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EDITOR

Sherry Eskander

Deadline for articles for August Newsletter is Friday 25 August

President Message

July has been a very 'hot' month and many find ourselves restricted by our water authorities. Hosepipe bans are becoming a normal restriction as our climate throws up extreme weather patterns. I hope that you all kept cool?

At the beginning of the month my first 'longer' drive took me to an informal SI Folkestone lunch, hosted by Ann Reeves. It was wonderful to meet one of their newer members, Ellie and as the rain continued to pour down our conversations flowed with much hilarity- peppered with local activities underway such as the Refuge in Literacy UK project. Ann has been liaising with Rising Sun Domestic Violence & Abuse Charity, who are keen to pursue the programme. Anne Stairmand (our contact at Refuge in Literacy UK) is at hand to offer any advice to the Club as they work to deliver the programme that will suit the charity.

Recently I contacted the London Chilton Region after a contact at the Luton Women's Aid sought a local Soroptimist Club to discuss the Refuge in Literacy UK programme. This initiative is slowly but surely spreading out across the UK Using all relevant organisations to deliver this literacy programme.

The British Transport Survey is getting good reviews as the data collated provides an expectation that changes will be made. I am aware that many of you in the Region have collected data from many of our railway stations.

I was delighted to hear from Angela Howe that our £1000 earmarked for Lendwithcare investment has now been completed. Angela and a team have selected nine requests for loans with 'businesses' from South America, Asia and Africa. Angela has written an article explaining more!

I have also reached out to those Clubs I have yet to visit. I look forward to my visit to SI Canterbury who are kindly hosting a lunch. I also hope to meet with SI Bromley in August.

In July we saw our SIGBI President Ruth Healey in the London Daily News, 8th July. She was championing Gender Impact Assessment (GIA). The full article profiled SIGBI regarding our consultative status at the UN, timing the Annual Day of Action (12th July) to coincide with the UN's international Day of Hope and the aim to embed Gender Impact Assessments as statutory requirements.

'Women's charity, Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland (SIGBI), says it's time to move from box-ticking to measurable change. It is calling on the UK Government to adopt a robust, compulsory gender-first approach to equality as it embarks on its annual Day of Action (July 12).'

At a recent Zoom meeting for Regional Presidents (hosted by Ruth Healey) we were made aware of the growing media presence for Soroptimist International as some 80 publications, identified by our PR Agency, have measured the potential reach of those publications, yielding millions of readers who will come across the name Soroptimist International.

July has been a month of preparations for the Regional Charity Lunch that was held at London Beach Country Hotel Spa & Golf Club on Sunday 20th July. It was a great success. More about this event in the Newsletter.

As we move through the summer our Regional AGM on Saturday 20th September looms. This will be one of the last Presidential activities I will preside over as Roxanne and I go into the 'twilight zone' before the official handover at Conference 2025.

You may have seen the conference details including the programme? The Saturday Workshop programme is filling up quickly and the advice from SIGBI is register your preferred workshops as soon as possible. <https://sigbi.org/birmingham2025>.

Looking forward to seeing you at our Regional AGM on Saturday 20th September.

In Friendship

President Sue

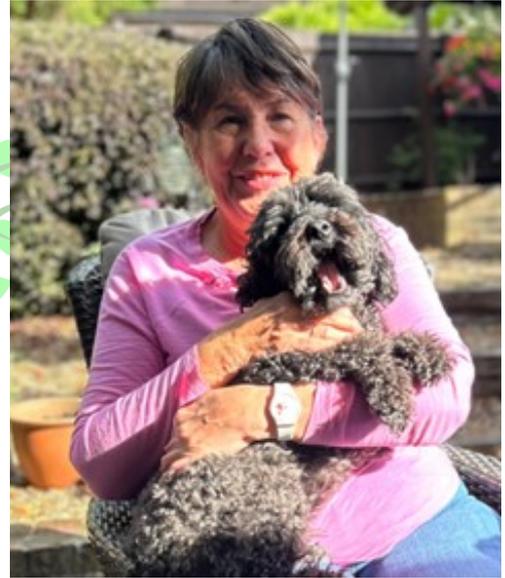


More from the President

This was my photograph the morning after the day before! Breakfast on the patio with the dog hoping to get a tasty treat.

Until the next event- THANK YOU!

President Sue



ORANGE IS NOT JUST A COLOUR

It's the colour of #OrangeTheWorld's Unite Campaign

Orange Cafe events in our Region continue to raise Soroptimist International South East England's profile and they give us an opportunity to open up a conversation about what we do.

I hope to drop into a few over the coming months!

SI Sevenoaks gathered for another Orange the World coffee morning to continue the quest to highlight the problem of violence against women and girls in our area. This time, 25th June, we gathered at a new venue for us, Kake & Kocktail on St John's Hill, Sevenoaks. The members, as pictured, were given a warm welcome by the owner who, as a retired police officer, knew all about the VAWG and Ask for Angela projects. We had an enjoyable time and a good chance to chat!



By Kathy Jordan

UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HOPE 2025

At the Club's July business meeting on 14th July 2025, members of SI Eastbourne & District celebrated the UN International Day of Hope (established by the UN in March 2025 to celebrate and promote hope as a unifying and transformative force amid global challenges, emphasizing its importance in fostering peace, dignity, and sustainable development.)

SI EASTBOURNE AND DISTRICT: MEMBERS' HOPES Members were asked to choose two 'hopes' to be written on sunflower petals in order to make a whole sunflower. We chose the sunflower as it in itself is a sign of hope. Below are our combined hopes:

We will keep a check on what we have hoped for throughout the coming year and reflect on them on next year's International Day of Hope.

By embracing hope, we can work together towards a more inclusive, empathetic, and resilient future for all.



- ◆ World peace – three times
- ◆ Donald Trump to be impeached
- ◆ Peace in the Ukraine and healing for all those affected
- ◆ Girls worldwide to be able to achieve their goals
- ◆ Something will be sorted for my husband
- ◆ Climate control
- ◆ Our present government stays strong from foreign aggression and greed
- ◆ Water (clean) for all - twice
- ◆ Food for all
- ◆ Ending violence against women – three times
- ◆ End of hunger
- ◆ Gender equality
- ◆ End to wars everywhere
- ◆ Cure for cancer
- ◆ Warring countries should shake hands
- ◆ The country gets back on its feet
- ◆ Better provision for the vulnerable
- ◆ Good health
- ◆ Love and kindness towards victims of violence against women
- ◆ Increase of love to all nations
- ◆ Be kind to each other
- ◆ Reduce child poverty
- ◆ Club's donations to the women journalists in Afghanistan will give women there a voice

By Joyce Boorman

You may have seen the information circulated about SIGBI's call for Gender Impact Assessments to be incorporated into government policy making. The Equalities Act called for Equality Impact Assessments to be undertaken but these asked public bodies to explain how their work specifically impacted on groups with protected characteristics. These assessments have not necessarily achieved their aim as they are cumbersome and expensive and, to some extent, come after the decision is made.

Read more on the Hub, link https://thehub.sigbi.org/blog/view/Presidents_Blog_July_2025_Wpp



sk

Medway and Maidstone Soroptimist team

20629

CANCER RESEARCH UK
Race for Life
CC160719201

Proud Partner
Standard Life
Part of Phoenix Group
CPUR12_37124400125



Team ready to race.....



Team finished race.....



Finish line



Liz ran 5k in 30 mins



Nellie

Soroptimist Team raise £2838 doing Maidstone's Race for Life

On 6 July, a Medway and Maidstone Soroptimist team took part in the Cancer UK Race for Life at Mote Park, Maidstone. We were running in memory of Liz Duckworth, who had been a Soroptimist member for more than 40 years and sadly passed away unexpectedly of cancer in February.

The team was made up of 7 club members Nellie Adjaye, Jane Barnes, Stella Barnes, Teresa Cambell, Carol Infanti, Jenny Jones, Liz Owsley plus Rebecca Duckworth (Liz's daughter).

1 in 2 people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. In the UK, someone is diagnosed with cancer every two minutes. No matter how cancer affects us, life is worth Racing for. Cancer UK's Race for Life raises money for life-saving cancer research. Donations will make a real difference to those affected by cancer, now and in the future.

Liz O and Teresa are both runners and completed the 5k course in 30 minutes and 38 minutes, respectively. For the rest of the team, we walked the course along with the 100's and 1000's of other participants taking between an hour and one hour 20 minutes to complete. There was a brilliant atmosphere and a real buzz motivating us all to keep going and to succeed in completing the course and receive our medals as we went over the finish line.

We had set up a Giving Page for the team and every member had set themselves a target to achieve through sponsorship. All of us exceeded the individual targets set and Nellie achieved the most donations of more than £800 with Gift Aid. Photos and videos taken on the day by Stella proved useful for Nellie to share with her family and friends to evidence all her efforts, when seeking their support.

