



# Save our Sanity

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



Oct 2023

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 54

## In This Issue

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

- Editorial Welcome and Dear Diary Dates
- Soroptimist International London and Chiltern Region
- [SILC next mtg – 9 December via Zoom](#)
- Soroptimist 2023 Conference
- 1 in 10 mothers with under fours quit work due to childcare costs
- MKCC launches campaign to make men better towards Women in MK
- Red Arrows: Predatory behaviour widespread and normalised
- Iceland’s PM joins biggest women’s strike for equal pay and end to violence against women
- Lewis Edwards Snapchat sex abuse images police officer jailed
- Women should get NHS menopause checks at 40
- Women’s groups criticise move to delay sentencing in England and Wales
- Girl’s not enjoying PE as much as boys because of periods and low body confidence
- Five Female MC’s who changed the Hip Hop genre
- Nobel economics prize awarded to Claudia Goldin for work on women’s pay
- Government Rape advisor leaves role over lack of will to change
- Dame Sue Carr becomes the first Lady Chief Justice
- SIGBI latest news/Blogs
- Soroptimist International latest news/blogs
- Be kind to yourself November
- Soroptimist International Voices and Podcasts
- Inspiring Women - Be Inspired
- UN International Days & Awareness days – Nov
- Our Twitter feed and web page

## Editorial Welcome

### Soroptimists – Standing up for Women and Girls



**We made a fantastic start to October with our annual Music event.**

Thank you, the Heart and Music singers, for a great evening at the Mead Centre in Newport Pagnell. They put on a varied programme of songs that had us all tapping our feet by the end of the evening.

And a big thank you to everyone who came along to make it the wonderful uplifting experience that it was. We raised over £700 which will go towards our charities MK Act, Ukraine Appeal, YMCA MK, Works For Us and UnityMK.



And then on the following Monday, 16 October we were up with the larks and taking part in the Guinness World Record attempt to make the longest line of tins of food.

We had to be at Campbell Park by 8.30am. Thank you, Dave from MK Snap, who with his red van dropped off our 11 crates of tin cans at our hub down by the Parks Trust Offices.

But I digress. We need to go back to July, when MK Foodbank announced the MK Can event. They asked businesses, organisations, charities, churches, clubs and small groups in MK to help them. MK Foodbank have seen a significant increase in the need for their services in this economic crisis. If we achieved the target of 132,000 cans MK Can would help give them 6 months' worth of food for their clients as well as break a world record. All each group signing up needed to do was collect 350 tins of food to make a 25metre line. We may be a small club, but we are always keen to help our community and so back in July we said yes. We could ask our families and friends to help us. Well, our families and friends, as usual did not let us down. In fact, they went over and above and we have to say a massive thank you for that. In the end, I think we collected nearly 1,000 cans and were able to help out MK Snap and YMCA MK reach their 350 targets. And we had some left over which we donated to the Walton Community Support Project Foodbank. Liz and Adrian, friends of Mary's and who also volunteer at this project came along to help and stayed with us all day. Again, a big thank you to everyone who helped us collect the cans and who helped on the day. There was a marvellous community spirit on the day and yes, we smashed the record. It now stands at 102,447 instead of 44,966. Our club can now officially say we are a Guinness Book of Records Participator and we shall shortly have the certificate to prove it.

**And I think this just goes to show being a Soroptimist is never boring. We never quite know what we are going to get up to next. And so, my fellow members, what is going to be our next challenge. And we have been challenged. 2024 will be the SIGBI Federations 90 birthday. Our new President Ruth Healey has challenged clubs to do 90 things next year. Well, we may not be able to do 90 things but I am sure we can come up with something, so thinking hats on everyone please.**



**On the 20 October we held our 2nd Violet Awards ceremony celebrating women of action, unsung heroes helping vulnerable women in the charities we support. As you can see from just a few of the photos we had a wonderful evening.**

This is only the second time we have held this event. This year we were very fortunate in having Jan Flawn, CBE and founder of P J Care sponsor us. Zoe Raven, CEO of Acorn Early Years Foundation was our guest speaker and gave us a fascinating talk on early years childcare and managing her foundation. But the evening was all about our nominees. It was a privilege to say thank you for all the unstinting dedication they give to their charities and the people who they help. Our outright winner was Julie from MK Act. Her dedication was truly inspiring and we say a very well-done Jan. And to our runners up from the Ukraine Appeal Chairity, Olena and Irene, again your

unstinting dedication only inspires us to do more. Everyone of our nominees is an inspiration and highly regarded at the charities they work for. It was lovely to be able to thank them all.

Thank you everyone who helped out to make it such a good event. Thank you MK Snap for letting us use your wonderful facilities and thank you to David at MK Snap for being very patient and setting up MK Snap to look so good for us.



**On the last day of October, we held our first Orange Café at Dobbies Garden Centre in Fenny Stratford. Thank you Dobbies for being so welcoming and helping us set up in the café.** We were allowed to put our leaflets on tables which included our own soroptimist leaflet as well as our Helps at Hand bookmarks. And we have been allowed to put up on the community notice board our orange the world and white ribbon posters.

We are at Dobbies next on Tuesday 28 November between 10am and 2pm. Volunteers to help staff the stand would be much appreciated please.



**And I can not finish with out saying what a lovely branch meeting we had.**

Welcome Summer, a new member who we hope will enjoy working with us.

And a thank you to Laraine who made two wonderful Quilts that are being donated to the families at MK Act.

**And now looking forward, please put the following dates in your diary.** With regard to the two Xmas fayres, we do need more volunteers to help so if you can please let Sue or myself know. Many thanks

Dear Diary Dates	
Tue 21 Nov	<b>Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Acorn Training Centre, Westcroft</b>
Sat 25 Nov	<b>Christmas Craft Stall at Newport Pagnell Xmas Light Switch on Mead Centre</b>
Wed 29 Nov	<b>Christmas Craft Stall at MK Snap, 1 to 6pm</b>
Wed 22 Nov	<b><u>PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE FOR NOVEMBER FREINDSHIP LUNCH</u></b> <b>Friendship Lunch</b> 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
<b>Tues 12 Dec</b>	<b>7.00pm Xmas Meal, Xmas Meal, The Swan, Newport Pagnell</b> <b>Time to be confirmed</b>
Wed 27 Dec	<b>Friendship Lunch</b> 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA

As you can see, we have a busy November. We have the two Xmas craft fayres on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> to raise funds for our charities and we also have our next Orange Café on Tuesday 28 November at Dobbies from 10am till 2ppm.

And in December, we are into our Xmas projects. Our Xmas presents for MK Act this year will be food vouchers for the 28 Families there. For the UnityMK, previously Winter Night Shelter, we are helping to provide a buffet lunch on 5 December. Please add your food donations to Laraine's list or let Jean know. On the 9 December the

Ukraine women's group are holding a children's Xmas party. We are planning to purchase 80 presents and will be wrapping these on 30 November. We have been invited to the party which is taking place at the City Church starting from 12 noon and I hope you are able to pop along it sounds exciting. For YMCA MK, we will be cooking a Christmas meal for the stage 1 supported living residents on the 11 December. We will be taking food into the YMCA from 9.30am, ready to serve at 12.30pm. Please let Mala know what foods you can donate; the list has recently been sent round.

November and December are going to be busy for us helping to bring xmas to the users of the charities we support and if you can also give some time to help volunteer for a couple of these projects, xmas fayres that would be much appreciated. Please let Sue know.

**And below for your diaries are the 2024 dates.**

2024 Regional and SIGBI Conference Dates	
Sat 16 March	SILC Int Women's Day Celebration 10-4pm in London
June	SILC Region Conference TBC
<b>12 Oct</b>	SILC Region Conference AGM/Conference,. Details to be confirmed
<b>1-3 Nov</b>	<b>SIGBI Conference Edinburgh Details to be confirmed</b>

2024 MK Dates			
Tues 16 January	<b>Branch meetings held Tuesdays at 5.30pm at Acorn Training Centre, Westcroft</b>	Wed 31 January	<b>Friendship Lunches last Wednesday of the month at 12.30 pm</b>  The Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley
Tues 20 Feb		Wed 28 February	
Tues 19 March		Wed 27 March	
Tues 16 April		Wed 24 April	
<b>Tues 21 May AGM</b>		Wed 29 May	
Tues 18 June		Wed 26 June	
Tues 16 July		Wed 31 July	
Tues 20 August		Wed 28 August	
Tues 17 Sept		Wed 25 Sept	
Tues 15 Oct		Wed 30 October	
Tues 19 November		Wed 27 November	
Tues 17 Dec			

Special Events in 2024

**Tuesday 6 March TBC**  
**International Women's Day Tea and Cake Event,**  
**3.30pm to 5.30pm** MK Snap, 20 Bourton Low, Walnut Tree TBC

