



Membership Handbook 2018 – 2019

Member's name.....

This year's theme: 'Pressing for Progress'

Meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7.30 pm

Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Homer Road, Solihull B91 3QD

Contact us

Email: sisolihull@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.si-solihull.org.uk

National website: www.sigbi.org



SI Solihull



@SI_Solihull

Delivering the difference

Our Vision, Mission and Values

‘Women inspiring action, transforming lives’

Soroptimist Vision – Soroptimist International is a vibrant, dynamic organization for today’s professional and business women.

We are committed to a world where women and girls together achieve their individual and collective potential, realise aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide.

Soroptimist Mission – Soroptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls through a global network of members and international partnerships.

Soroptimist Values –

- Human rights for all
- Global peace and international goodwill
- Advancing women’s potential
- Integrity and democratic decision making
- Volunteering, diversity and friendship

As the world’s largest service organization for women, we work to improve the world for women and girls by:

- Carrying out service
- Lobbying governments
- Raising awareness
- Raising funds
- Educating, Enabling and Empowering women and girls so that they develop knowledge and skills to ensure that they become self-supporting and the leaders of tomorrow

Soroptimist International is a women's service organisation which provides exciting opportunities to be of service to others and take part in projects through Awareness, Advocacy, and Programme Action. These projects are carried out by clubs all over the UK and international

Officers 2018 - 2019

President:	vacant
President Elect:	vacant
Vice President:	vacant
Secretary:	Sue Mitchell
Treasurer:	Sue Knowles
Programme Action:	Marina McGoldrick
Friendship Links:	Jan Hemlin / Judith James
Immediate Past President:	Elaine Stephens
MAR Representatives:	Elaine Stephens + one vacancy
Pastoral officer:	Norma Howie
Programme/Speaker Secretary:	vacant

Contact

Secretary Sue Mitchell's email: sue@jsmitchell.co.uk
Mobile: 07749 239477

2018-19 Charities:

Anawim, St Basil's homeless and others

Welcome

I am pleased to have this opportunity to welcome you as a member of Soroptimist International, Solihull & District Club and I do hope you will enjoy the fun and friendship which comes with being a member and part of this wonderful worldwide organisation.

As a global volunteer movement we work together at local, national and international levels to educate, enable and empower women and girls in order that their lives may be transformed. We do this in a variety of ways. Such as raising awareness of issues and lobbying or carrying out service. For example, providing essential items for our local women's refuge, organising educational and inspirational events for girls or raising funds for projects & charities (although we are not specifically a fundraising organisation). We also enjoy a variety of social events throughout the year and we invite you to join us whenever you can. We believe that a voluntary association should be based on fun and friendship.

Our Federation Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland - or SIGBI is one of four Federations, with approximately 80,000 members in 132 countries. We have representative status at the United Nations, where we report on the work done by clubs worldwide and have the opportunity to lobby on issues that directly affect women and girls.

I hope that you will get involved in our Programme Action and Advocacy as this is at the heart of what we do. The charities we are mainly supporting this year are Anawim, and St Basils homeless, both local charities, but also we will also fund raise for other local, national and international projects during the year.

The club is run by an Executive Committee, normally consisting of President, President Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President, Programme Action officers and Friendship Links officers. However since some of these roles are vacant this year, our meetings will be chaired by some of our Past Presidents, ably assisted by leaders of support teams. Any member can become a co-opted member of Executive. In addition, each of our groups has a named leader who is your best point of contact. Rest assured you will be made most welcome if you wish to "join in" at any time, as this is the best way to get to know club members and make new friends.

In friendship

Ann Thomas, Editor

History of SI Solihull & District

SI Solihull & District was chartered in 2000. Our present club is in fact the second SI Solihull, & District, the first being formed in 1955 but closed in 1995. A second club was formed in 2000 and remains the flourishing group we know today.