£2838.50, which included Gift Aid, was the total amount raised through the team's combined efforts. This will help Cancer UK Research to bring about a world where everybody lives longer, better lives, free from the fear of cancer.
by Jane Barnes

The 5p challenge - How many 5ps can you fit into a small jam jar?

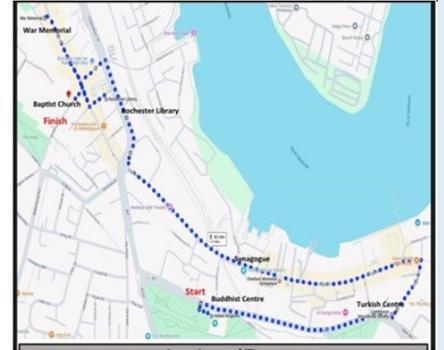
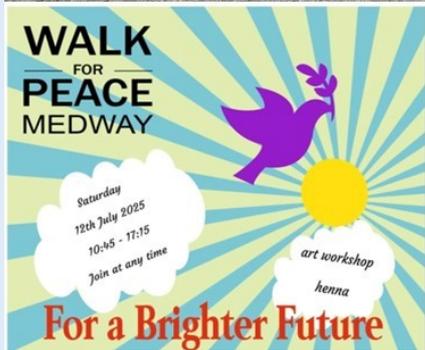
Carol Infanti of SI Medway and Maidstone set herself a challenge to eat lots of cream teas so that every member of the club could have one (clean empty) jam jar to fill with 5p coins. That's definitely one of the nicest challenges!

Club members brought their filled jam jars to the July club meeting and the sum of £44 was collected. This money will be shared between the Benevolent Fund and club funds.

By Carol Infanti



Carol on Walk For Peace on Day of Action



Carol at Medway 'Walk for Peace' on Day of Action

On 12 July, it was the International Day of Hope and in Medway they hold a Walk for Peace which is an annual event. It started over a decade ago (originally called 'Pilgrimage for Peace'), organised by Medway Interfaith.

The theme for this year's event was 'Walk for Peace for a Brighter Future'. Each year people on the walk visit different places associated with different Faiths.

Carol McKeough from SI Medway and Maidstone joined about 70 people of all ages and faiths who participated in this year's walk on one of the hottest days of the year. In the current climate, Carol's hope was for 'peace and unity throughout the world and a brighter future'.

The walk started off at the new Buddhist Centre that has just opened in Rochester, where walkers were shown around the centre, shared in a Buddhist prayer for peace and watched a short video by the Dali Lama talking about the 'Unity of Mankind'. The walk then progressed on to Turkish Dialogue Society Centre where walkers were entertained by Turkish children dancing and singing a peace song. From there the walk continued to Chatham Memorial Synagogue where representatives from the following faiths - Jewish, Baha'i, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist shared prayers for peace.

This was followed by a visit to Rochester library to see Primary students art work on the theme of Peace. At the war memorial in Rochester High Street, the Mayor of Medway joined and gave a short speech.

The finale then took place at Rochester Baptist Church, where walkers were entertained by local performers including a Bulgarian dance group.

Carol's comments, 'Very powerful services at the Buddhist Temple where we started and at the Mosque but oh so very hot...'

By Jane Barnes

Gender Impact Assessment - hopefully you have heard about this new advocacy project by now. If you are looking for a bit more context, we have put together this video explainer. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gqiMQTm68E>

Gender Impact Assessment





Mariuxi del Cisne


Region allocate £1000 to fund Women Entrepreneurs through
lendwithcare



Smoil



Ngan



Liza



Chantal



Monica



Piramide



Tilimbike 5 Group



Town Market C 1602 Group

LendwithCare is an organisation that encourages self-sufficiency by granting loans to people who would otherwise have trouble obtaining finance. They publish details of how the money will be used and details of the applicant(s). Various individuals and groups then each finance part of the loan and this can be for as little as £15.

We have now set up a LendwithCare account for the Region with £1000 from our Charity account. The group having the nice job of choosing which women entrepreneurs to lend money to, is made up of Ann Reeves, Wendy Metcalf, Angela Howe and Joyce Boorman.

We had fun deciding where to start and the first list of entrepreneurs is:

We have £100 to allocate when we next meet and hopefully this will be augmented by any repayments that have been made in the interim. We aim to help as many women as we can and keep the money going round. *By Angela Howe*

Loans made 17 th July 2025		Café/Eatery	Loan
Ecuador	Mariuxi del Cisne		£100
Malawi	Tilimbike	Retail	£100
Paraguay	Piramide	Retail	£100
Philippines	Liza	Farming	£100
Philippines	Monica	Retail	£100
Rwanda	Chantal	Farming	£100
Thailand	Smoil	Sewing	£100
Vietnam	Ngan	Retail	£100
Zambia	Town Market C1604	Retail	£100

SI Sevenoaks Day of Activism



“SI Sevenoaks held a Day of Activism at President Margaret Crabtree’s lovely home in Sevenoaks to mark the SIGBI date of Saturday 12th July. Twelve members met to look back at photo albums dating back to the 1930s and to make plans for the coming months to continue the programme action work and fundraising efforts. We had a collection and raised £52 for President Margaret’s next charity – to be revealed at our next club meeting in September. Pictured from left are: Julie Walder, Margaret Nicholson, Pat Downing, President Margaret Crabtree, Mary Hogarth, Eleanor Burns, Penny Robbins, Tracey Kemp and Shirley Brigham. *By Sandie Higgs*”

Peggy's Cream Tea at Coolings...

Thank you Peggy

Friday July 11th saw members of SI Bromley honouring their oldest member with Honorary Membership after 50 years of loyal support and service.

Peggy joined SI Bromley in 1974 when it was still a la mode to wear gloves and hats to meetings and to address members by their full name and title. She was President for the first time in 1984 when meetings were held at the Conservative Club in Bromley with Mrs Thatcher looking down at us from the wall, making sure we all had our handbags to carry our notes.

The second time in 2004 she shared the Presidential position with her good friend Audrey Percival in a more relaxed era when we enjoyed more informal gatherings.

In the meantime she spent many years in the much valued and underrated role of minutes secretary

Peggy has always been very hospitable – many times hosting social and fundraising evenings at her home and entertaining members from Holland and Germany during friendship weekends. She has visited clubs in Germany, France and

Holland as well further afield in Australia and Thailand and she has taken visitors to Buckingham Palace and The Albert Hall where she worked for many years

Very much in Peggy's spirit of Friendship, members met to thank Peggy and to enjoy tea and cream scones amid the flowers at Coolings Nursery. Of course, business first, we discussed the serious matter of jam first or cream, before moving on to a joyous afternoon of chat and laughter.

By Mary Clarke



Whether you like Jam first or cream on your scones.. We all had a good time.



Maplesden Noakes Business Challenge on Healthy/Unhealthy Relationships



Members of Team 11



Team 11 and Soroptimist judges



Materials produced



Awarded Third place



Team 11 with certificates



Third place certificate

As a club, SI Medway and Maidstone have been working on the Love Me..Love Me Not..(LMLMN) project. We have been keen to develop the project further with school age children. During one of our project meetings in February, Sharon Forghani mentioned that we could approach Maplesden Noakes School in Maidstone to set a challenge for a group of Year 12 students to work on as part of their annual Business Challenge competition.

In early June, Sharon and Annette Davies met with the school mentors to discuss our challenge which was: -

‘To create and produce material to support the advancement of education particularly in relation to healthy/unhealthy relationships and what constitutes coercive and controlling behaviour in a friendship or relationship . This material will be age appropriate and used in schools year 7 (11–12-year-olds).

Two groups were allocated our challenge and had to present their findings/solution to us and a panel of judges on 14 July . We were extremely impressed with both groups’ presentations, the professionalism and maturity shown by the students in tackling a subject they knew little about.

An overall winning group for the competition followed by 2nd and 3rd place groups were chosen, and as an incentive, prize money was offered.

At the Awards Event on 16 July attended by Sharon, Angela Howe, Carol McKeough and Jane Barnes, we were proud when one of our teams was awarded Third place and received £500 prize money. In addition, the school confirmed they would be using the materials produced with Year 7 students from September. By Jane Barnes

SI Sevenoaks Summer Lunch

"The month of July has come and it's always a joy to organise SI Sevenoaks annual Summer Lunch. The conservatory roof open, geraniums in bloom and cheerful chatter! Many thanks to The Chaser in Shipbourne for wonderful meals and of course members good company".

By Penelope Robbins
Past President



EAST GRINSTEAD STUDENTS PREPARING FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

Once again, this year, East Grinstead Club members were invited to participate in Sackville School's Mock Interview Programme. The aim of this annual event is to develop interview and employability skills in Year 10 students and to make a positive contribution to their preparation for the world of work.