**April or July TBC**  
**Food and Quiz evening, 7pm,** Simpson Church, Simpson

**July – SIGBI Day of Action TBC**

**Tuesday 20 August – Summer Party,** Venue to be confirmed

**Sat 11 Nov – Remembrance event** at MK Rose 10.40am for 11.00

**Sat 23 Nov – Newport Pagnell Xmas Lights Event.**  
**Craft Stall at** The Mead Centre, Newport Pagnell TBC

**Nov – MK Snap Xmas Craft Stall Fayre,**  
 MK Snap, 20 Bourton Low, Walnut Tree TBC

**25 Nov – 10 Dec – 16 Days of Activism:**  
**Orange the World/White Ribbon events**

**Saturday 14 December – Music Event with Muisca Choir,**  
 The Mead Centre, Newport Pagnell

A chocco block 2024 and lots to look forward to. Bring it on.

**Before I sign off just a reminder, we have 16 Days of Activism taking place from 25 November till 10 December.**



To kick start us off, please remember there is the White Ribbon Vigil on Saturday 25 November to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The programme for the event includes the following:

- 4pm MK Gallery with speakers including Cllr Emily Darlington ACC Murray, Thames Valley Police Prof Loga Jurasz, OU Jay Virgo Q:Alliance Commander Emma Ballie TVP Beki Osborne , BMKSASS
- 5.45pm Torchlight procession to MK Rose Mayor and Mayoress Sky from MK Act to read a poem Youth Mayor or Youth Councillor to read a poem



**And thank you to the learners of MK Snap for our wonderful Remembrance Wreath, which Angie will be laying for us at the Remembrance Day Ceremony at MK Rose on Saturday 11 November at 11am.**

Our Remembrance Wreath recognizes women and girl's contributions and sacrifices across all wars and during peacetime.

The learners from Snap have made each flower individually from willow and biodegradable recycled materials with pride and respect.

Happy reading everyone.

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

---

## Soroptimist International London and Chiltern Region



**At the 7 October Soroptimist International London and Chiltern Region meeting Kate Belinis was installed as our new President – her theme is “Celebrating Inspirational Women” so we can expect some great meetings in the year ahead.**

The meeting started with the speaker Roxie Chambers, a survivor of Domestic Abuse who is now working for Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) telling her story of survival.

The meeting then went on to install the Regions new President, Kate is pictured here, accepting the chain of Office from Helen Byrne (SILC President 2020-21).

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

---

## SILC - next meeting Sat 9 Dec, Zoom 10 till 2pm



AmickyCarol Akiwumi MBE  
ENTREPRENEUR  
INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER  
FUNDRAISING CONSULTANT  
AND TRAINER

The next Soroptimist International London and Chiltern's Region meeting is via Zoom on Saturday 9 December 10 till 2pm.

The meeting will celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Human Rights Day (10 Dec) and has two inspiring speakers.

The first speaker is Sherry Peck, CEO of Safer London, whose vision is that the city should be a safe place for young Londoners. [Click here](#) to learn more about saferlondon. The second speaker is AmickyCarol Akiwumi, Social Entrepreneur, and she will be talking about Money4YOU, whose mission is to tackle inequality through financial education, entrepreneurial interventions, capacity building and tools for funding sustainability. [Click here](#) to learn more about the event and to sign up.

---

## Soroptimist 2023 Conference



We had a great time at the Soroptimist London 2023 conference with some amazing speakers giving us plenty to think about.

[Click here](#) to go to the page where you will be able to view the blogs from each of the speakers and sessions we had.

Speakers included Louisa Rolfe, OBE Asst Commissioner Frontline Met Police with responsibility for Domestic Violence. Hasina Safi, on the situation of women in Afghan. Diva Arya, BBC World News reported discussing women's rights in India.

---

## 1 in 10 mothers with under fours quit work over childcare



About a quarter of a million mothers with young children have left their jobs due to childcare pressures, research by an equal rights charity suggests.

Large numbers of women are missing out on career opportunities for the same reason, the research indicated. More mothers are working than ever before, the Fawcett Society said, but they were facing what amounted to a motherhood penalty as their careers weren't progressing.

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

---

## MKCC launches campaign to make men behave better towards women in Milton Keynes



**At the beginning of October the Council launched a campaign encouraging men to call out inexcusable behaviour towards women.**

The “You’re Right, That’s Wrong” campaign aims to educate men on the kind of behaviours and remarks that might make a woman feel uncomfortable and how they can stop it.

