

Councillor Phelim Mac Cafferty
Brighton & Hove City Council
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove BN3 3BQ

Chief Executive
Brighton & Hove City Council
Hove Town Hall
Norton Road
Hove
BN3 3BQ

Date: 16 March 2018

Our Ref: PM/nv

Your Ref:

By email

Dear Chair of the Policy, Resources and Growth Committee

Re International Women's Day Commemoration - Blue Plaque

This month our city marked 'International Women's Day,' a crucial date in the calendar that highlights the fight for women's equality. This year we also mark the 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act, which gave the right to vote to some women over the age of 30. Today, as in the past, Brighton and Hove has been at the centre of the rich struggle for women's equality.

This letter requests that to commemorate the 100th anniversary, the Committee considers the options to nominate the movement for women's votes in Brighton and Hove to be commemorated by a blue plaque next to the Clock Tower*; that such a nomination is communicated to the Commemorative Plaque Panel; and, that appropriate arrangements are made with civic and cultural organisations to highlight important stories of the struggle for women's suffrage for the coming year.

In marking the 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act we must acknowledge the extraordinary bravery of suffragists and suffragettes who fought for equal rights for women. Brighton Women's Social & Political Union was founded in 1907 and was one of the most active regional branches of the Pankhurst-led organisation- whose motto was 'Deeds not Words.' While in the summer of 1913, a group of 100 women from Brighton marched to London supporting the call for votes for women- as part of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies' mass march from seventeen cities across the country. As elected representatives ourselves, we must recognise the heroism of Brighton and Hove suffragettes who fought for the right to vote.

Suffragist Millicent Garrett Fawcett was married to Henry Fawcett, Member of Parliament for Brighton in 1865. Today Millicent's surname lends itself to one of the leading organisations for gender equality. *8- 9 the Quadrant, next to the Clock Tower, was home of the Women's Social and Political Union founded by Emmeline Pankhurst. Emmeline's great-granddaughter, Dr Helen Pankhurst is an alumna of Sussex University and granddaughter of Sylvia Pankhurst. Many of the organisation's well-known members, such as Christabel Pankhurst, Annie Kenney, and Emily Wilding Davison, came to visit the city. In January 1910 police removed

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Green Party Councillor for Brunswick & Adelaide Ward

two women from inside the organ at the Dome, after they drew attention to their hiding place with a sneeze. The pair – Brighton-local Eva Bourne and activist Mary Leigh – had planned to leap from the organ during a talk that evening by anti-suffrage Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, shouting “votes for women.”

These are women who bravely fought for the representation of women in Parliament and their participation in public life. Later in 1918 women become magistrates and had their right to sit as Councillors extended. Their steps are well worn by thousands of other women in the city since, fighting for a fairer world.

I urge the committee to consider honouring the struggle for votes for women in this fashion; so that their efforts are publicly recognised for years to come. I would be grateful if the committee would accept this request and bring to a future committee plans for its implementation this year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phelim Mac Cafferty', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Phelim Mac Cafferty

Green Party Councillor for Brunswick and Adelaide
Convenor of the Green Group of Councillors, Brighton and Hove City Council
Green Group Spokesperson on the Policy and Resources Committee and Planning Committee