



Women and Glasgow

“ Change takes place in living systems, not from above but from within, from many local actions occurring simultaneously.”

Grace Lee Boggs

Glasgow is a proud city with a history of heavy industry, political activism and art and culture. Women have contributed more than their fair share to the development of the city, although can often experience some of the most difficult challenges in a city of high deprivation.

From Suffragettes to poets, women from Glasgow have made their mark across the globe, sometimes gaining acknowledgement abroad before at home. Elsie Inglis, who studied medicine in Glasgow has a memorial fountain in Serbia dedicated to her for her contribution to hospitals during the First World War.

Not all women in Glasgow were as far travelled, but they were no less significant. “Battling” Betty McAllister dedicated her life to improving living conditions for residents in the East End of Glasgow throughout the 80s and 90s. Betty may not have built hospitals, but she fought for the right to decent housing, against the Poll Tax and to improve road safety for children. Betty’s motto “If you shout loud enough, they’ll listen,” embraces the image of the determined Glaswegian woman.

Women in Glasgow have made their voices heard in a variety of ways; Mary Barbour with her rent strikes (1915), the Glasgow Girls protesting the deportation of their friends (2005) and Baroness Helena Kennedy who continues to represent women’s voices in the highest courts in law are all examples.

In the Arts, Liz Lohead reflects perfectly the attitude towards women’s contribution in society in her poem “Men Talk”.

“Women into Girl Talk
About Women’s Trouble
Trivia ‘n’ Small Talk
They yap and they babble
Men talk, Men talk”

In Glasgow there are currently only 4 statues of women, despite there being numerous statues celebrating men’s contribution. For feminists however statues to the individual often misses the point. A movement based in collective action, feminism celebrates positive impacts on communities. The numerous services available to women and children, the contribution to address violence against women and children and the impact feminist has on the rights of all are the evidence of women’s contribution to Glasgow. Their continued support from the state and beyond is the accolade to women that is required.

Deprivation statistics Glasgow

- 10.7 years difference in life expectancy between least and most deprived areas for women.
- 1 in 3 children living in poverty
- 24% of working population have a disability
- 1 in 5 adults have no qualifications

EVENT RESULTS

THEME: The famous line from that famous song “I Belong to Glasgow” is more important now than ever. Glasgow strives to be a safe and vibrant City of fairness, equality and diversity. Therefore we invited women whether you were born, raised here, moved, migrated, brought from another Country or maybe you work here, to come together to discuss how exactly women belong to Glasgow. Do we feel safe, do we feel equal and do we feel included?

PARTICIPANTS: Total of 41 women from local communities representing a wide range of backgrounds, convened 8 break-out groups on issues with 24 proposed actions. **(Apr 2017)**

TOP FIVE PRIORITIES VOTED BY PARTICIPANTS (NUMBER OF VOTES)

- Education: proper information available to voters about what will happen in event of yes/no – currency, subsidies, defence. **22 votes**
- Targets to be stopped! Sanctions stopped. **20 votes**
- Educate children on gender issues at school. **18 votes**
- Respect people whose opinions/vote differ from yours. **17 votes**
- Promotion of health activities such as ‘Live Action’ and ‘Good Moves’ by GP’s and staff in surgeries etc. **15 votes**

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

- Education/Training/Awareness raising/publicity. **116 votes**
- Organised action/Support groups. **48 votes**
- Funding related. **45 votes**
- Individual action/mind-set change. **25 votes**

DETAILED RESULTS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS

- Education: proper information available to voters about what will happen in event of yes/no – currency, subsidies, defence. **22 votes**
- Targets to be stopped! Sanctions stopped. **20 votes**
- Educate children on gender issues at school. **18 votes**
- Respect people whose opinions/vote differ from yours. **17 votes**
- Promotion of health activities such as ‘Live Action’ and ‘Good Moves’ by GP’s and staff in surgeries etc. **15 votes**
- Education – teach children respect for everyone. **14 votes**
- More staff training at JCO and Assessment Centres – customer service. **14 votes**
- Everyone must use their vote or else!!! **13 votes**
- Empowering children by teaching politics in school e.g. voluntary involvement in a political party. **12 votes**
- Education for all, exclusives of gender, on the rights of women, including and encouraging men to participate in conversations/decision that promote women’s rights. **12 votes**
- More investment into medical staff – less hours, higher pay, internal support services. **11 votes**
- Ring fencing funding for women’s services. **10 votes**