

## Winter 2025 update from SI Plymouth & District

*This newsletter is for members and 'Friends' of Plymouth Soroptimists, keeping everyone up to date with our activities and inviting you to join us at our club, social and fundraising events.*

### **News/Events**

#### **Christmas supper**

A merry Christmas supper was enjoyed by 21 club members at the Duke of Cornwall in December. A couple of fun quizzes wound up the evening with only a little cheating on some tables! Donations in lieu of Christmas cards raised £69 for project funds.



#### **Sherry, mince pies and coffee morning**

A very enjoyable social and fundraising event raised £145 which will be put towards filling the Mother's Day gift bags for women in the Refuge. The event was a joint effort with the two Margarets providing the venue and refreshments.

## Harewood House fund raising

Welcome visitors to the club stand at Harewood House on a miserably wet day in December were two local councillors, Terry Beer and Patrick Nicholson, and local MP Rebecca Smith. Over £200 was raised at the event, much of this thanks to the beautiful glass decorations made and donated by Susanne.



Some of the team with local MP Rebecca Smith

## Hygiene crates

A team of Plymouth Soroptimists shopped and packed 36 'hygiene care boxes' for families living in temporary accommodation in Plymouth.

Soroptimists obtained a grant of £1,050 from Plymouth Astor Trust to purchase sturdy plastic storage boxes and fill them with 40 personal hygiene items for a family including shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, soap, sanitary towels and flannels. The boxes also contain kitchen roll, bleach spray, anti mould spray and handwash.

This initiative saw the Soroptimist club working with Odils Learning Foundation, who hosted the packing day at their Stonehouse premises. Odils will make the hygiene boxes available to families in need, including their own service users as well as families being supported by Plymouth Access to Housing (PATH) and Devon & Cornwall Refugee Service (DCRS).

Plymouth Soroptimist President Ann said "This was a real team effort and it has been lovely to bring this to fruition after discussing the idea with Odils earlier this year. We believe there are at least 200 households in Plymouth living in temporary accommodation, and many simply cannot afford the toiletries and cleaning products that most of us take for granted. We're really grateful to Plymouth Astor Trust for the grant, which has enabled Soroptimists to support some of these vulnerable families in our community."



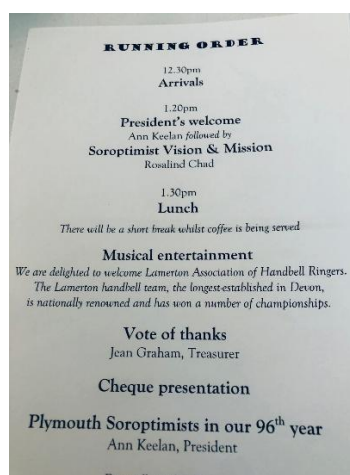
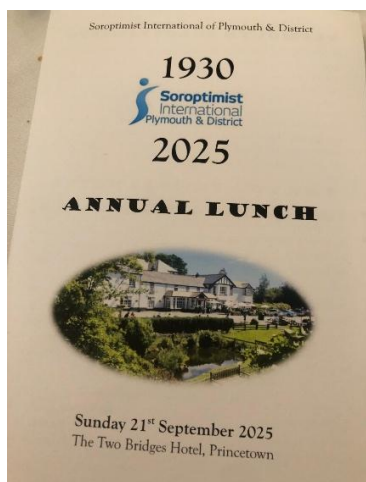
## Care leavers boxes

Another batch of care crates have been collected by Social Services for delivery to youngsters leaving the care system and setting up in their own homes.



## President's lunch

A lovely lunch was enjoyed by 30 members, Soroptimists from other clubs and friends in September at the Two Bridges Hotel on Dartmoor. The unusual and delightful after lunch entertainment was provided by The Lamerton Association of Handbell Ringers.





## New members

We were delighted to welcome Rosalind and Debbie into our club membership in September and October respectively. They are valued additions to our team and their input to our activities will be very much appreciated.



Rosalind with President Ann



Debbie with President Ann

## Christmas gifts for Ukrainian children

A 6-strong team of our members filled 50 Christmas boxes for children in Ukraine. Many other members also contributed to the initiative by wrapping the shoe boxes in festive paper and donating items.

The boxes contained a Christmas card, toys, games, crayons, colouring books and sweets. The boxes were taken to a central pick up point for PUMA (Plymouth Ukraine Medical Aid) who will deliver the boxes before Christmas.

Lorraine co-ordinated the shoe box initiative for the Plymouth Soroptimist club. She said: "It was a great team effort and we all enjoyed the morning packing the boxes. It was wonderful to think that we will give some pleasure to children who are suffering in this war-torn country."



Club members have also been making regular donations to Plymouth Ukraine Medical Aid (PUMA) including crutches, mountain bike, sleeping bags, warm clothes etc,

## Remembrance Day

Two of our members, Ann and Pam G, laid a wreath on our behalf at the War Memorial on Plymouth Hoe at the annual remembrance service.



## Orange cafes

Orange symbolises a brighter future free of violence and is the colour used for the International Day for the Elimination of violence against women and children.



On the 25<sup>th</sup> of most months throughout the year we hold an 'orange café' in various locations in our area.

Members supported the orange cafés in October at the Watermark Café Ivybridge and Tesco Lee Mill in November. They received a very warm welcome from the staff at both venues. The teams listened to some heartbreaking and harrowing stories from women who visited the stands



## **Microfinance**

We continue to support a number of women throughout the world by lending them a little money to help them maintain or set up a small business. This enables them to be independent and self-sufficient. Once their business is profitable the loan is gradually repaid with that money being invested in other small businesses run by women.

## **Easy Fundraising**

Our club has been using 'Easyfundraising' for a few years and are delighted that to date we have raised over £830 using this easy tool to raise funds.

If you shop online, you can help us raise funds for our projects by adding the Easyfundraising app to your phone, computer or laptop and then select Plymouth Soroptimists as your chosen charity. Then when you are shopping, if the company you are using is in the scheme you will get a reminder that you can gain 'commission' just by clicking on the right place. It will tell you how much will be given to Plymouth Soroptimists in your name. It costs you nothing as it is paid by the company that you are buying from and it is that easy!

Every time you use it a few pennies are raised for us to be able to help people who are less fortunate than ourselves.

**Happy New Year to all our friends and members!**

## **Future events**

Wednesday 7th January – club meeting via Zoom

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January – supper meeting including discussion on 'the year's ideas'

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February – club meeting at Duke of Cornwall Hotel

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February – supper meeting, speaker/s from Read Easy Plymouth

Click to find us on  or visit our [website](#)

If you no longer want to be included in our 'Friends of Plymouth Soroptimists' group please email [siplymouthclub@gmail.com](mailto:siplymouthclub@gmail.com)