In the early days, membership of the club was by invitation only! Applications for membership were 'on the table' for three meetings before either being accepted or rejected. All members were professional women and only one representative from each profession was allowed. As always there were a number of teachers, so to get round the 'one representative' rule they were listed as 'Teacher' or 'Head of Department', 'Head Teacher' and so on. Committee members served for two years, and club meetings were held at the Manor House in Solihull.

Initially the club was enthusiastic, but as time went on club activities declined and it became little more than a lunch/social club until its closure in 1995. After 5 years a new club was formed under the leadership of new Founding President Beverley Haywood with 18 members. This was largely due to the efforts of Anne Hill from SI Central Birmingham, and initially meetings were held at her home. After the award of the Club Charter, meetings were held at the Greswold Hotel, Knowle, and then David Lloyds Sports Club in Cranmore Boulevard, Solihull. Several of the founder members are still with us today. Our first Charter Dinner was held at the Motorcycle Museum, and year on year since then we have gone from strength to strength.

Past Presidents of our Club since Charter in 2000:

2000/1	Beverley Haywood (Founder)
2001/2	Ann Roberts
2002/3	Alison Burrows
2003/4	Val Lacey
2004/5	Jan Hemlin
2005/6	Sue Knowles
2006/7	Helen Clarke

2007/8	Ann Keepax
2008/9	Jenny George
2009/10	Grace Hampson
2010/11	Janette Lambert
2011/12	Angela Sadler
2012/13	Chris Spriggs
2013/14	Margaret Jarman
2014/15	Marie Lawrence until October '14 then shared by past presidents
2015/16	Elizabeth Lowe
2016/17	Ann Thomas
2017/18	Elaine Stephens

Organisation of Soroptimist International

SI Solihull & District has over 50 members and is one of 12 clubs which form **Midland Arden Region (MAR)**. These comprise: **Birmingham Central, Bromsgrove and Redditch, Coventry, Hereford & District, Kenilworth & District, Kidderminster & District, Leamington and Warwick, Rugby, Solihull & District, Stourbridge, Stratford-upon-Avon & District, Worcester & District.**

Clubs vary in size and members come from all walks of life. The common thread is a willingness to make a difference, to follow similar values and objectives, and to have fun and make friends along the way.

Regional Council Meetings are held four times a year at accessible venues. Dates for these are publicised at the start of each regional year and our club has full details about the speakers and events. The clubs support chosen charities – some on-going, others chosen annually by the President.

Midland Arden Region is one of the 23 regions in **Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland** (www.sigbi.org) and **Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland** is one

of 4 Federations worldwide, the others being **SI of the Americas, SI Europe, and SI South-West Pacific**. There is an annual SIGBI Conference in the UK, which in 2018 will be in Liverpool, and a four yearly International Convention. (www.soroptimistinternational.org)

Soroptimist International was founded in 1921, when 80 women formed the first Soroptimist club in Oakland, California. Since then, membership has grown to approximately 80,000 women worldwide. There are over 3100 clubs in over 130 countries.

Soroptimist International projects, carried out by clubs around the world, make a difference to the lives of half a million women and girls each year. Because of this project work, and since 2013, **Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland** has Consultative Status with the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the United Nations**. Soroptimist International works with several agencies and technical bodies and has permanent representatives at all major five United Nations centres, and is a recognised non-Governmental Organisation representing women from all over the world.

Programme Action – what we do

Programme Action is the life blood of our organization. It is the reason why many of us joined and became Soroptimists, to make a difference to women and girls. This report about Programme Action will help you to understand the basis on which we work. The main focus for you as a member is to get involved in Project Work; it is how you find out more about club members, begin to work as a team and in so doing it will make you feel you are doing something that is really worthwhile.

Main areas of focus:

- **Advocacy**
- **Economic Empowerment**
- **Learning Opportunities**
- **Environmental Sustainability**
- **Food security**
- **Violence and Conflict Resolution**

‘Educate, Empower and Enable’

We welcome new members and new ideas for future projects, as we endeavour to develop links at home and abroad with actions which aim to improve the lives of our fellow human beings. We aim to try to integrate ideas which will further our campaigns to end Violence Against Women, encourage careers for women and girls, and enable vulnerable women at home and abroad to take control of their lives through economic sustainability and education. The fact that we are a very jolly and friendly group of women only serves to foster great fun and friendship, as we continue to combine business and pleasure through our social evenings and supper meetings.

SI Solihull & District Club and Programme Action Groups and Projects

This information is to enable existing, new and prospective members learn about the work of our various sub-groups. The monthly SI venue is at the **Crowne Plaza, Homer Road, Solihull**, and meetings of sub-groups are held at members' homes.

Anawim Centre, Balsall Heath (on-going project bi-annually) – 2018-19 charity

We support this Centre for vulnerable women who would otherwise be sentenced to imprisonment in whatever way we

can. For example, wrapping and sending presents at Christmas, and providing toiletries and night clothes.

Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid Refuge,

The club has supported this community charity for women who seek a safe haven there with essential domestic items, and will continue to do so. The organisation also works in partnership with police to end human trafficking and violence against women

Hamlin Fistula Hospital, Ethiopia

The club continues to support the Fistula Hospital in Addis Adaba by knitting blankets and baby jackets for women patients and residents. The work is done by members, friends and family. The blankets are taken to Midland Arden Region meetings and then shipped to Ethiopia by the charity supporting the work. Our Crafts & Laughs group responded to a request from the hospital by knitting shawls, baby cardigans and hats.

Contact: Jane Davies

Homelands School, Uganda

Three club members visited the school in July 2014 and are planning to visit again in 2018. Teaching standards have declined here since our first visit in 2011, with fewer experienced teachers. Our members went at personal expense and seven suitcases full of pupil supplies and spent the week teaching and helping pupils and their teacher. We continue to support the orphanage through our links with SI Masaka and raised enough funds last year to install 8 water tanks in the village.

SI Masaka, Uganda

During their visit to Homelands school, our members also visited one of our Friendship Links clubs SI Masaka. Small gifts of educational materials were given to 4 schools SI Masaka is supporting. Money was also given to buy baby food for the child of a girl supported by SI Masaka.

Contact: Angela Sadler

PROGRAMME ACTION GROUPS

Crafts and Laughs

Coordinator - Jane Prance.

This group meets every first Wednesday in the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Jane Prance's house. The aim of the group is to focus on crafts to support the programme action focus work. We hold an annual Christmas craft sale selling home-made items crafted by members of the group. These include knitted and sewn Christmas decorations, gifts, home-made Christmas cakes and Christmas cards. New members to this group are welcomed.

Education Group

Contact: Sue Bassett

This is a relatively new group looking at various projects relating to education both here in the UK and overseas. Main projects for this group include our Public speaking Competition, supporting the Regional Public Speaking Competition and supporting Homelands Orphanage and School in Uganda. New members to this area of development are welcomed.

Fun in the Park

Coordinator –Grace Hampson

Aim: To provide a community festival for the Borough of Solihull and raise as much money as possible for chosen local charities.

Activities: To organise 'Fun in the Park', an annual event. The event is to encourage local organizations, schools etc to participate. Events include classic car display; dog show; fun rides for the children; stalls. Helpers and ideas welcomed.

Green Group

Coordinator – Chris Spriggs

Widney Manor station - Contact: Sue Mitchell

SI Solihull maintains and develops the floral displays at Widney Manor station. This work fulfils one of the main aims of our Programme Action work, namely to offer service to the local community and promote a greener and more sustainable environment

Involvement and activities: Most members of the project have an interest in gardening, but some just wish to be involved in a project that benefits the local community. The work involves bulb and flower planting, watering and weeding, together with discussing ideas for developing floral displays.

