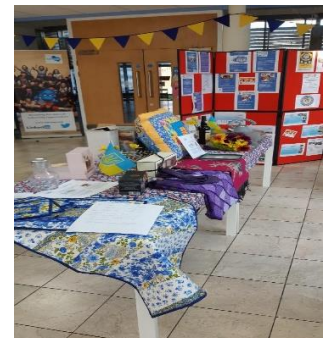
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Editorial Welcome

Embrace Equity, DigitAll for Women and girls were the two themes for this years International Women’s Day



Our International Women’s Day celebrations started the day before with our fantastic Afternoon Tea event. This year we were privileged to have Debbie Brock, High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire to speak to us about her year in office and the inspiring women she had met in that year and then we had Viktoriya Shatenko from the Ukraine

Appeal charity to speak to us about what is happening in the Ukraine and the new projects they are undertaking to support the Ukraine families here in Milton Keynes.

We had a sold-out house and a very **BIG thank you** to all our friends who came along and helped us to again raise and be able to donate £400 to SI Krakow for the work they are doing in Poland with Ukrainian families and £400 to the Ukraine Appeal here in MK. All our friends did us proud.

And we need to say a **Big thank you** to all members, baking cakes, scones, organising, decorating MK Snap and serving. And thank you to MK Snap for the use of their beautiful premises and to the learners who made our wonderful spring floral displays for the tables, they were gorgeous.



The next day I attended the IWD event at MK Theatre and on Saturday, 11 March it was lovely at last to be able to attend the London and Chilterns Regional conference in person to celebrate IWD. The themes for the day were the two IWD themes Embracing Equity and the UN theme recognizing the importance of DigitAll for women and girls. And the Conference also supported the London Chilterns Region theme for this year “The Future is ours to Challenge”.

It was an inspiring and motivational day. It began with Shilla Patel, Training and Events Co-ordinator for the AVA project (Against Violence and Abuse). This project strives to improve services for survivors through training, resources and consultancy to end violence against women and girls through policy research and prevention work.

Our second speaker was Ruth Healey, President elect of Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI). Ruth spoke about the current set up of SIGBI as well as looking to the future with her thoughts for her Presidency 2023-25. Ruth's presentation linked closely to the London Chiltern theme “The Future is ours to Challenge” as she spoke about the declining membership forecast and she encouraged all clubs to make recruiting new members a top priority but to also be more outward facing, more agile, more flexible, we need to get our message out there and find out what tomorrow's members want, we need to be brave.

In the afternoon we had an update on the Domestic Violence Courts work, we had taken part in. The report should be coming out end of March to mid April and we will be asked to circulate it to all relevant persons and bodies in Milton Keynes. The next stage will be to look at the recommendations and see what ones are relevant to MK and how we can work to get them implemented. Watch this space.

To find out more from the day [click here](#).



We had a great meeting this March, as we welcomed Ben Thomas, Executive Director from Citizens Advice Milton Keynes to talk to us about their merger with Works For Us, our linked charity and what that means going forward.

Ben started by saying that after 4 years of collaborative working, the merger had finally gone through, slightly delayed due to the pandemic, at the beginning of 2022 and Works For us will continue to keep their own identity

CA offer support and advice and WFU the skills training to help people with their life skills and to get them back into employment. Ben said the two distinct services combine and provide a more joined up and streamlined service, unique to Milton Keynes and which is being observed by other CA's.

The merger has stimulated a lot of discussion and they are currently in talks with MacMillian Cancer and Paradigm Housing to develop training relevant to these two charities to help their users get back the skills to rebuild their lives.

We asked Ben how we could help and it was interesting to hear how, just like Age MK, CA says they need help with letting people know that they are a charity and still need funding, donations, and volunteers. Before the pandemic they had 88 volunteers and at present are down to just over 30. Any help we can give to get the message out there and help get more volunteers is important if they are to continue to provide their vital services to the community of Milton Keynes. Let's hope we can help spread the word. It was lovely to be able to present Ben with a donation of £200.



And picking up from our Regional meeting, **it was great to be able to welcome and induct Debbie into our club at our March meeting.** Already Debbie is taking an active role and we hope she enjoys and gets much fulfilment from being a Soroptimist.

And I end this month's editorial on Membership. As our President Elect Ruth Healey said, we need new members, and we need to encourage new members, not just during May, our membership month but all the time.

Below are just a couple of draft posters I have started to put together for us to consider. The first one on the left has been expanded but is as a result of an exercise we did at the Regional conference. It was called the Elevator Pitch, we were asked if you met someone in a lift (elevator) what would you tell them about being a Soroptimist in the 30 seconds (about 60 words) it would take to get between the ground floor and the 4th floor.

Below are two examples, the first is the result from the group I was in and the second from one of the other groups.

"Soroptimists are women standing up for women and girls to help achieve their full potential. We Act, Advocate, we have representation at the UN. We are doers. Being a Soroptimist gives you a purpose, makes you feel better helping others. We meet as a club, we provide friendship and support to each other. We support local charities; communities and we have a global reach."

