

## **Orange the World Herts Campaign 2025** **Soroptimist International St Albans and District**

The Soroptimist International St Albans and District **#OrangeTheWorldHerts** campaign 2025 was bigger and better than ever! The Club arranged events from 10 Nov to the end of December.

The theme **CALL IT OUT!** is more than awareness raising, it is a call to action – <https://sigbi.org/st-albans/callitout>

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the campaign which is run by Denise Powell and the Club's Peace Team, with support from all Club Members. It began small during COVID in 2020 with just lighting up St Albans Museum and Gallery orange, getting a photo and publicising afterwards to raise awareness. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the campaign which has grown every year.

Planning begins in the new year with a Zoom meeting to review of how the campaign went in the previous year, and ideas for the coming year. Meetings with the core team are then held regularly through the year, with all Club Members getting involved in the planned events. An estimated 1000 hours of Soroptimist time was spent in 2025.

### **Key events in the Soroptimist International St Albans and District Orange the World Herts 2025 campaign:**

**Mon 10 Nov – “Orange the World”** Campaign 2025 kick-off on Zoom – with Hoda Ali Co-founder of The Vavengers – The Vavengers is a UK-based charity committed to ending Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and all other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) <https://thevavengers.co.uk/> Please click here to read all about it: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans/otwkickoff25> £80 was donated to Vavengers following the talk.



**Mon 24 to Sun 30 Nov** – the [Odyssey cinema](#) in St Albans was lit up in **Orange**. This was a first for the campaign and the cinema displayed materials in support of the campaign in the foyer.



**The #OrangetheWorldHerts St Albans campaign launch on 25 November** was a triumph marking the official start of the

**#OrangeTheWorld** campaign – 16 Days of Activism to end violence against

women. The main event was held in the Council Chamber at the St Albans Civic offices. Please click here for all the details including more photos: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans/otwstalbans25>. The keynote speaker is an extraordinarily brave domestic abuse survivor whose story moved just about everyone in the room to tears “Rising Beyond: A Journey of Resilience and Renewal”. There was a collection of



£270 on the day for the speaker's work with mums and babies in domestic abuse situations. The second speaker Rosie Lewis from the University of Hertfordshire delivered a powerful talk on the 8-stage timeline of events before a domestic violence homicide. It is a framework for tracking homicide risk in cases of coercive control and stalking. This 8-stage sequence is based on Professor Jane Monckton-Smith's research. There were many dignitaries and influencers in attendance. DCI Mike Birch said afterwards thanks for organising the event, it reinforces why we what we do is important, I wish I had brought some of my other officers along to hear the talks."

Neil Kieran, the White Ribbon champion at St Albans Council said: "This has been the best ever White Ribbon Day event – I think the training, the walk and the talks in the Chamber were really impactive and will bring in some real practical changes."

The main event was immediately followed by a photo-call outside the St Albans Museum and Gallery which was lit up in **Orange**. There was also a walk earlier on the day with the Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline – with the walking groups putting up posters with the helpline contact information, all over the City centre. 25 November is also known as "White Ribbon Day" - the Soroptimist event was run in partnership with the St Albans City and District Council who are "White Ribbon" accredited. The aim was to bring together individuals and organisations to tackle violence against women and girls. The Council also ran the Suzie Lamplugh Trust bystander training in the morning that had been recommended by the Soroptimists. It was successful and they plan to repeat the training for more staff to be able to attend.

Some of the Soroptimists continued to the **Great Northern Pub** on London Road which has also turned **orange!** and was displaying materials about the campaign on the bar and on the wall of the pub.



On **26 November County Hall Hertford** was lit up **orange** for **#OrangetheWorldHerts** with a reception and speaker event in the Council Chamber – the last time ever for that building. The event was hosted by Herts County Council Chairman Cllr Lawrence Brass with Kate Belinis DL and lead for Soroptimist International Hertford & District. Other speakers included Honorary Alderman Annie Brewster DL JP, Denise Powell Soroptimist International St Albans & District, Detective Chief il Herts County Council Chairman Cllr Lawrence Brass with Kate Belinis DL and lead



for **Soroptimist International Hertford & District**. Other speakers included Honorary Alderman Annie Brewster DL JP, Denise Powell Soroptimist International St Albans & District, Detective Chief Inspector Sarah Gilbertson Cllr Ajanta Hilton Herts County Council's White Ribbon lead. The Herts CC Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls, Strategic



Partnerships Team supported the Soroptimists with this event and invited the Fire and Rescue Service (complete with fire engine). Other guests were Soroptimists from Hertford and St Albans, County Councillors and more. In her speech Annie Brewster praised the Soroptimists for their **#CallitOut!** call to action and quoted the horrific statistic that 40% of Herts Police time is now taken up with Domestic Abuse <https://sigbi.org/st-albans/callitout>. DCI Sarah Gilbertson's talk was very moving and covered the importance of "Standing Together: Women in Policing and the Role of Men as Upstanders". It is



easy for police to become overwhelmed and numbed to what is happening and when they hear the lived experience of women and girls it creates empathy and the motivation for better policing. There was a group discussion about next steps. The audience and speakers were positive in spite of the scale of the problem. The focus is now on prevention and only a few years ago the focus was on survivors so that was seen

as being more forward looking. With high visibility cases in the media like the murder of Sarah Everard and the more recent murders of Carol, Hannah and Louise Hunt there is more momentum from all parts of society to pull together to end violence and abuse of women and girls.

**On 27 November the focus was Harpenden – Orange the World and “Have You Voice Heard!”.**

The thought-provoking and interactive event was held in the foyer of the Eric Morecambe Centre hosted by Harpenden Council and Cllr Beth Fisher, Mayor of Harpenden. Please click here for all



the details: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans/otwharpenden25>.

Police Sergeant Mark Essam from Harpenden Neighbourhood Policing gave a presentation which led to some positive group discussions about the way forward to end the abuse of women. Kira Day from The Chrysalis Centre, based in Harpenden gave a presentation about their work to break the cycle of abusive behaviour. There were families of victims

of domestic violence in the audience which made the event very real. Deputy Lieutenants Kate Belinis (also a member of Soroptimist International Hertford & District) and Alderman Annie Brewster JP asked questions and everyone was engaged in the interactive session. Harpenden MP Victoria Collins was also in attendance which meant that she was able to pick up on points raised to take up with central government.



Soroptimists got **Orange** and Christmassy on **1st December at St Albans City Station**. They were joined by friends (including some members of local choirs), to sing festive songs and raise more than £400 for SAHWR Women’s Refuge!

[www.sahwr.org.uk](http://www.sahwr.org.uk) Everyone wore **orange** to continue with the

**#OrangetheWorldHerts** campaign “16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women”.

Soroptimists ask people to take action and **#CallItOut** whenever they see abuse of women.



**On 4th December** St Albans Soroptimists had a stand at the University of Hertfordshire **16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Fair** instigated by Soroptimist Ameeta Sabharwal.

Ameeta, Ann Beatty and Jane Slatter “womanned” the display table. It was good to meet students



and staff at the University of Hertfordshire, including Poppy the Therapy dog from the Student Wellbeing department.

With between 32,000 and 35,000 students in

attendance from all over the world, the University faces all the challenges that young people face so they need support and the tools to stay safe. Students and staff are asked to stand with the Harassment, Domestic and Sexual Abuse Service at the University and **#CALLITOUT** !

On the **5th December St Albans Girls School (STAGs)** Sixth Formers had an **"Orange the World"** form time activity with a presentation based on materials provided by Jane Slatter from Soroptimist International St Albans and District. The presentation was followed by lively group discussions with the students. Jess Flint, Deputy Headteacher said "next year we are going to build it into our diversity and charity calendar".



### **St Saviour's Christmas Tree Festival 16-27 December**



This year the theme was "Past, Present and Yet to Come" and the SI St Albans & District Tree was called: **"Orange the World: for a future free from violence against women and girls"**. The SI St Albans & District tree made a real impact because it was in front of the pulpit and it was decorated in **orange** with promotional information beneath it as the final event for the **#OrangeTheWorldHerts** Campaign for 2025.

The event only takes place every 3 years, so this was a great opportunity to promote Soroptimists and the **Orange the World** Campaign.

### **Media Coverage**

On **24 Nov Jane Slatter** was interviewed by **Heart Radio in Herts** about 16 Days of Activism, White Ribbon and **Orange the World** to provide sound bites for them to play on the week of 25 November.

On **11 December Jane Slatter** was interviewed by **Elly O'Meara** on **Mix 92.6** about this year's **Orange the World Campaign** click here to listen to the recording of the broadcast on the community radio station <https://mix926.com/highlight/orange-the-world-16-days-of-campaigning-against-violence-towards-women-and-girls/> it's in two parts – first is after Leona Lewis One More Sleep. Jane is pictured here with Elly in the recording studio.



The local publication **The St Albans Times** supported the Club brilliantly again this year with this feature article <https://stalbanstimes.co.uk/st-albans/soroptimists-campaign-continues-fight-against-male-violence-to-women/> and also in the following week's issue <https://stalbanstimes.co.uk/past-issues/2025/issue-150/> pages 68-70.

The Soroptimist **Orange The World Herts** campaign was also included in St Albans Mayor's news, St Albans Council news, Hertfordshire Lieutenancy news and more!

**Fundraising** - during the campaign the Club supported two local organisations in the district working to support victims of gender-based violence and domestic abuse:

[Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline](#) and [St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge](#)

There was no charge for the events and donations received enabled the Club to give **£40 to the Helpline and £40 to the Refuge.**

The Club also donated **£80 to Vavengers** from the 10 Nov event and collected **£270** on the day of the main event on 25 Nov for the survivor who spoke's work with mums and babies in domestic abuse situations.

### **Other Positive Outcomes**

- Awareness raising of the scale of the problem of the abuse of women and girls with different groups of people from dignitaries, politicians and influencers to those needing support.
- Hundreds of people were involved and they now have information on getting support and have committed to "call it out" in future when they see abusive situations affecting women and girls.
- A commitment from that the Herts Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) procedure will be changed to reflect the Professor Jane Monkton-Smith's 8-stage timeline of events before a domestic violence homicide.
- Commitment from the Harpenden MP to make it easier for families to contact help to understand when a member of the family needs protecting (this came up as a result of hearing from the parents of their daughter who was murdered by her controlling partner).
- Closer working with Herts County Council and St Albans City and District Council who both have White Ribbon accreditation. Working with the White Ribbon Campaign makes sense because the goals are the same as the Orange the World Campaign. Also closer working with Harpenden Mayor and Council and the Harpenden MP.
- Herts Police including training with survivors to improve policing by increasing empathy with victims of abuse.
- St Albans Girls School to build the campaign into the school's diversity and charity calendar.
- Working with many partner organisations. The campaign has been growing in effect and impact every year.

There will be more positive outcomes as well as more "orange" activities happening using the momentum created by the campaign that the Club is unaware of because of the ripple effect.

### **Communications**

There is a lot of information on the SISTA website that shows the scale and importance of the **Orange The World** campaign for the Club, it's Members and partner organisations.

This is the page that includes information about the Club's Orange the World (OTW) campaign, going back to 2020: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/orange-the-world/>

This the page that includes information about "Call It Out" the Club's OTW Call to Action that began in 2024: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans/callitout>

This page includes a summary of all of the OTW activities for the 2025 campaign: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/2025/orange25/>

This page has detailed information about the OTW "Kick off" event on 10 Nov 25 with Hoda M. Ali speaking about FGM: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/2025/otwkickoff25/>

This page has detailed information about the 25 Nov OTW launch event in St Albans: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/2025/otwstalbans25/>

This page has detailed information about the 27 Nov OTW launch event in Harpenden: <https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/2025/otwharpenden25/>

This page includes the OTW activities that were included in the Christmas Club activities:

<https://sigbi.org/st-albans-and-district/2025/xmas25/>

Following the 2024 campaign Jane Slatter produced a short video which was used to promote the 2025 campaign and is available to view on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/TGCeu7NQCe8?si=3UcKDUJOnbqrODrH>

Club Member Kat Clark produced this powerful montage of photos from the 2024 campaign which was used to promote the 2025 campaign. Photo montages have also been produced for previous years and one will be produced for 2025 for use in 2026.



### Pre-Campaign Events

There were events ahead of the main campaign where the Club was able to promote the **Orange the World** campaign and Soroptimists to wide audiences and to share on the Club's **Facebook and Instagram** accounts.

**On 2 Oct** four SI St Albans & District Members attended the **Hertfordshire Violence Against Women and Girls Conference 2025** - and had a stand – with the selfie frames (see photo) which attracted a lot of interest.



**On 25 Oct** St Albans Soroptimists had a stand for the first time at the **St Albans Cathedral Community Showcase** where the **"Orange The World" campaign** was promoted. This sparked many conversations including one with the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire. Click here to see the Facebook post and images:

[\(9\) We were at St Albans Cathedral for the... - Soroptimist St Albans | Facebook](#)

Hopefully this report gives you a flavour of the scale and breadth of the **Soroptimist International St Albans and District 2025 Orange the World Herts campaign**. With an estimated 1000 hours of Soroptimist time spent on the project in 2025 it is the main piece of Programme Action work for the Club and involves everyone.

**Jane Slatter, Dec 31 2025**