



Save our Sanity

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



30 September 2024

MK Soroptimists

Newsletter 63

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Editorial Welcome

Standing up for Women and Girls - 16 Days of Activism
#Prevention and #ItStartswithMen

We are now getting to a very busy part of the year for us and so please check out the “Dates for your diary” section and make sure they are all noted.



Before I sum up what we did in September, MK Act is bidding for a cash boost from the Tesco Stronger Starts scheme. Stronger Starts provides grant awards of up to £1,500 to local community projects, with a particular focus on children and young people.

MK Act is one of three community groups shortlisted in Milton Keynes to receive grant awards and from October to Mid-January 2025 Tesco customers can vote using a blue token, find them at the check-out each time you shop. MK Act is on the shortlisted for its Friendly Foodies, an initiative based at the women's refuge centered around the joy of learning new cookery skills, enhancing nutrition and health, reducing food waste and fostering a sense of community for survivors of abuse. Importantly, the sessions will be designed and supported by us. To learn more [click here](#).



Ukraine Art Exhibition was open from 6 to 28 September at Central Milton Keynes Library and Jean and Scottie kindly attended on our behalf.

The exhibition presented British and Ukrainian arts, craft works, historic documents, books artefacts and sculptures with the aim to highlight the dramatic journey of Ukraine to democracy, freedom and independence in the past and in the present. Poems were read and there were some poignant and interesting art to see.

Sue, our wonderful Secretary, popped into Red House Surgery and gave a talk on Soroptimists and what we do. A big thank you to the staff at the Red House Surgery for a donation which will go towards our charities and for their continued support with our SOS toiletries scheme.



What a lovely way to start a monthly branch meeting by welcoming a new member in Lynne.

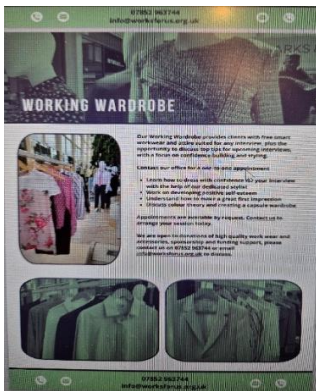
Lynne became a Soroptimist in Pontypridd after she retired from being a Psychiatric Nurse and after recently moving to Shuttleranger has joined us. We welcome her and hope she will enjoy being a part of our group. Ther more the merrier we say so keep on telling your friends about us. We are always looking for more members so that we can do even more for our charities. And if you look at the photo more closely you will see a new member made by Scottie. This is Orange Bear our newest recruit to the Orange Café team. See more below.



This month our Orange Café popped up at MK College at one of their Welcome days to the Community.

The welcome day is an opportunity for students to come and see groups from MK community, who they might be interested in to volunteer or just to learn about what we all do.

We were very fortunate to be located next to MK Act in one of the college's cafeterias and YMCA were also there. Sally Alexander, CEO of MK College group came and said hello and told us at that the college is working with students to raise awareness around violence to women and girls and is looking at becoming a White Ribbon friend. We wish them all the best in this endeavour.



On the 25 Sept Vanessa and I visited Works For Us office and were able to drop off works clothes donation.

It was lovely to chat with Kelly and we have been asked if we can help out with tidying up their “clothes for work” store cupboard. Currently clothes are still in bags because they are short of clothes rails and hangers. They are waiting on, hopefully, a donation of clothes rails. Once received they have asked if we can go along and help tidy the store up, get more of the items hanging up and steamed using our fantastic steamer, Kelly said again thank you for this valuable piece of equipment. If anyone wants to help with this project, please let Sue and I know.

More clothes donations were taken to both Unity MK (walking boots and trainers) and to the community at the Greenleys Community Group. Unfortunately, Greenleys are not taking anymore clothes donations at the moment because the storage at the community centre has been deemed unsafe and they are currently looking for other storage options.



And our 90 Challengers is still going strong. At the end of September all our members had donated 90 items which were dropped off on Saturday 28 Sept at the Help Ukraine BAMK headquarters in Stacy Bushes for shipment back to the Ukraine to help families displaced from their homes.



We were really saddened to cancel our 2nd Afternoon Tea scheduled for 18 September but all our friends are such busy people.

However, Afternoon Tea celebrating International Women's Day will take place on Wednesday 5 March 2025. Details to be confirmed. Please put in your diary and bring as many friends with you as you can.