"Soroptimist International is an organisation that supports women and girls, through practical deeds, enablement and emotional space. It's a chance to connect with my own sex and give women and girls a voice."



Who are Soroptimists?

- ❖ Soroptimists means "the best for Women"
- ❖ We are a global charity organisation
- ❖ We are women volunteers
- ❖ Standing up for women and girls
- ❖ Raising the profile of women and girls' issues
- ❖ Transforming lives through Educating, Empowering and Enabling
- ❖ We Act, Advocate and raise awareness
- ❖ We make a difference
- ❖ We provide support and donations to our charities and our community
- ❖ We work locally, nationally and globally
- ❖ We are a sisterhood providing support and friendship for all
- ❖ Together we can Help Women and Girls to Better Futures

If this interest you, why not join us. To find out more contact us on

soroptimistsmk@gmail.com

Twitter: @SMiltonKeynes Website: <https://sigti.org/milton-keynes/> Facebook: Soroptimists Milton Keynes

If we had more members, here in Milton Keynes, just think how much more we could help out our community, our charities and our projects.

I ask you that if you have any friends, neighbours please let them know about us and what we do and see if you can encourage them to join us or start by supporting us more.

But amongst ourselves we need to think of different ways to recruit more members, whether that is coffee events, putting up posters in churches, cafes, community and family centres, going to speak to other groups etc. I hope that some of you can help join our sub group to take this project forward because it is just as vital as our work with our charities.



Soroptimists?



Who are we?

We are a global charity supporting women and girls to achieve better lives

Why are we Soroptimists?

- ❖ We are women inspiring action and transforming lives
- ❖ A voice for women and girls
- ❖ We provide practical help to those in need
- ❖ We like to roll up our sleeves and get things done
- ❖ We add value to a range of local charities
- ❖ We offer friendship and support

Does this sound interesting to you?
Soroptimist International Milton Keynes is always looking for new members.
Join us email us at soroptimistmk@gmail.com

Twitter: @SImiltonKeynes
Website: <https://igbi.org/milton-keynes/>
Facebook: Soroptimists Milton Keynes

Soroptimists?



Who are we?

We are a global charity supporting women and girls to achieve better lives

5 Good reasons to join Soroptimist Milton Keynes?

- ❖ Be a voice for women and girls
- ❖ Provide practical help to those in need
- ❖ Spread kindness
- ❖ Make a personal difference
- ❖ Find a purpose

Does this sound interesting to you?
Soroptimist International Milton Keynes is always looking for new members.
We are a club providing friendship, support and a purpose
Join us email us at soroptimistmk@gmail.com

Twitter: @SImiltonKeynes
Website: <https://igbi.org/milton-keynes/>
Facebook: Soroptimists Milton Keynes

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. And I am looking forward to what we can achieve in the year ahead.

Together we empower each other, we support each other, we can do anything

Sue Key, Chair

Dear Diary updates

Dear Diary Dates	
Wed 29 March	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tues 18 April	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Acorn Training Centre, Westcroft
Wed 26 April	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Tues 23 May	AGM Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Acorn Training Centre, Westcroft
Wed 31 May	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
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
June 2023	SILC Regional Meeting, Details still to be confirmed. Click here.

Ukrainian Art Exhibition - 11 March - 11 April



Ukraine Appeal and the Chernobyl Relief Foundation in the UK are staging a Ukrainian art Exhibition called "PeaceHopeUkraine" from 11 March to 11 April at Milton Keynes Central Library.

The exhibition aims to mark a year since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It will feature art work by refugee Ukrainian artists and children. Please try to pop in and see the work.

St Mark's Meals opens its 100th center



Right now, there are around 18,000 children in Milton Keynes living in poverty, roughly 9 children out of a classroom of 30.

St Mark's Meals MK has grown to support thousands of children across Milton Keynes. This local charity run by St Mary's MK, which aims to end child hunger in the city, has opened its 100th centre.

Since launching in 2019, with the aim of ensuring that no child in MK ever goes to bed hungry, St Mark's Meals has expanded across the entire city and is now accessed by 100 schools, pre-schools and children's centres. The latest addition, and 100th partner, is Holmwood School in Great Holm. [Click here](#) to read the full story.

Study in MK finds women still under represented in local politics



A recent study into the make-up of parish, town and community councils across the city has found women make up just a third of elected councillors.

The study carried out by Fawcett Society Milton Keynes, the women's rights and gender equality charity, found that of the 48 parish, town and community councils across Milton Keynes, only four had a majority of women. And in three parish councils, there was not a single female member.

To download and read the full report [click here](#). This link will take you to the Fawcett Society MK website where you will be able to read more of their reports.

MP's approve plans to make street sexual harassment a crime



MP's have approved plans to make street sexual harassment a crime carrying a jail sentence of up to two years.

Catcalling, following someone or blocking their path will become an offence in England and Wales under a bill backed by the government.