Sackville School

TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE

Students are required to choose a job that interests them, write a letter of application and submit the letter along with an up-to-date CV. Each student is interviewed by someone they do not know with questions designed to assess their communication, collaboration, creative problem solving and self-management skills. At the end of the interview of around 15 minutes, the student is asked to take a seat away from the interviewer whilst a feedback sheet is filled in. The interviewer then invites the student to return to the desk to receive verbal feedback as well as the written sheet. The feedback covers the letter of application, the CV and the actual interview.



As for many students this is their first experience of a formal, work-related interview, the emphasis of the feedback is upon positivity with the aim of boosting their confidence and helping them prepare for real-life employment situations. One or two suggestions as to how they can improve are both helpful and beneficial but need to be delivered in a positive way!

It was very encouraging to meet these young people and to realise how conscientious, well-informed and hard-working they are. The youth of today do not often receive good press which is very sad when many of them have so much to offer.

By Rosemary Stone

Exciting News! Soroptimist International has officially published its High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) Report, submitted to the United Nations! The report highlights SI's advocacy and impact across SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Read it **here:** <https://www.soroptimistinternational.org/hlpf/>



It is on the HUB

Check it out

For more on the hub articles, also check this Newsletter

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COMMUNICATION CAFÉ DROP-IN



LAST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH,
DROP-IN SURGERY FOR AN HOUR FROM MIDDAY.

BRING YOUR QUESTIONS, IDEAS, CHALLENGES.
WE LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

SIGBI Birmingham 2025 Conference



**PROFESSOR
SUZIE IMBER**



**SHAZIA
CHOUDHRY**

SPEAKERS

We have an excellent line-up of speakers for our 2025 Conference.

31 OCT - 2 NOV 2025

sigbi.org/birmingham2025

BOOK NOW

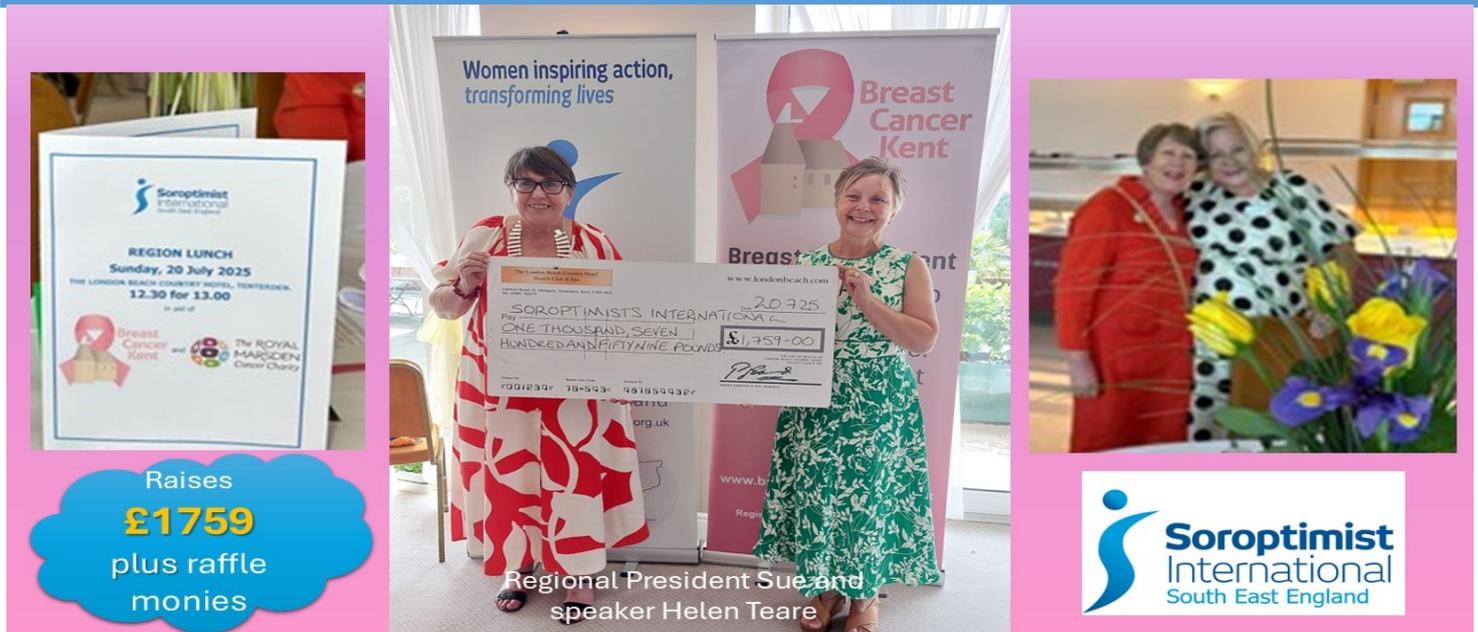
Conference workshops are filling up.