Another date for everyone is our Music event presenting Musica Charity Choir MK on Saturday 14 December, 7pm at The Mead Center, Newport Pagnell. Please share this with all your friends. We really hope you can come along; it will be a great musical evening. There will be refreshments, a raffle and a silent auction of one our quilts made by our members.

On behalf our friend Miss Quiz, please see below her next Quiz night:

Future Events:

Sun 10th Nov: Remembrance Concert, 7pm in the Church

QUIZ NIGHT with FISH & CHIPS on Sat 26th October at 7.00pm In St Thomas's Church Simpson, MK6 3AD Proceeds to ROYAL NATIONAL LIFEBOAT INSTITUTION (RNLI)

£15.00 p.p. £7.50 p.p. without the food
Raffle Prizes gratefully accepted. Bring your own drink. Tea at half time.

Maximum 8 people on a table - Couples or those alone can be placed on tables. Places MUST be booked with missquiz@sky.com

Sat 23rd Nov: Quiz & Supper - Help for Heroes – in Simpson Hall – places must be booked – 7.00pm
Sat 7th Dec – Quiz & Supper - ipeace in Simpson Hall – 7.00pm – need to book
Sat 14th Dec: Christmas Fayre, Simpson Church – 10.30.-1.00pm
Sun 15th Dec: Carols Singalong – 4.00p.m. in the Church – All welcome
Fri 20th Dec: Salvation Army Carols, Simpson Church – 7.00p.m – Bring & Share Supper
Sat 28th Dec – Quiz & Lasagne Supper – Camphill Communities – 7.00pm – need to book



Did you know about the Dunelm Textile Takeback Scheme?

Dunelm is making it easy to do something useful with your unwanted home bits, whether it's a tablecloth you never use, a vase or a bed

Frame, you can either donate via post, at one of their stores or they have partnered with the Salvation Army to make it easier to donate textiles closer to your home. They are accepting all home textiles, clothing, shoes and accessories, including reusable and non-reusable items. All donations must be clean.

Home textiles include: bedding, throws, blankets, towels, bathmats, pillowcases, cushions, cushion covers, fabric placemats or runners, curtains and tea towels, duvets and pillows.

Reusable items are: clean, dry and in good condition. These clothes or home textiles are ready to be bought and used for their intended purpose straight away.

Non-reusable items are: worn out, damaged or marked. These items are no longer fit for their intended purpose, but can be recycled.

[Click here](#) to learn more. Please share with friends.

Each year the 25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is a focus for preventative programmes. This year's SIGBI 16 days of Activism to raise awareness of the continuing increase in violence against women is **#Prevention** and the White Ribbon theme is **#ItstartswithMen**. We will be posting on our social media platforms the #Prevention messages and would appreciate if you would share please. We will be continuing with our Orange Cafes at Dobbies, every 3rd Tuesday of the month. Our next one is Tuesday 22 October and Tuesday 26 November. We will also be taking part in Milton Keynes City Council awareness event at the Civic Offices on Monday 25 November between 12 and 2pm. And I hope as many of you as can will be able to come along to the Annual Vigil also taking place on Monday. See below for details.



Monday, 25 November

5.30 pm Hear invited Speakers at MK Gallery
6.30 pm Torchlight Procession to MK Rose
6.45 pm Contemplation and pledges for action

#PreventionFirst
#16Days #16DaysOfActivism
#OrangeTheWorld #EndViolenceagainstwomen
#WhiteRibbon #ItStartsWithMen #NoExcuse

To learn more about the Annual Vigil and see our contribution [Click here](#) to see the new website



Finally, here is an update from Anna at SI Krakow. In September most children return to school rested after spending a good time on holidays. Unfortunately, not all parents can send their offspring for holidays. Thanks to our Soroptimist donors and our good friends at SCKM Staromiejskie Centrum Kultury Młodzieży in Kraków a group of 23 Ukrainian youth spent a wonderful time at a semi-college. They had vocal and music classes, ecology classes, chemical laboratory lessons, 3 d printing workshops, music and movement games, circus workshops, a tour of Cracow with a guide, trips to interesting places in the vicinity of Krakow. These activities done together will be long remembered.