Sexual harassment is already illegal. The bill aims to improve enforcement and targets street harassment.

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

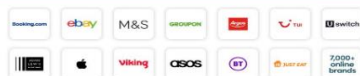
BBC presenter Alexis Green speaks out over her sexual stalking harassment



This month Alexis Green, BBC South weather presenter spoke out about the harassment ordeal and its impact upon her. The presenter was bombarded with scores of sexual message, photos and videos which at times made her physically sick and at other times unable to do her work.

To read the report [click here](#).

Soroptimist Milton Keynes now set up on Easyfundraising



Milton Keynes Soroptimists are now registered with easyfundraising, FREE donations for us every time you and your friends shop online.

There are over 7,000 brands who will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself!

These donations will make a **BIG difference** to our charities and I hope you are able to take a moment to sign up, support but also share with all your family and friends and ask them to

support us when they are shopping on line. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment. **Click here** to go to the link to sign up. I am happy to help you sign up, just let me know.

Ukraine Easter Celebration - 15 April



Ukraine Appeal Charity is pleased to invite all supporters of Ukraine to the Orthodox Easter Celebration Service on 15th April 2023 from 11:00 to 13:00 at The Church of Christ the Cornerstone, 300 Saxon Gate West, Milton Keynes, MK9 2ES.

Part of their tradition is to bring along your Easter basket for the blessing. Below is a tutorial on how to prepare the Ukrainian Easter basket:

<https://suburbangrandma.com/ukrainian-traditionaleaster.../>

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 will be taking place in London on 3 to 4 November.

At the moment the Theme is Climate for Change. More details will follow. **Click here** to keep an eye out for updates on this conference.

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.**

Conversation Cafes: A voices of Women Project



In March 2022, with support from Community Action MK, members of VOWMK began to visit community hotspots where women gathered and talked to them.

To read the full report of what women told them about their lives and experiences in Milton Keynes. [Click here](#) to read the full report.

SI London Chilterns Region Conference 11 March - IWD



Embrace Equity and DigitAll for IWD. What an inspiring and motivating day I had at our Regional Conference on 11 March to celebrate International Women's Day.

It began with Shilla Patel, Training and Events Co-ordinator for the AVA project (Against Violence and Abuse). This project strives to improve services for survivors through training, resources and consultancy to end violence against women and girls through policy research and prevention work.

We then had Ruth Healey, President elect of Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) speak to us about the future and making membership a priority.

To read more about the day [click here](#).

SI President Maureen Maguire speaks at CSW67



Soroptimist International President Maureen Maguire was selected to speak to the CSW67 general discussion held at the UNHQ. Watch her address on the link below, from starting point 59.43.

[Click here.](#)

Save our Pharmacies - sign the petition



Our local NHS pharmacies are on the brink of collapse, despite having proven during the pandemic that they are more needed now than ever. Since 2015, their funding has been cut by 30% and 720 pharmacies have permanently closed, putting vital NHS services at risk. Without fair funding from the Government, many more pharmacies will be forced to close.

Something the government can do straight away is to fund a 'Pharmacy First' Service in England so people with minor illnesses can be treated on the NHS by their local pharmacy, instead of having to wait to see a GP for a prescription.

Community pharmacies provide vital health and social care in communities across the country, including the most deprived neighbourhoods. Please back local pharmacies – so they can continue to keep people well and save lives! [Click here](#) to sign the petition.

Soroptimist International Blogs - read the latest



Read the latest Soroptimist International Blogs including:

- 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
- A Century of Innovation for Increased Access to Education for Women and Girls.

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

SIGBI - Latest Blogs and News issues



This month's SIGBI blogs include articles on World Water Day, CSW67.

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

Vow MK Latest newsletter



[Click here](#) to read March's newsletter from VOW MK including a woman's centre in MK, women's voices on women's health in MK, women's response to budget group response to the spring budget and more.

Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



In 1988, actress and children's advocate Audrey Hepburn accepted a role as UNICEF Special Ambassador. She said she auditioned for this job 45 years ago and finally got it. During WW2 in the Netherlands Hepburn had danced to raise money for the resistance. To learn more about her inspiring life [click here](#).



Wild Flower Spring by US modern impressionist Erin Hanson. [Click here](#) to learn more.

[Click here](#) for Erin Hanson website.

To learn more about inspiring women artists go to <https://twitter.com/womensart1>

UN International days and Awareness days - April 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.**

2 April	World Autism Awareness 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	International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda	
7 April	World Health Day	
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 Mother Earth Day	
23 April	World Book and Copyright Day (UNESCO)	English Language Day
23 April	Spanish Language Day	
24-30 April	World Immunization Week (WHO)	
24 April	International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace	
25 April	World Malaria Day (WHO)	International Delegates Day
26 April	International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day	
26 April	World Intellectual Property Day (WHO)	
27 April	International Girls in ICT Day (ITU)	
28 April	World Day for Safety and Health at Work	
30 April	International Jazz Day	

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:

