



The Grace Onions 'Our Planet, Our Future' Award 2024



Grace Onions, former Regional President of SIGBI South East England, was passionate about addressing Climate Change and the loss of Biodiversity on our planet, and her work in these two areas was both inspirational and palpable. This Award commemorates her dedication to these key issues, which will affect not only our generation, but also future generations to come.

The aim of this Award is to showcase the excellent work which clubs in the South East England Region are carrying out on low carbon and biodiversity initiatives and innovations.

Entry Form

This is the second of this Annual Award and the winning club will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 21st September 2024.

Entries for the Award should be from clubs based in the Soroptimist International South East England Region.

Name of Club ...Whitstable & District

Contact details (e-mail address and contact phone number)

Jane Webb

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Title of the Initiative/Innovation Plastic Free Whitstable

PLASTIC FREE WHITSTABLE

Whitstable & District Soroptimists are residents of coastal towns and aware of the state of the seas locally and globally. Plastic pollution and sewage are immediately evident on the beach and shoreline. Sea pollution impacts biodiversity and marine life.



Our mission is to protect the sea by reducing plastic pollution to promote biodiversity. Building on these issues, we explored and lead the Plastic Free (PF) initiative in Whitstable, Faversham and Herne Bay already have PF status.

PF communities require businesses, voluntary organisations, schools and individuals to reduce and eliminate single use plastic and register with Surfers Against Sewage. Whitstable was awarded PF status in 2019.

When the Whitstable & District club was being formed, we wished, like our mother club, to become a PF Community Ally. Our enquiries were “returned to sender” until, after some persistence, we learned that the PFWhitstable committee had been disbanded leaving the logo, Facebook page, bank balance and several hundred reusable cups behind.

The club agreed to lead the PFW project, appoint a Community Organiser and work together as our way to tackle the climate crisis and work towards these Sustainable Development Goals:

- **5 Gender Equality** – the climate crisis especially affects women and girls who are more likely to be displaced from their homes. The rate of child marriage is increased because of climate induced starvation and the risk of social injustice is increased (UN Climate Change).
- **6 Clean Water** – water quality is a local and global issue and improves when pollution decreases.
- **12 Responsible Consumption & Production** – achieving environmentally sound management of waste.
- **13 Climate Action** – single use plastic is made from fossil fuels, so extraction and creation emits huge amounts of greenhouse gases.
- **14 Life Below Water** – reducing marine pollution particularly from land-based activities.
- **17 Partnerships** – Soroptimists established a new PF committee with the support of both political parties, the churches and the town Forum. Multistakeholder partnerships are crucial to maximise local knowledge, expertise, energy and connections and enhance our efforts towards the SDGs.

Our efforts are reported on PF forms 63209, 63377 and 63375. Within our first year Whitstable & District Soroptimists have:

- Managed and led regular PFW committee meetings, recruiting members from political parties, the council, churches and other community organisations.
- Ensured that there are sound governance arrangements for the PFW funds.
- Recruited club members as volunteers.
- Delivered flyers along the high streets to publicise an open meeting, explaining PFW, highlighting issues and receiving feedback.
- Led the open meeting and recruited additional volunteers bringing the total to 11.

- Evaluated numerous businesses and approved 41 to date as PFW Business Champions, all committed to reducing & eliminating single use plastic from their business models. Each has been awarded a certificate, cup and display sticker. The businesses vary enormously, serving different markets ranging from cafes, high end dress shops, beauticians and gift shops.



- Contacted a range of voluntary organisations and signed up seven as Community Allies.
- Pledged the club as a PF Community Ally including removing single use plastic from our activities and only having events in PF venues.



- Organised beach cleans, collecting approximately 50 kilos of rubbish including 10 kilos to mark UN Mother Earth Day.



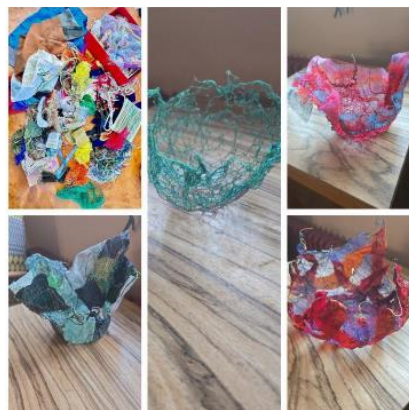
- Invited SOS Whitstable and the council's foreshore officer to inform us about current issues and the way in which they are being addressed, offering our services as citizen scientists e.g. by taking seawater samples.



- Organised an open meeting and invited a sustainability specialist to explain the lifespan of textiles, sustainable fashion and the impact of fast fashion on the environment. Clothing production has doubled since 2000, and the public have bought 60% more clothes since then. The speaker's donation was given to the Faversham Repair Cafe, helping them to reduce waste.



- Provided waste threads and silks for a member to turn into "Something for Nothing" artwork.



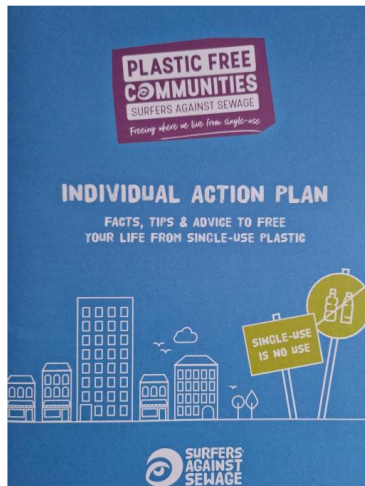
- Supported the SOS Whitstable protest to "Save our Seas".



- Gathered information about local recycling facilities, sharing it widely on social media and reducing the amount sent to landfill.

RECYCLING LOCALLY - WHITSTABLE & TANKERTON: JULY 2024		
PRODUCT	LOCATION	COMMENTS
Card & Paper	Kerbside recycling (Council)	Sainsbury stopped Sep 2022
Plastic & Bottles	Kerbside recycling (Council)	Sainsbury stopped Sep 2023
Soft plastic	Tesco Extra, Millstrod Rd	NB: must be clean
eg bread bags, plastic crisp packets, cling film, firm lids on soft fruit punnets and ready meals, pasta bags, blacout and chocolate wrappers	Southern Co-op, Cromwell Rd Co-op, Oxford St Co-op, Canterbury Rd M & S, Estuary View Aldi, Estuary View Sainsbury, Chestfield	The Co-op is favoured as they have a UK recycling site for soft plastic
Tetrapaks, inc Pringles tubes, cocoa tubs	Tesco Extra carpark, Millstrod Rd	COUNCIL does NOT accept tetrapaks etc inc drinks cartons, full-lined tubes and tubes with metal ends
Ink cartridges	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	St Alphege church opening times: 2-4pm Friday & Saturday 8-4pm Sunday 9-30am Wednesday
Stamps	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	
RETINA UK	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	
Hearing aids & Glasses	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	
LYONS RECYCLE for SIGANT	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	
Blister packs (tablets)	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	
MARIE CURIE	St Alphege church, High St, Northex foyer	
Blister packs (tablets)	Lady Dore Vets, Cromwell Rd	Waiting room
Batteries	Tesco Extra, Millstrod Rd Southern Co-op, Cromwell Rd Co-op, Cromwell Rd Co-op, Canterbury Rd Sainsbury, Chestfield Sainsbury local, Whitstable Aldi, Estuary View	
Clothes & shoes	Tesco Extra carpark, Millstrod Rd Sainsbury, Chestfield B and Q, Chestfield	SALVATION ARMY OXFAM
Electricals	Local Vets	
Towels and Sheets	Local Vets	
BRITA water filter cartridges	Copperfields, High St	
Textiles inc clothing	Dunelm (Canterbury)	Must be clean

- Invited members to sign up as PF households.



- Supported public events such as welcoming the Plastic Soup Surfer who has windsurfed between London & Paris to raise awareness of ocean plastics.



- Shared our litter picking equipment with other local organisations for their own litter picks.



- Set up and managed a PFW stall at the Wild About Whitstable fair.

<https://www.ct5peoplesforum.org/post/crowdfunding-campaign-for-wild-about-whitstable>

	MONDAY 12TH	TUESDAY 13TH	WEDNESDAY 14TH	THURSDAY 15TH	FRIDAY 16TH	SATURDAY 17TH	SUNDAY 18TH
MORNING	08:00-10:00: Open WAFW in Urpeth garden	08:30-10:00: Drive Practice, singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	09:00-10:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	09:30-10:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:00-10:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:30-11:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex
	10:15: Bee Blooms in Urpeth garden	10:30-11:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:15: Family singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:30-11:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:30-11:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:30-11:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	10:30-11:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex
	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	11:00-11:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex
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AFTERNOON	13:00-14:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	14:00-15:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	13:30-14:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	14:00-15:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	14:00-15:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	14:00-15:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	14:00-15:00: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex
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EVENING	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex	19:00-19:30: Singing in choir from Harlow, Harlow, Essex
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WILD ABOUT WHITSTABLE, MONDAY AUGUST 12TH TO SUNDAY AUGUST 18TH 2024



- Achieved a high profile in the community as a forward thinking, female led organisation delivering our goals to the benefit of the whole community.

Future plans include more beach cleans, more Business Champions, establishing a review mechanism and continuing support, taking part in more events and recruiting more Community Allies.

Date 19th August 2024

Please note – the deadline for submission of entries is 23rd August 2024.

Please submit your completed entry form together with any supporting photographs or video by e-mail to: yd.freeman@mypostoffice.co.uk

Clubs will also need to provide a 50-word summary of their entry with one or two photographs, which will be posted onto the SI South East England website to: Siseecomunications@gmail.com

The winning club will be asked to make a short presentation on their project at the Annual General Meeting on 21st September 2024.