

HOT TOPICS – MARCH 2021

EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

Did you know ...?

Until Victorian times, women enjoyed very few rights at all in the UK. Even when they got married, everything they owned became their husband's property! In 1897, only rich men and no women were allowed to vote for their MP in the UK. In 1903, Emmeline Pankhurst created a group known as the Suffragettes and they campaigned against this inequality. In 1914, the outbreak of WW1 meant that while thousands of men were fighting on the battlefields, many women took their place in lots of important jobs. Police forces were one of the organisations whose strength fell rapidly as men of all ranks left to fight in the war.

In 1919, the first ever Metropolitan Police Women's Patrols took to the streets of London under the supervision of Superintendent Sofia Stanley. They had no power of arrest, their duties were very limited and they received less pay than male officers

Because of the important roles that women played, the rules were changed with the introduction of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which meant that **all** men could vote and **some** women could now vote. Ten years later, women were given the vote at the age of 21, the same as men. In 1979, Margaret Thatcher became the first woman Prime Minister in the UK and was the longest serving PM for over 150 years.

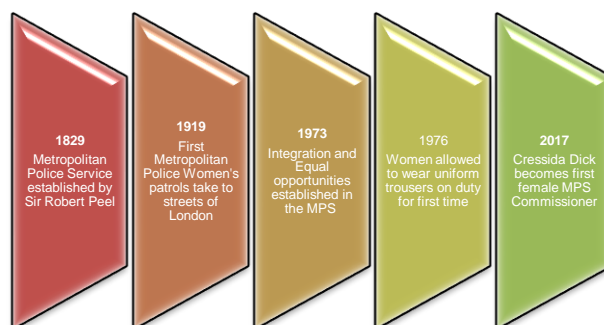


International Women's Day celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women around the world, as well as raising the profile of gender parity. This important event is marked annually on **March 8th**, International Women's Day (IWD) is one of the most important days of the year to:

- celebrate women's achievements
- raise awareness about women's equality
- lobby for accelerated gender parity
- fundraise for female-focused charities



The Glass Ceiling is something that prevents someone from getting a more important position in their organisation. Have a look at the timeline below:



This is just a small snapshot of changes in the MPS. You can see how long it has taken for women to be considered equal in the organisation and to smash through the glass ceiling.

In 2015, Home Secretary Theresa May gave a speech to celebrate women in policing. In her speech, she identified there were over 35,000 female officers in England and Wales, representing 28.2% of all police officers and up from 25.7% in 2010



What roles in the Metropolitan Police Service do you think might women be under-represented in and why?

DISCUSSION POINTS

The International Women's Day theme for 2021 is '**Choose to challenge**'. What can you do to help shape a gender equal environment in the Metropolitan Police Service?

Which of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 relate to gender equality?

Which of the British Values is relevant to gender equality?

Useful websites:

Women in policing - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (Theresa May transcript)

International Women's Day 2021

Metropolitan Women Police Association

Workforce data report | The Met (Breakdown of workforce data)