Book soon to get your preferred sessions.

There's so much to look forward to at our 2025 Soroptimist Conference in Birmingham, you can register via the Events tab in the Hub thehub.sigbi.org/events.



Successful Region Lunch Fundraiser for Cancer charities



Sunday 20th July saw more than 50 Soroptimists and friends from across our Region gather at the London Beach Hotel and Spa Country Club for a Region Lunch. It has been some time since the Region visited this venue but after much planning during the Spring Lunch and early Summer the day arrived.

I must first thank 'the team' who made this happen. Susie Forbes was instrumental in liaising with the Hotel and joined by Carol Infanti the event ran very smoothly. Thanks too to Maureen and Jo Anne from East Grinstead who arranged all the flowers for each table. (At the end of the event the flowers went to the Guest on a table with a birth date nearest to the 20th July). Thanks too to Claire Bell for saying Grace, Margaret Crabtree for the Vote of Thanks to our Speaker and those hosting to meet and great special visitors.

It was wonderful to hear so much chatter on each table as Guests caught up with old friends and developed new friendships.

The chosen charities for our support at this event were Breast Cancer Kent and The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. We were fortunate to have Helen Teare from Breast Cancer Kent speak about her involvement in the Charity along with information about the equipment they strive to purchase, for the benefit of cancer patients within the Region. These high-ticket items make a huge difference in diagnosis and treatment ensuring that our Region has state of the art technology.

Helen answered many questions that came her way and was delighted to accept our donation that will be formalised in several weeks. As you can see from the photograph £1,759 will be shared between Breast Cancer Kent and The Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, (who were unable to attend this lunch.) This is not a final total but one given on the day. Watch this space for the final tally.

Thank you so much for your generosity in purchasing raffle tickets and a final total is being verified, however we anticipate that it raised circa £300. I want to thank those Clubs who could not attend but donated prizes. And those who came along with prizes in hand to add to those items we had already sourced. Thanks to Federation President Ruth for her generous donation.

This was my first attendance at a Region Lunch, and I enjoyed every minute. Yes these events take time to arrange but all the hard work pays off handsomely given the amount that we raised on the day.

Helen Teare sent this thank you note and will be using some of our photographs in their marketing activities.

'It was all my pleasure and thank you for inviting me. I was astounded how much you raised for us. The team will be delighted.'

President Sue

A Date For Your Calendar

SI BROMLEY AND CROYDON AND DISTT.

High Tea

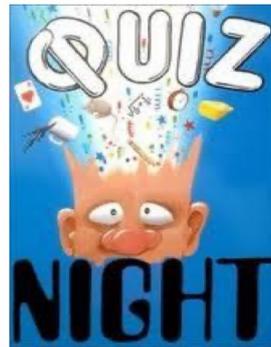
All proceeds to go to BCWA Bromley
and Croydon Women's Aid

ON 23RD AUGUST 2025 AT 1PM
AT CHESTNUT GARDENS
95, FOXLEY LANE
PURLEY
CR8 3HP

COST: £20
PLEASE PAY BY BAC
TO
SOROPTIMIST CLUB OF CROYDON AND
DISTRICT
BUSINESS ACCOUNT
SORT CODE 20-24-61

60824038

PLEASE EMAIL IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL
DIETARY REQUIREMENTS
EMAIL-
SICROYDONANDDISTRICT@GMAIL.COM



Where?

The Selsdon Centre
for the Retired,
132 Addington Road,
Selsdon CR2 8LA

In the same building as Sainsbury's (opposite the
store entrance) and we can use their car park

Hosted by Soroptimist Club of Croydon fundraising for
Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid and Croydon Vision

When?

Saturday

6th September

5.30 – 9.30pm

Who? Everyone!

Teams of 2 – 8 people
individuals welcome,
we can arrange teams

Tickets in advance only

To request a booking form
please email:

baileyheather@blueyonder.co.uk

How much?

£18.00 per person,
includes Chicken or
Vegetable Biryani

Please BYO drinks and cash
for raffle tickets!
Tea/coffee and a cookie
included.

Glasses available.

A non-curry option is available if required