Organised by Milton Keynes City Council and its Safer MK Partners, the overall aim is to help individuals realise when their behaviour is problematic and to foster a culture of greater respect and accountability.

“You’re Right, That’s Wrong” will promote online information, targeting men aged between 18 and 40. It will also be publicised around popular night time venues across Milton Keynes. To read the full MK Citizen article [click here](#). (picture MK Citizen)

## Red Arrows: Predatory behaviour widespread and normalised - RAF



**An investigation into a toxic culture in the RAF’s Red Arrows display team has found predatory behaviour towards women was “widespread and normalised”.**

A bystander culture meant such behaviour went unchallenged, the report found and Chief of the air Staff, Sir Richard Knighton, said he was appalled by the finding and unreservedly apologized.

To read the full BBC article [click here](#). (picture PA Media)

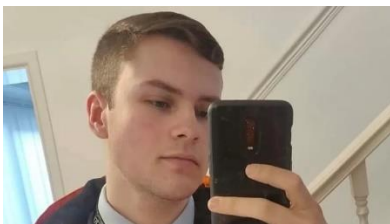
## Iceland’s PM joins biggest women’s strike since 1975 for equal pay and an end to violence against women



**Tens of thousands of Icelandic women, including the country’s prime minister went on strike to push for an end to unequal pay and gender based violence.**

Prime minister Katrin Jakobsdottir said she would join the women in staying at home as they had not reached their goals of full gender equality and they are still tackling gender based violence which is a priority of her government. [Click here](#) to read the full article. (ITVx Images)

## Lewis Edwards: Snapchat sex abuse images police officer jailed



**A police officer who blackmailed and threatened underage girls to send them explicit photos of themselves on snapchat has been jailed for life.**

The 24-year-old had groomed more than 200 girls online and had 4,500 indecent images of children. The judge, Tracey Lloyd-Clarke described his behaviour as “cruel and sadistic” and “psychologically manipulative”, adding that he posed a high risk of danger to children. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. (Instagram image)

## Women should get NHS menopause checks at 40



### Women should be offered 2menopause checks” by GP’s after turning 40, campaigners and MP’s have said.

The Menopause All Party Parliamentary Group said this should be included in the NHS Health check offered every five years to those aged between 40 and 74. MP’s said a lot of women over 40 go to their GP’s with symptoms, unaware they are experiencing the menopause.

[Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (picture Getty Images).

## Women’s groups criticise move to delay sentencing in England and Wales



Victims of crime in England and Wales are being let down by a government that has failed to provide adequate resources to the criminal justice system, women’s groups have said, after It emerged that sentencing hearings of convicted criminals currently on bail – including rapists and burglars – were to be delayed because prisons are full.

[Click here](#) to read the Guardian article. (picture M Sobreira/Alamy).

## Girls not enjoying PE as much as boys because of periods and low body confidence



Girls identified a number of barriers to being active in school – including not feeling confident, having their period, not liking being watched by others, and worrying about their appearance.

A report suggests the number of girls who say they enjoy physical education in school has dropped over the past six years.

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

## Five Female MCs who changed the Hip Hop genre



Hip Hop can seem like a man’s world, but women have been there from the start.

To read the full BBC article about the women who had changed the course of hip hop [click here](#). (Getty image).

## Nobel economics prize awarded to Claudia Goldin for work on women’s pay



This year’s Nobel economics prize has been awarded to Claudia Golding, an American economic historian, for her work on women’s employment and pay.

Prof Goldin’s research uncovered key drivers behind the gender pay gap, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said. She is only the third woman to receive the prize, and the first to not share the award with male colleagues. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (Harvard University image).



---

## Government Rape adviser leaves role over lack of will to change



**Emily Hunt says rape myths perpetuated at highest levels of civil service and she has no confidence in reporting crime.**

A government adviser on rape has said she is leaving the role due to a “lack of will to continue to change” in the criminal justice system, citing myths about the crime perpetuated at the highest levels of the civil service.

**Click here** to read the Guardian article (picture is Guardian Aaron Chown).

---

## Dame Sue Carr is the first Lady Chief Justice, the top judge for England and Wales



**This month, the first women to head the judiciary in England and Wales has been sworn in.**

Dame Sue Carr, became the first ever Lady Chief Justice, the most senior judge, after taking the oath of office at a ceremony at the Royal Courts of Justice in London. She is the 98<sup>th</sup> judge to hold the position – and the first woman in a history dating back almost 800 years. **Click here** to read the BBC article (picture is PA Media).

---

## SIGBI latest News/blogs



**Click here** to read all the latest news articles and blogs.

Includes:

- Introducing our new President Ruth Healey
- UN International Day for the Prevention of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict – 6 November
- Two new clubs for SIGBI - SI Whitstable and District and SI Northampton

**Click here** to see the latest blogs.

---

## Soroptimist International Blogs - read the latest



**Read the latest Soroptimist International Blogs including:**

- One year later – a discussion on Iran’s Human Rights
- Brand Guidelines
- Population and Development: Ensuring Rights and Choices
- Decent work for women: Achieving the 2030 Agenda

**Click here** to see all the blogs.

---

## Be kind to yourself November

**New Ways November 2023**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Make a list of new things you want to do this month	2 Respond to a difficult situation in a different way	3 Get outside and observe the changes in nature around you	4 Sign up to join a new course, activity or online community	5 Change your normal routine today and notice how you feel	6 Try out a new way of being physically active	7 Be creative. Cook, draw, write, paint, make or inspire
8 Plan a new activity or idea you want to try out this week	9 When you feel you can't do something, add the word "yet"	10 Be curious. Learn about a new topic or an inspiring idea	11 Choose a different route and see what you notice on the way	12 Find out something new about someone you care about	13 Do something playful outdoors - walk, run, explore, relax	14 Find a new way to help or support a cause you care about
15 Build on new ideas by thinking "Yes, and what if..."	16 Look at life through someone else's eyes and see their perspective	17 Try a new way to practice self-care and be kind to yourself	18 Connect with someone from a different generation	19 Broaden your perspective: read a different paper, magazine or site	20 Make a meal using a recipe or ingredient you've not tried before	21 Learn a new skill from a friend or share one of yours with them
22 Find a new way to tell someone you appreciate them	23 Set aside a regular time to pursue an activity you love	24 Share with a friend something helpful you learned recently	25 Use one of your strengths in a new or creative way	26 Try out a different radio station or new TV show	27 Join a friend doing their hobby and find out why they love it	28 Discover your artistic side. Design a friendly greeting card
29 Enjoy new music today. Play, sing, dance or listen	30 Look for new reasons to be hopeful, even in tough times					

**ACTION FOR HAPPINESS**      **Happier · Kinder · Together**

The clocks have changed, the nights are getting longer and the festive season is nearly upon us. It can be a hectic time of year. We must all remember one thing and that is to look after ourselves. Try to remember each day to have a little time out for yourself.

## Soroptimist International Voices Webinars and Podcasts



**Click here** to listen to the latest SI Voices webinar from SI President Maureen Maguire on "Explaining Soroptimist International's Brand Transformation".

The SI latest Podcast is on Gender and Climate. To listen to this and previous Podcasts **click here**.

## Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



The following is a quote from Dr Maya Angelou and is a wonderful thought that illustrates what we Soroptimists do.



In 2017 women hung wedding dresses along Beirut seafront in protest at a law allowing rapists to escape punishment if they married their victim.

"If I could give you one thought, it would be to lift someone up. Lift a stranger up - lift her up. I would ask you, mother and father, brother and sister, lovers, mother and daughter, father and son, lift someone. The very idea of lifting someone up will lift you, as well."

The law was eventually repealed after such pressure from Arab women's groups Brought by WomensArt1, Twitter page link is <https://twitter.com/womensart1>

## UN International days and Awareness days - November 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 Nov	<a href="#">International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists</a>
5 Nov	<b>World Tsunami Awareness Day</b>
6 Nov	<b>International Day For Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict</b>
9-15 Nov	<a href="#">International Week of Science and Peace</a>
10 Nov	<b>World Science Day for Peace and Development</b>
14 Nov	<b>World Diabetes Day</b>
16 Nov	<a href="#">World Philosophy Day (UNESCO)</a>
16 Nov	<b>International Day for Tolerance (UNESCO)</b>
19 Nov	<b>World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims</b>
20 Nov	<a href="#">Africa Industrialisation Day</a>
20 Nov	<b>World Children's Day</b>
21 Nov	<b>World Television Day</b>
25 Nov	<a href="#">International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women</a>
26 Nov	<b>World Sustainable Transport Day</b>
29 Nov	<b>International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People</b>
30 Nov	<a href="#">Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare</a>

## 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](#)

## Sl:MK support these local charities:

