TRAFFICKING OF YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN

In 2004 – 05, we ran a year-long project to raise awareness of the Trafficking of young women and children at a time when most people didn't like to talk about it. As a result of our work, we were honoured to receive the *Good Practice Award for Human Rights and the Status of Women* at the 2005 SIGBI Conference. In 2017 we organised a pop-up shop in the town centre for International Women's Day collecting pre-loved bras for the Purple Teardrop Campaign which supports survivors of trafficking. A further pop-up shop in 2018 saw us encouraging local people to decorate squares for the Global Blanket Campaign against forced labour and human trafficking in supply chains. In 2021 we co-hosted a Modern Day Slavery online workshop in partnership with the Wisbech and Fenland Museum.

ANNUAL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION FOR YEAR 6 PUPILS

In 2007, we held our first Public Speaking Competition for Year 6 pupils. Each team consists of three pupils who introduce their chosen subject, present a reasoned argument, summarise, and give a vote of thanks – no mean feat for such young people. In 2024 we received a Good Practice Award for Empowerment as a result.

ANNUAL LITERARY LUNCH

In 2011, we held the first of our Literary Lunches, in the Riverside Restaurant in King's Lynn with guest authors Sophie Hannah and Jim Kelly. It was so successful that we had to move to a larger venue the following year, the Le Strange Arms in Old Hunstanton. Our speakers have ranged from Dame Stella Rimington to Elly Griffiths, and, on looking through the list, it seems we Soroptimists do enjoy crime novels! In 2023 Sophie Hannah and Jim Kelly paid us a return visit and in 2026 we look forward to welcoming Midge Gillies, journalist and biographer, whose latest book 'Atlantic Furies' tells the story of the race to be the first woman to fly the Atlantic.

ENGLISH LESSONS

In the past decade, King's Lynn saw a great increase in migrant workers and, for several years, members supported them by helping with English lessons. The sessions included useful vocabulary for common situations, providing plenty of opportunities for conversation.

WOMEN'S WELLBEING DAY

In October 2014, we held a Women's WellBeing Day at Lynnsport. Topics covered included healthy eating; keeping safe; reflexology, massage and reiki; pilates, and many more. !

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In June 2010, in partnership with West Norfolk Voluntary and Community Action, we held a forum on Domestic Abuse. More recently we have been involved with 'Norfolk Says No' and the White Ribbon campaign which we promoted at the local football club.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

In March 2019, the club held a 2 day event in the Town Hall to celebrate International Women's Day. It was an opportunity to bring local groups together and promote awareness of Soroptimism. Highlights included an art competition for primary school children, a talk from Britain's first female firefighter, Jo Reynolds, musical entertainment from 2 local choirs and a chance to try Bollywood dancing. This was all made possible by the generosity of the Mayor in allowing use of the Town Hall, and a grant from the Audrey Muriel Stratford Trust. A follow-up event ' Women Alive' was held in March 2020 just prior to the Covid 19 lockdown. In recent years club members have provided volunteers to assist in the King's Lynn and Sandringham Parkrun.

CHARITIES AND FUNDRAISING

Over the years, we have organised and been involved in a wide range of events to support our chosen charities. These have included: market stalls, Christmas Fairs, jumble sales, quizzes, bridge drives, concerts, and fashion shows. In 2019 an afternoon tea was held to support Home-Start Norfolk in the entertaining company of David Palmer, auctioneer. In 2021, President Julie Williams hosted a very successful garden party and wine tasting in aid of West Norfolk Young Carers—despite the rain. In 2024 a fashion show featuring Allez Chic of Castle Rising was a sell-out success.

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Holocaust Memorial Day: at the annual service in the Town Hall, a Club member, usually the President, gives one of the readings.
Remembrance Sunday: our President lays a poppy wreath, in Tower Gardens and, after the ceremony, she and some members join the civic procession to The Minster for a service.

Club history originally compiled by Lindsay Campbell
Update April 2026(Carolyn Slynn)

Soroptimist International
Great Britain & Ireland

SI King's Lynn

- Enjoy the company of women who like to make a difference
- Create a better world through international friendships
- Get involved with projects to educate, empower and enable women and girls

Interested?

Get in touch and you will receive a warm welcome as a guest at one of our meetings

sikingslynn@gmail.com

www.sigbi.org/kings-lynn

2026-2027

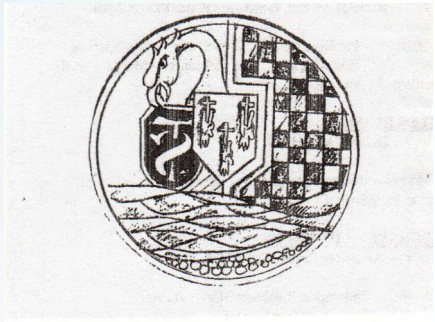
President
Shared (Executive)

Charities

Break

Founders Grant
(with Girlguiding , King's Lynn)

Soroptimist International of King's Lynn A brief history 1975 – 2025



THE CHARTER
Our petition was accepted at a meeting of the Federation Executive Council on 7 December 1974. There were 27 founder members. The King's Lynn Club was proposed by SI Norwich, our Mother Club, and seconded by SI Peterborough.

THE CHARTER DINNER
12 July 1975, at the Duke's Head Hotel, King's Lynn
The Charter was presented by Federation President Ruth Harris.
Divisional Union President: Cara Watson

10TH ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON
13 July 1985, in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, King's Lynn
Guest of Honour: Federation President Muriel Bowers
Divisional Union President: Kathleen Hunter

25TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER
8 July 2000 in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, King's Lynn
Guest of Honour: Federation President Elizabeth Harrison (SI King's Lynn)
Regional President: Julie Carter (SI King's Lynn)

40TH ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON
5 July 2015 in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, King's Lynn
Guest of Honour: The Rt Hon Baroness Gillian Shephard
Regional President: Cathy Cottridge

THE FEDERATION – SIGBI
Members have attended every Federation Conference since 1975, and also some Soroptimist International Conventions.
Elizabeth Harrison was Federation Health Advisor 1991 – 1995, and elected Federation President 1999 – 2000.

LONDON ANGLIA REGION - SILAR
SI King's Lynn has taken an active part in the Region (formerly Divisional Union.. Elizabeth Harrison, Julie Carter, Maggie Orage and Sylvia Cliffe have all been Regional Presidents, and many Club members have held Regional Office.

LINK CLUBS
We have formed strong Friendship Links with Clubs in Waimea (New Zealand), Waterland (The Netherlands), Amber Valley (Alfreton), Solihull & District, Pune (India), Lubeck (Germany) and Krakow (Poland) The link clubs enjoy friendship visits and working on joint projects.

PROJECTS, ACTIVITIES AND CHARITIES
Just a taste of what we've been doing over the last fifty years…

THE HOUSING PROJECT
Our first charitable project. In 1979, the Club rented two bedsits and a one bedroom flat from Broadland Housing Association, furnished them, and let them to young people coming to work in King's Lynn. By 1995, there was plenty of suitable accommodation locally, and the project closed.

HANDICRAFT PROJECT AT ST EDMUND'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
This project was started by a group of club members in 1993. On Tuesday lunchtimes, a group of Year 5 pupils learned to knit and sew under the guidance of the "Knitting Nannies," as they were affectionately known. The club has recently continued the tradition by knitting baby clothes for the SIGBI Meru Women's Garden Project.

WOMEN'S REFUGES
In past years, we have collected toiletries, personal items, toys and games for the women and their children, who have to leave home at short notice.