Advocacy / Lobbying Group

Contact – Angela Sadler

Members of SI Solihull launched this group in 2006 with the aim of lobbying public officials and local organizations. Our activities reflect the true spirit of Soroptimism. It is important to remember that SI has a voice at the United Nations, and we aim to ensure that voice is heard locally, nationally and internationally. We welcome the active involvement of all members, both in current campaigns and in raising new issues that are of concern.

Paint the Town Pink

We continue to raise awareness in our community about breast cancer and hold a bi-annual event in October for Knowle shopkeepers to design their shop windows in pink to raise funds for the Breast Cancer NOW charity. The event will take place next year in 2019. Contact: Marina McGoldrick

CLUB GROUPS

Events

Coordinators – Barbara O'Connor plus one vacancy

This group discusses the organization of social and fund-raising events.

Examples of social outings include a quiz night, visits to places of interest, fashion show / beauty demonstrations, theatre outings, supper evenings at local restaurants, Christmas Party, etc.

Friendship Links

Friendship Links are important for all Soroptimist Clubs. They can be set up in the UK and overseas between clubs. Clubs wishing to form a link, having agreed this in principle, should contact the Federation Friendship Link Coordinator formally to set up the link. The Friendship Link will have many benefits and develop over time. Any Soroptimist Club can form Friendship Links within their own Federation or in the Federations of the Americas, Europe, or South West Pacific. They must remain interactive and dynamic at all times.

Benefits enjoyed through Friendship Links:

1. Getting to know about the life of the other club
2. Appreciation of different cultures
3. Establishing warm friendships
4. Visiting and exchanging programmes
5. Enjoying holiday contacts
6. Practising language skills
7. Taking part in Special Events
8. Offering hospitality, house exchange
9. Mentoring new Clubs and those in difficulties

SI Solihull & District enjoys Friendship Links with the following clubs:

In the UK: SI Wallasey, SI Klings Lynn,

In Europe: SI Molde (Norway), SI Fulda (Germany)

Throughout the world:

SI The Hills (Australia)); SI Johannesburg (South Africa); SI Masaka (Uganda)SI St Vincent and the Grenadines (Caribbean)

Friendship Link Activities include exchange visits, usually staying in members' homes and being hosted by the local club, letters, emails, support where needed, and meeting up at Conference. In 2016 we hosted SI Molde, Norway and visited SI Fulda, Germany, and in June 2018 we are reciprocally hosting SI Fulda as seven of their members come to visit us.

Contact: Jan Hemlin or Judith James if you are interested in the Friendship Links group

Health Group

Coordinator Chris Spriggs

This group looks at various aspects of health, from elderly care to health of members. We help at Elizabeth house, Shirley annually with serving afternoon tea, and occasionally help with garden improvements there. New members to this group are welcomed.

Club Support Teams (4)

Our club has grown over the years and in order to be inclusive and develop in a positive way, it is our wish that members are encouraged to participate in our business meetings as much as possible. We also wish to encourage members to feel confident about – if they so wish - taking office at some point. Roles can be shared or even taken on for a three months.

With this in mind, our club has four support teams which for three months of the club year take on duties of organising the room for our meetings. These duties may entail setting up the display boards and tables, putting up our banner, registering members on arrival, setting up the microphone, buying flowers, chocolates or wine for visiting speakers if needed, meeting and greeting guests. This year we will have our meetings chaired by club members.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership, Development and Marketing Group (MDM)

The group meets monthly to develop initiatives that will progress the Club in terms of:

- Club management, self-review and forward planning.
- Reviewing and refining ways of recruiting, inducting, mentoring and supporting members.
- Looking for and responding to ways we can market our Club, through social media, our website, being a visible presence when opportunities arise locally or nationally.

Contact: Group Leader, **Jane Davies**

SOROPTIMISM

Our Values and Behaviours may be found on the SIGBI website.

As members of Soroptimist International we:

1. Are an International Women's voluntary service organisation working to improve the lives of women and girls at a local, national and international level
2. Put Programme Action at the heart of our work, aiming to educate, empower and enable women and girls to reach their own individual and collective potential
3. Believe that any woman may come along and contribute positively to our goals
4. Encourage members' participation in activities, which enable them to contribute to society whilst enjoying fun and friendship
5. Are efficient, using technology to inform and keep us informed
6. Are flexible in the way we do club business so we can focus on Programme Action
7. Share best practice in an open and generous manner and develop new skills
8. Are an organisation others seek out as partners

How to become a member:

We welcome visits from prospective members and strive to make them feel they are amongst friends. Our officer responsible for new members is **Ann Keepax** who may ask a new prospective member / visitor for some details so that they can be given further information about our organization.

They will then be greeted at their next meeting and given a Welcome Pack. After they have attended 2 or 3 meetings, they will be invited to join Soroptimist International, Solihull and District and over a coffee or two are informed as to what we do.

If the person is happy to go ahead, the Club Secretary, Treasurer and President are advised so that the application form can be sent out and an agreed Induction Date set. This Induction takes place at the Business Meeting and involves a short welcome ceremony. The prospective member is offered a 'Mentor' – usually a Past President – who will be there to introduce her to other members, groups, and encourage her to support any project or event that she may show an interest in.

Key Tasks of Membership:

1. Attend and participate in club meetings and functions
2. Pay the annual membership fee in a timely manner.
3. Participate in the Programme Action activities of our Club.
4. Work with other members to ensure the smooth running of our Club.
5. Treat all members with courtesy and respect.
6. Be willing to be a support team member and/or take office
7. Be willing to represent the Club, if asked.
8. Attend Club and Regional Annual General Meetings.
9. Attend Regional and Federation Conferences if possible.
10. Have a working knowledge of the structure and policies of SIGBI
11. Keep abreast of developments at local and national level.
12. Actively encourage and welcome new members.
13. Promote Soroptimism when the opportunity presents itself, especially through social media sites.

Please refer to National Website (www.sigbi.org) for information on resignation/termination of Membership and Right of Appeal.

Subscriptions

Annual subscription cost is £105 payable in April. Members can also pay in two instalments of £60 and £45, the second being by June of the current year.

Useful contacts

Club Website	Angela Sadler
New members, meet & greet	Ann Keepax
MAR events coordinator	Judith James
Communications	Ann Keepax & Janet Clifford
Uganda blankets, bras etc to MAR	Jane Davies

Miscellaneous Notes

Supper Meetings

Contact Sue Knowles, Treasurer to confirm attendance, they are held prior to our business meeting usually three or four times a year. Members will be notified regarding menu preferences a week before the supper meeting.

Non-attendance: the meal has to be paid for (£19) if Sue is not advised at least 48 hours before the supper meeting.

Regional Meetings

Midland Arden Region (MAR) meetings are announced at club meetings and attendance is booked through Judith James They are normally held on a Saturday morning, four times a year followed by lunch and a speaker. All members are encouraged to attend to gain a wider perspective of Soroptimist International.

National Charities

SIGBI encourage all clubs to support their charities. Further details of these can be found on the SIGBI website. (www.sigbi.org)

SI Residential Club, 63, Bayswater Road - London W2 3PH

All Soroptimists, family and friends are welcome. It has single and twin rooms and a suite – all have modern ensuite facilities. There is a lounge bar, and TV room as well as a Conference room.

63 Bayswater Road is also available for meetings, seminars booked by Soroptimists or non- Soroptimists. Breakfast is served in the basement dining room and snacks/ light meals can be provided on request.

'63' is conveniently located near Lancaster Gate tube station and overlooks Hyde Park. It is also close to Paddington Station.

Bookings can be made by phoning 020 07723 8575 or by email: soropclub.63@virgin.net

Details: www.soropclub63.org.uk

Club Membership Handbook

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