Don't forget, if anyone has any interesting articles, they think the rest of us would like to learn about please send to me or if you want write an article for the newsletter, that would be most welcome.

As always, happy reading everyone.

Soroptimists standing up for Women and Girls Sue Key, Chair

Here are the next few months Dear Diary dates.

	Dear Diary Dates
Thurs 17 Oct	YMCA Community Lunch, 12 till 20pm at YMCA, CMK - Soupfest theme
Thurs 17 Oct	Theatre Trip, Cabaret, MK Theatre with meal before
Tues 22 Oct	Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley
Wed 30 Oct	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Sat 9 Nov	Ukraine "Rays of Sunshine" Musica Charity Choir event, 7pm to 9pm at Christ the Cornerstone. We are volunteering to help with the raffle.
Mon 11 Nov	Armistice Day at MK Rose, 10.00am at MK Theatre and over to MK Rose at 10.40am
Tue 19 Nov	Branch meeting. 5.30pm, Westcroft Morrison Community Room (back of Café), Westcroft
Sat 23 Nov	MK Snap Xmas Fayre, 1 to 5pm, MK Snap
Mon 25 Nov	MK City Council White Ribbon Event, 12 till 2pm, Room 1.02, Civic Offices
Mon 25 Nov	16 Days of Activism Vigil at MK Gallery and The Rose. 5.30pm till 7.30pm
Tues 26 Nov	Orange Café, 10 till 1.00pm, Dobbies, Fenny Stratford, Bletchley
Wed 27 Nov	Friendship Lunch 12.30pm at the Inn on the Lake, Mount Farm, Bletchley, MK1 1PA
Sat 30 Nov	Xmas Fayre, 10.00am to 5pm, Mead Center, High Street, Newport Pagnell
Sat 14 Dec	MK Musica Charity Choir Fundraising event, 7.00pm Mead Center, High Street, Newport Pagnell
Sun 8 Dec	Members Christmas Lunch. Date and venue to be confirmed
	2024 Regional and SIGBI Conference Dates
1-3 Nov	SIGBI Conference Edinburgh Details to be confirmed

Ukraine Music Concert - Sat 9 November



On Saturday 9 November, 7.00pm to 9.00pm, Ukraine has their “Ray of Sunshine” Music event with Musica Charity Choir proving a programme of varied music.

We are supporting this fundraising event by providing raffle prizes and handing out raffle tickets on the night. If anyone has any raffle prizes, or can help by volunteering on the night please let me know.

MK Fawcett – Latest Blog



Read MK Fawcett's latest Blog
August Reflections – [Click here](#)

SIGBI latest News/blogs



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

- New SIGBI Club – SI Minerva, South Wales
- Global Voice Newsletter
- World Literacy Day – 8 September
- Trafficking in Persons – 30 July
- Friendship – 30 July

Soroptimist International News and Blogs - read the latest



Read the latest Soroptimist International News articles including, [click here](#):

- SI Foundation project in Lumiere, Bamako in Mali update: Training successfully completes & project appears in Malian media outlets
- Webinar on “Building Global Momentum for a sustainable and equitable future”
- The 79th session of the UN General Assembly
- Recruiting to Volunteer role of SI Director of Advocacy

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

- Most Forum: Managing Social Transformation and Governance Challenges
- The Road to Busan: The Inc's Journey towards a Plastic Pollution Treaty
- Advancing Intergenerational well-being and health against Plastic Pollution
- Human Rights Council Discussion: AI. Tech and Human Rights
- Safeguarding Education in Conflict Zones

India's schoolgirls are leading a silent cycling revolution



India's school girls have gained a lot of confidence after they begun using bicycles to go to schools and coaching classes. More and more of them are going to school now. Most of them have free bicycles, says Bhuvaneshwari Kumari, a health worker in Begusarai. Nibha Kumari, a resident of Bihar, India's poorest state, recalls how a bicycle transformed her life when she turned 15. [Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (AP Image)

“We did it” Next shop workers win equal pay claim



More than 3,500 current and former workers at Next have won the final stage of a six-year legal battle for equal pay.

An employment tribunal said store staff, who are predominantly women, should not have been paid at lower rates than employees in warehouses, where just over half the staff are male. Lawyers for the shop staff described the judgement as "hugely significant" and the amount of back-pay owed could amount to more than £30m.

However, Next said it would appeal against the ruling. To read the full BBC article [click here](#) (LEIGH Image)

Acorn Early Years win Nursery Group 2024 Award



Congratulations to our friends at Acorn Early Years who won the Nursery Group of the Year at the Nursery World 2024 Ceremony in September.

“Women and children not protected from male harm”



A probation service is "not effectively responding to or reducing the potential harm perpetrated by men against women and children", according to inspectors.

Probation services in the East of England have received a rating of "requires improvement" from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. The report highlighted risk assessments being completed without referencing information about child safeguarding and domestic abuse. A Ministry of Justice spokesperson said the new government

"inherited a criminal justice system in crisis" and it had plans to recruit 1,000 probation officers. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. (JEFF OVERS/BBC Image)

Woman with cancer warns of rare breast implant risk



A woman who developed a rare type of cancer linked to her breast implants has warned that others with similar implants could be "walking around like timebombs". Susan Axelby, 68, was recently paid £57,000 by Allergan Limited after she fell ill with breast implant associated anaplastic large-cell lymphoma (BIA-ALCL). It is thought to be one of the first payouts of this kind linked to Allergan breast implants in the UK. To read the full BBC report [click here](#). (SUSAN AXELBY Image)

I can't sleep: What Olympian Rebecca Cheptegei's murder tells us about women's safety in Kenya



The murder of Olympic runner Rebecca Cheptegei by her former partner has reignited calls for stronger action against femicide in Kenya. The 33-year-old Ugandan died days after being doused in petrol and set alight by her ex-boyfriend at her home in Trans Nzoia County in western Kenya. This is not an isolated incident. Kenya has one of the highest rates of violence against women in Africa. To read the full BBC report [click here](#). (AFP Image)

Woman describes horror of learning husband drugged her so others could rape her



A French woman who was raped by unknown men over 10 years after being drugged to sleep by her husband told a court of her horror at learning how she had been abused. Gisèle Pélicot, who is 72, was giving evidence at the trial in Avignon, south-east France, of 51 men – including her husband of 50 years, Dominique. All are accused of rape. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article. [Click here](#) to read a further BBC article (AFP Images)

James McAvoy: Extreme opinions are everywhere



Ahead of the release of his new film, *Speak No Evil*, James McAvoy is happy to speak frankly to journalists about what drew him to the psychological thriller, and how he feels its themes of toxic masculinity and manipulation reflect the way society is changing. *Speak No Evil* goes further, delving deeper into the reasons for, and impact of, toxic male behaviour. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (Universal Image)

MK Foodbank Autumn Newsletter



[Click here](#) to read MK Foodbank's Autumn newsletter of upcoming fundraising events and the full BBC article. Take part, their annual Reverse Advent Calendar campaign is on again this year. Just find a box and decorate it. Everyday fill it with essential items, see list and Xmassy treats. Deliver to MK Foodbank by beginning of December and they will deliver to families in need.

Social workers lack training to tackle coercive abuse, BBC finds out



Coercive and controlling behaviour (CCB) has been a criminal offence in the UK since 2015. It isolates and harms victims using psychological abuse, and is now accepted to underpin all domestic abuse. Campaigners say understanding CCB is vital. However, nine years on from the law change, a BBC investigation has found more than a third of accredited university social work courses in England are not teaching specific training on coercive control. [Click here](#) to read the BBC article (BBC Images)

Kate Winslett says women should celebrate "being a real shape"



Actress Kate Winslet has told the BBC that women should celebrate "being a real [body] shape" after being told on a recent film set to sit up straighter to hide her belly rolls. Speaking about her upcoming film *Lee*, on Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg, Winslet said it was her job to be like her character - the fashion model turned acclaimed World War Two photographer Elizabeth 'Lee' Miller. [Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (EPA Images).

Tradeswomen paid less amid appalling sexism



Women in the skilled trades industry can be subjected to "appalling" levels of sexism and paid less than men, according to workers and new research. More than a third of tradeswomen said they are not taken seriously because of their gender, research by industry platform, Rated People, showed. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (KATY BRADSHAW Image)

"Extremely early days" for combined authority plan



Jack Shaw, a local government expert and senior adviser for think tank Labour Together, posted on X, that six councils - Milton Keynes, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton, West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire - were considering submitting an "expression of interest" in a South Midlands Combined Authority. A combined authority brings together existing local authorities but does not replace them, and supports councils to work together across a wider geographic area on issues such as transport and housing. Ten have been set up across England, including one in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. [Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (picture BBC).

Jaqueline Wilson “delighted to be viewed as gay icon” after coming out



Jacqueline Wilson has been described as many things over the years, but one title that still surprises her is "gay icon".

In 2020, the British children's writer announced that she was in a long-term relationship with a woman. Wilson has just published her first adult novel which, among other themes, explores same-sex relationships. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (GETTY Image)

Woman becomes first in UK to get new MS injection

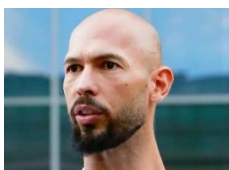


A woman with multiple sclerosis (MS) has become the first person in the UK to receive a new "game-changer" 10-minute injection.

The medication ocrelizumab, which helps to prevent relapses and slow the progression of MS, has now been approved as an injection and the first dose was given at Morriston Hospital and took just 10 minutes. Normally it would be an intravenous (IV) infusion twice a year taking up to 4 hours each time.

[Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (SWANSEA UNIVERSITY HEALTHBOARD Image)

“Tate raped and strangled us” - women talk to BBC



Two women who say they were raped and strangled by the controversial social media influencer Andrew Tate have spoken to the BBC about their experiences. Andrew Tate is currently under house arrest in Romania, facing charges of human trafficking, rape, forming a group to sexually exploit women, having sex with a minor and trafficking underage persons. And he, alongside his brother are being investigate for trafficking 34 women. [Click here](#) to read the BBC article. (EPA Images).

Domestic abuse experts to be embedded in 999 control rooms



Domestic abuse specialists will be embedded in 999 control rooms in England and Wales as part of the government's pledge to halve violence against women and girls in a decade. The measure is part of "Raneem's Law" in memory of Raneem Oudeh, 22, and her mother Khaola Saleem, who were murdered by Ms Oudeh's estranged husband in 2018. [Click here](#) to read the full BBC article (WEST MIDLANDS POLICE/PA Image)

Crime victims in UK fight devastating practice that stops appeal after a case is dropped



Senior law officers urged to intervene over potential wrongful acquittals when the Crown Prosecution Service offers no evidence. A draconian practice stops crime victims challenging last minute decisions to drop their cases is leading to mis-carriages of justice and must urgently be reformed, campaigners say. [Click here](#) to read the Observer article (Kieferpix/Getty/istockphoto images)

Inspiring Women - Be Inspired



Asociacion de Mujeres Rurales “Olga Estela Moreno”
(ASMUR)

Asociacion de Mujeres Rurales “Olga Estela Moreno,” ASMUR, is a group of rural and agricultural women from El Salvador who fight for equality and promote participation of more women in defense of their rights. They focus on the prevention and eradication of violence against women and increasing women’s economic security. They started in 1995 along the coastal region in reaction to the violence that rural and demobilized women were experiencing after the armed conflict in El Salvador during the 80’s.

Mary Fraser Tytler (1849-1938)

Interior, Watts Chapel, Surrey, England (1895-98) by Mary Fraser Tytler, symbolist craftswoman, designer and social reformer.

Watts was President of the Godalming and District National Union of Women’s Suffrage Society.

To learn more [click here](#)

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

UN International days and Awareness days - Oct 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.**

1 Oct	International Day of Older Persons		
2 Oct	International Day of Non-Violence		
4-10 Oct	World Space Week		
5 Oct	World Teacher's Day (UNESCO)		
7 Oct	World Habitat Day	World Cotton Day	
9 Oct	World Post Day		
10 Oct	World Mental Health Day (WHO)		
11 Oct	International Day of the Girl Child		
12 Oct	World Migratory Bird Day (UNEP)		
13 Oct	International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction		
15 Oct	International Day of Rural Women		
17 Oct	International Day of the Eradication of Poverty		
24 Oct	United Nations Day	World Development Information Day	World Day for Audiovisual Heritage (UNESCO)
	Global Media and Information Literacy Week 24-31 Oct	Disarmament Week, 24-30 Oct	
29 Oct	International Day of Care and Support		
31 Oct	World Cities 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](#)

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Sl:MK support these local charities:

