



West Midlands  
Growth Company

# 50 West Midlands women who have changed the world





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From sport, soul and suffragettes to the latest advances in life sciences and zero carbon technology, West Midlands women have been, and continue to be, innovators, producers, activists and creators who have helped drive Britain forward and shape the world.

The achievements and firsts of the 50 women in this document represent just a snapshot of all the many diverse and magnificent women from the region who have shaped the world.

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FIRST TO SAIL AROUND THE WORLD

FIRST SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

FIRST FEMALE MUSLIM MP

FIRST FEMALE REPORTER

FIRST CAPTAIN OF ALL ASIAN WOMEN'S  
CRICKET TEAM

ICONIC THEME TUNE COMPOSER

YOUNGEST TO RECEIVE AN MBE

FIRST FEMALE COUNCILLOR

BRIT AWARDS WINNER

FIRST CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

FIRST FEMALE COMMENTATOR

# SCIENCE & MEDICINE

In Life Sciences and Data-Driven Healthcare, the West Midlands is making a difference on a global scale. Women in the West Midlands have always been, and continue to be, pioneers in this field.

## Sister Dora

Dorothy Wyndlow Pattison, or Sister Dora, was sent to Walsall to work as a relief nurse in a small cottage hospital and would devote the remainder of her life to nursing in the town. When Walsall was hit by smallpox, she worked for six months at an epidemic infirmary treating thousands of patients. During the last two years of her life, Dorothy developed a special bond of friendship with railway workers who often suffered in industrial accidents. In 1871, they gave her a pony and a carriage and even raised the sum of £50 from their own wages to enable her to visit housebound patients more easily. A statue commemorating her life still stands in the town – the first in the UK of a woman not of royal blood when it was unveiled in 1886.



## Mary Lee Berners-Lee

Mary Lee Berners-Lee was born in Hall Green, Birmingham in 1924. Mary became an English mathematician and computer scientist who worked in a team that developed programmes in the Department of Computer Science, University of Manchester, and the Ferranti Mark 1 and Mark 1 Star computers. While at Ferranti, Mary discovered that the women in her department were getting less pay than the men. She presented the case to the personnel department and was able to convince them to grant equal pay and rights for women. She was the mother of Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the world wide web.

## Dr Helen Maddock

Professor Maddock currently leads the successful Centre for Sport, Exercise and Life Sciences at Coventry University, in addition to being founder and Chief Scientific Officer of InoCardia Ltd, a Coventry University spin-out company. She has successfully led many research projects, building on experience originally gained in R&D within the pharmaceutical industry (AstraZeneca and GlaxoSmithKline) and academia. Her research is driven by the desire to improve cardiac health. Overall, she has made significant contributions to the field of cardiovascular biology, including original peer-reviewed articles, reviews and book chapters.



Dr Helen Maddock. Photo: Coventry University

## Ida Smedley Maclean

Born in Birmingham in 1877, Ida Smedley Maclean was an award-winning biochemist and the first woman admitted to the London Chemical Society. Early in her career, as an assistant lecturer at the chemistry department of the University of Manchester, she became the department's first female staff member. Ida continued to work hard to improve the status of women in universities and was among the founders of the British Federation of University Women in 1907. Ida was regarded as an authority on biochemistry.

## Professor Dame Sally Davies

Professor Dame Sally Davies was born in Birmingham and attended Edgbaston School for Girls. Professor Davies was the first woman to be appointed to the post of Chief Medical Officer for England, in 2010. She is a haematologist with specialist research interest in sickle cell disease. In her advisory post she guides government decisions on diverse subjects such as superbugs, drug trials and obesity. Professor Davies developed the National Institute for Health Research in 2006 with a budget of £1 billion. In the 2020 New Year Honours, Davies became the second woman (and the first outside the Royal Family) to be appointed Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath (GCB), for services to public health and research.

## Dr Mary Sturge

Mary Sturge was a Birmingham-born doctor, known for her pioneering work with alcoholism and championing the importance of preventative medical care. She is credited as being the second woman doctor in Birmingham and was President of the Medical Women's Federation from 1920 to 1922, where she campaigned for equal pay and the removal of the marriage bar for women in medicine.



*Professor Dame Sally Davies : Wikipedia*

# BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURS

West Midlands Growth Company's Global Growth Programme offers support packages for West Midlands-based companies looking to scale-up export, and international companies looking to quickly grow in the UK. Helping even more female entrepreneurs to flourish.

## Dr Gurjeet Bains

Dr Gurjeet Kaur Bains' achievements are immense and wide-ranging. They include her role as the first woman to chair the Institute of Asian Business, which is part of the largest Chamber of Commerce in Britain, and as Editor in Chief of The Sikh Times and Eastern Voice. She developed the British Asian Hafta that recognises the success and contributions of the Asian community to Britain, and she is also a non-executive director for the largest NHS Health Trust, University Hospital Birmingham. Her latest success is as a governor of Birmingham Metropolitan College.

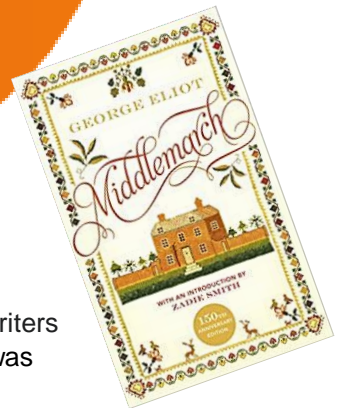
## Rosie Ginday

Following training as a high-end pastry chef at University College Birmingham and work in Michelin-starred restaurant Purnell's in Birmingham, Rosie Ginday MBE, founded Miss Macaroon in 2011 with just one team member, a small kitchen space, £500 and a whole load of determination. Miss Macaroon is now one of Birmingham's most well renowned social enterprise companies. The business reinvests 100% of its profits into helping unemployed young people gain skills that will help to change their lives.



# CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

From artists to actors, singers to writers, women from the West Midlands have led the way. Just as the region now leads the fastest growing tech sector in the UK.



## Delia Derbyshire

Coventry-born Delia Derbyshire, the 'Sculptress of Sound', is the creative mind behind one of the most iconic theme tunes in British TV history. As a pioneer of British electronic music, Delia composed the theme music to Doctor Who. A blue plaque was unveiled at Derbyshire's former home of 104 Cedars Avenue, Coventry, on 15 June 2017 as part of a BBC initiative celebrating important musicians and venues.

## Carol McNicol

Credited with helping to transform the British ceramics scene in the late 1970s, Carol McNicol is a potter who grew up in Solihull. Carol makes sculptural functional ceramics and has lectured widely. She exhibits internationally and her work is in the V&A's modern collection.



Carol McNicol: Teapot artnet

## Gillian Wearing CBE

Born and raised in Birmingham, Gillian Wearing CBE, is a conceptual artist and winner of the 1997 Turner Prize. In 2007 Wearing was elected as lifetime member of the Royal Academy of Arts in London. On 30 October 2014 her sculpture A Real Birmingham Family was unveiled in front of the Library of Birmingham. It depicts two local sisters, each single mothers called Roma and Emma Jones, with their two children; Roma's son Kyan and Emma's son Shaye. Emma is depicted as pregnant with a second son, Isaac. The Joneses were selected from a shortlist, by an independent panel, to be the subject of the sculpture.

## George Eliot

One of the leading writers of the Victorian era was Nuneaton-born

Mary Ann Evans, but writing under the more well-known pseudonym of George Eliot. It is believed she adopted the name as a novelist because she wanted to escape the stereotype of women's writing being limited to light-hearted romances or other lighter fare not to be taken very seriously. Her novels such as *Mill on the Floss*, *Middlemarch* and *Silas Marner*, were known for their realism, psychological insight, sense of place and detailed depiction of the countryside. In 2015, writers from outside the UK voted *Middlemarch* [first among all British novels](#) "by a landslide".

## Mollie Randle

Mollie Randle founded arts centre the MAC in Birmingham in the 1960s. Then the Midlands Art Centre for Young People, her husband John English OBE is largely credited with the achievement which was undoubtedly theirs together. The centre in Cannon Hill Park reopened in 2010 after a £15million facelift. It remains a popular hub for creatives of all ages.



A Real Birmingham Family: WMGC

## Jorja Smith

Brit Awards-winner for Best British Female Artist in 2019, Jorja Smith was born and raised in Walsall, and is a leading R&B singer-songwriter. She has released three studio EPs and has collaborated with many musicians including Drake and Stormzy. Jorja performed at the Closing Ceremony of the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games. Jorja's mother, [Jolene](#), is a jewellery designer is also based in Walsall and studied at the School of Jewellery in Birmingham.



Jorja Smith: Wikipedia

## Madeleine Carroll

Madeleine Carroll was an English actress, popular both in Britain and America in the 1930s and 1940s. At the peak of her success in 1938, she was the world's highest-paid actress. Born in West Bromwich, Madeleine is remembered for her role in Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps* (1935). She is also noted for largely abandoning her acting career to devote herself to helping wounded servicemen and children displaced or maimed by war. She was awarded with both the Legion d'Honneur and the Medal of Freedom for her work with the Red Cross.

## Becky Hill

Staunch Walsall FC supporter, Becky Hill is an singer and songwriter who rose to prominence after appearing on the first series of the *The Voice UK*. Born in Bewdley, Becky Hill received two Brit Awards nominations in 2022, including British Song of the Year for "Remember" with David Guetta, and Best Dance Act, which she won 2 years in a row in 2022 and 2023.



## Meera Syal

Acclaimed comedian, playwright, screenwriter and novelist, Meera Syal, was born in Wolverhampton. Her best-selling novel, *Anita and Me* was loosely based around her relationship growing up with her neighbour in nearby Bloxwich, Walsall. Her big break came as part of the team behind TV comedy *Goodness Gracious Me*, and she is also well-known for playing Sanjeev's grandmother, Ummi, from her role in *The Kumars at No. 42*. In 2017, Syal was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

## Beverley Knight

Beverley Knight MBE was born in Wolverhampton and is a recording artist and musical theatre actress. Widely labelled as one of Britain's greatest soul singers, Beverley has released eight studio albums and has been in the music industry for 30 years.

## Laura Howell

Laura Howell is a Wolverhampton-born comic strip artist and the first female artist in the history of *The Beano* comic. She is responsible for Johnny Bean from *Happy Bunny Green*, *Les Pretend*, *Tricky Dicky* and the manga adaptation of *The Beano*. She has also contributed to a number of publications including *Viz* and *MAD* magazine. Laura lives and works currently in Birmingham.

Laura Howell: [laurahowell.com](http://laurahowell.com)





## Kathleen Garman

Wednesbury-born Kathleen Garman was the second wife of British-American sculptor Jacob Epstein. Their daughter, Kitty Garman was married to artist Lucien Freud. Upon Epstein's death, Kathleen Garman, together with American artist, Sally Ryan, donated and established The Garman Ryan Collection, a permanent collection of art works housed at The New Art Gallery Walsall comprising of 365 works of art, including prints, sketches, sculptures, drawings and paintings. The collection features many examples of works by key European artists of late 19th and early 20th Century, including Van Gogh, Picasso, Monet, Turner and Degas.

## Joan Armatrading

Joan Armatrading is a Kittitian-English singer-songwriter and guitarist. She came to live in Birmingham at the age of seven from Saint Christopher and Nevis, and grew up and first performed in the city. A three-time Grammy Award nominee, Armatrading has also been nominated twice for Brit Awards as Best Female Artist. In a recording career spanning nearly 50 years, Armatrading has released 20 studio albums, as well as several live albums and compilations.

## Ruby Turner

Ruby Turner is a British Jamaican R&B and soul singer, songwriter, and actress. In a music career spanning more than 30 years, Ruby achieved the rare feat, for a British singer, of reaching #1 on the US R&B chart, with "It's Gonna Be Alright" in February 1990. Ruby is also a regular Jools Holland band member on Jools' Annual Hootenanny.

## Christine McVie

Although born in the Lake District, the late, great Christine McVie (nee Perfect) grew up, like Dame Julie Walters, in Bearwood, Smethwick. Before joining supergroup, Fleetwood Mac, Christine McVie had studied sculpture at Moseley School of Art in Birmingham for five years. Christine married Fleetwood Mac co-founder John McVie in 1968, and instead of a honeymoon, they celebrated at a hotel in Birmingham with Joe Cocker, who happened to be staying there, before going on the road with their own bands. Christine wrote the iconic 'Don't Stop' and remains one of the greatest popular music writers of all time.

## Caitlin Moran

Growing up in the region in a family she describes as 'the only hippies in Wolverhampton', novelist and journalist, Caitlin Moran's upbringing inspired her TV drama/comedy series, *Raised by Wolves*. Her book *How to Be a Woman*, which again details her early life including her views on feminism, as of July 2012, had sold over 400,000 copies in 16 countries.

## Dame Julie Walters

Multi-award-winning actress, Dame Julie Walters, was born in Edgbaston but grew up in Bearwood, Smethwick in Sandwell. At the age of 18, she trained as a student nurse at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham but left to study acting at the Manchester School of Theatre. Julie is known for her roles in *Educating Rita* and *Billy Elliot* as well as playing Molly Weasley in seven of the eight *Harry Potter* films. She is a lifelong supporter of West Bromwich Albion Football Club, having been brought up in Smethwick, and she is a patron of the domestic violence survivors' charity *Women's Aid*.



Christine McVie: Wikipedia



# BROADCASTING & JOURNALISM

The BBC has unveiled plans to move its main Birmingham base to the new creative quarter in Digbeth from 2026, providing more opportunities for women in the region to succeed.

## Marie Bethell Beauclerc

Although born in London, Marie Bethell Beauclerc was a pioneer in the teaching of Pitman's shorthand and typing in Birmingham. In 1888 she was the first woman to be appointed as a teacher in an English boys' public school, at Rugby School. Following her appointment to the Birmingham Morning News, she became the first female reporter in England. In 1887, Marie Beauclerc established a Shorthand Writers Association and "officially introduced the art of typewriting to Birmingham. Marie Beauclerc's pioneering work in the fields of shorthand and typing, benefited the progress of Birmingham's business and cultural community, and helped pave the way for the explosion of female stenography in the 20th century.



## Emma Willis

Emma Willis is a former model, broadcaster and TV presenter born in Sutton Coldfield. She has presented Big Brother, Celebrity Big Brother, The Voice UK and The Circle. An Aston Villa fan, in an episode of Who Do You Think You Are?, Emma confirmed that she has longstanding roots in Birmingham, with her family tree being traced back to her great-great-great-grandfather, who was named James Gretton and was listed as a Horn and Hair Merchant in the census records.



## Jacqui Oatley

In April 2007, former Radio WM reporter, Jacqui Oatley, became the first female football commentator in the history of BBC football programme Match of the Day. Born in Wolverhampton, Jacqui is a successful broadcaster and presenter in her own right, and almost certainly played her part in opening up the beautiful game to women in Britain. She is also the UK's first female darts presenter, an FA qualified football coach, and is currently the main commentator of FA Women's Super League matches on Sky Sports. In 2016, she was made an Honorary Doctor of Letters at the University of Wolverhampton for her contribution to sports broadcasting.

## Alison Hammond

Alison Hammond is a Birmingham-born television presenter, best known as one of the main anchors on ITV's This Morning, and in 2023 she co-hosted the 76th British Academy Film Awards (BAFTAs). Alison will play a key part in This Morning's International Women's Day celebrations following the announcement of the body positivity campaign, Celebrating Every Body, which will coincide with IWD and which will involve several of the show's stars being open about the struggles they've been through and how they've learnt to feel good in their own skin.

Alison Hammond: Karwai Tang / WireImage

Marie Beauclerc: Wikipedia

# SPORT

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, the first Games to award more medals to women than men, shone a spotlight on the West Midlands, and we proudly stepped into it...as female sportswomen have been doing for years and continue to do. And as the region is attracting major sporting events from around the world, even more opportunity presents itself.



Salma Bi: Birmingham2022.com

## Salma Bi

Birmingham-based Salma Bi was awarded a British Empire Medal in 2020 for her services to cricket and diversity in sport. Drawing on her own experiences as a young girl who just wanted to play sport, Salma has encouraged over 1,000 local girls to get involved in grassroots sports. She also captained the first all Asian Futsal Team in Birmingham and founded the first all Asian women's cricket team. She went on to become one of the few female Asian umpires in the UK, as well as being a senior cricket coach and a director of a sports company. She was also the first British Muslim woman to play county cricket, representing both Worcestershire County Cricket Club and the MCC. When she's not championing grassroots sport, Salma is a full-time haemodialysis nurse at a Birmingham hospital.

## Lisa Clayton

Lisa Clayton is the first British woman to sail single-handed and non-stop around the world. On 17 September 1994, Clayton set out to attempt two world records, namely "Fastest Sail Around the World by a Woman, Single-Handed Without Assistance" and "First British Woman to Sail Single-Handed and Non-Stop Around the World." She returned on 29 June 1995, after 285 days at sea. On her yacht, called Spirit of Birmingham, Lisa survived the 31,000-mile (50,000 km) journey despite capsizing twice. Her vessel was named after her home city. In 1996, Lisa was recognised as an Honorary Freeman of the City of Birmingham.

## Jordanne Whiley

Jordanne Whiley MBE was one of the world's greatest ever wheelchair tennis players. She's been Grand Slam champion a total of thirteen times and has one silver and three Paralympic bronze medals under her belt too awarded at the London 2012, Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 Games. Hailing from Halesowen in the Black Country, Jordanne retired in 2021.

## Karen Carney

Birmingham City and England Hall of Fame inductee, Karen Carney MBE is a sports broadcaster and former professional footballer who played as a winger and midfielder. Born in Solihull, Karen began her career at Birmingham City and has represented England at four FIFA Women's World Cups. At the time of her retirement she was the second most capped England player with 144 appearances. Karen Carney has also co-created "the Second Half"; a programme supporting women footballers in their careers post-football.



Jordanne Whiley: Wikipedia



## Ellie Simmonds, OBE

Ellie Simmonds is one of Britain's most popular athletes, ever since breaking through as the youngest British competitor at the Beijing Paralympics in 2008. She has broken 10 world records and holds four Paralympic golds. Walsall-born Ellie also became the youngest person ever to have received the MBE from the Queen when she was just 14 years old. She has since been elevated to OBE. In January 2019, Ellie was appointed to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee board, and won the UK's heart when she became the first celebrity from the Dwarfism community to take part in Strictly Come Dancing.

## Dame Denise Lewis

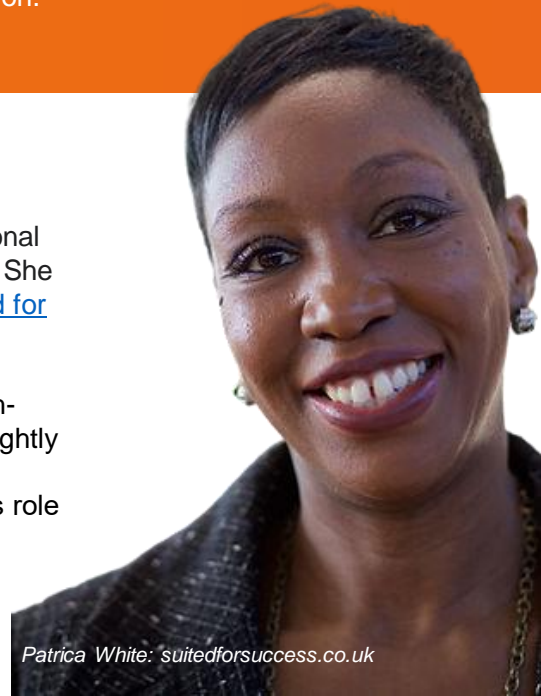
Dame Denise Lewis DBE is a sports presenter and former track and field athlete, born in West Bromwich, who specialised in the heptathlon. She won the gold medal in the heptathlon at the 2000 Sydney Olympics and was twice Commonwealth Games champion, amongst other honours in the sport. She was the first European to win the Olympic heptathlon. At the inaugural British Ethnic Diversity Sports Awards (BEDSA) in 2015, Denise became the first recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

# POLITICS AND REFORM

The West Midlands has a rich and proud heritage in social reform and the suffragette movement, and here we celebrate some of the women of yesteryear and today who continue that tradition.

## Patricia White

After 10 years as working as a journalist for the BBC, the inspirational Patricia White decided she wanted to give back to the community. She began by running a foodbank in Birmingham before starting [Suited for Success](https://www.suitedforsuccess.co.uk) in Ladywood in 2015. The charity has since provided hundreds of men and women, who may be struggling to attend interviews because they don't have an outfit to wear, with free high-quality interview clothes, styling and interview preparation skills. Lightly worn suits and smart workwear is donated by professionals in corporate companies and businesses across the city. The charity's role in helping the city's unemployed was recognised by the Queen in October 2019 with the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.



Patricia White: [suitedforsuccess.co.uk](https://www.suitedforsuccess.co.uk)





## Mary MacArthur

Born in 1880, Mary MacArthur was a Scottish suffragist and labour activist who played a significant role in improving working conditions for women in the West Midlands. As the founder of the National Federation of Women Workers (NFWW), she campaigned tirelessly for the rights of working women. Mary is perhaps best known for the prominent part she played in the women chain makers' strike in Cradley Heath, Sandwell in 1910. The dispute, which lasted two months, ended in success with the women receiving the country's first minimum wage. Mary also played a key role in the successful campaign for the passage of the 1918 Representation of the People Act, which granted some women in the UK the right to vote. Her legacy continues to inspire feminists and labour activists around the world, and she is remembered as a trailblazer for women's rights and workers' rights alike.

## Shabana Mahmood

Shabana Mahmood is a barrister and British Labour Party politician who has served as the Member of Parliament (MP) for Birmingham Ladywood since 2010, becoming one of the UK's first female Muslim MPs. Shabana has been a strong advocate for improving education and employment opportunities in the region, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## Bertha Ryland

Bertha Ryland was a prominent suffragist who played a crucial role in the women's suffrage movement in Birmingham. She was a member of the Birmingham Women's Suffrage Society and actively campaigned for women's right to vote. Ryland organised numerous events and rallies to raise awareness of the suffrage cause and to push for change in the laws. Ryland's efforts were instrumental in the successful passage of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which gave women over the age of 30 the right to vote. In November 2018, a blue plaque was unveiled in her honour at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

## PC Andrea Reynolds

Recently retired PC Andrea Reynolds was a long-serving officer of over 25 years of West Midlands Police and founder member of the WMP Black and Asian Police Association. She was recognised for her role in policing and wider community in the New Year Honours List in December 2022, and awarded the King's Police Medal. She also became an executive member of the National Black Police Association and helped develop a training programme to build stronger relationships between policing and diverse communities.

## Ada Newman

Ada Newman was a pioneer for women in politics when, in 1910 - eight years before women won the right to vote in parliamentary elections – she became the Black Country's first female councillor, when elected to Walsall Borough Council. Between then and the outbreak of the Second World War, a further 49 women were elected to local councils across the Black Country. Many were often the only woman councillor in their town, or one of only a tiny minority of women elected to represent their local area. Yet, through their work in local government, these pioneering women made a huge difference to the lives of local men, women and children in the Black Country.



PC Andrea Reynolds: [WestMidlands.Police.uk](https://www.westmidlands.police.uk)



## Lady Wulfrun

Lady Wulfrun was a powerful figure in Anglo-Saxon England, whose name lives on through the city of Wolverhampton, which was founded by her. According to legend, Wulfrun was a noblewoman who lived in the 10th and possibly early 11th century and was a descendent of King Aethelred. She founded a monastery in Wolverhampton and is said to have also built a chapel dedicated to St. Peter. Wulfrun was known for her piety and generosity towards the poor, and her legacy is still celebrated in the city she founded. Today, she is remembered as a symbol of the city's history and culture with a statue that stands tall outside St. Peter's Church in the centre of the city.



## Catherine Osler

Catherine Osler was a prominent figure in the UK women's suffrage movement. She became President of the Birmingham Women's Suffrage Society in 1903 and in 1911, Osler joined the executive committee of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. Birmingham University awarded her a master's degree in 1919 for her work in support of women's social standing. Her name and portrait are on display in a local gallery and on the plinth of the statue of Millicent Fawcett in Parliament Square, London, alongside 58 other women's suffrage supporters.

## Francesca Wilson

Born in Newcastle, Francesca Wilson was an international humanitarian and educationist who dedicated her life to providing access to education for marginalised communities and refugees in Birmingham, including opening up her home in Edgbaston to refugees. In later years, Francesca was a prolific author of biographical and historical works, reportage, and policy documents on relief.

## Dame Ellen Pinsent

Dame Ellen Frances Pinsent DBE was a British mental health worker and from 1911, the first female member of the Birmingham City Council. Pinsent chaired the Special School Sub-Committee of the Birmingham Schools Committee from 1901 to 1913.

## Lady Godiva

10th century Anglo-Saxon noblewoman, Lady Godiva was the wife of Leofric, Earl of Mercia. According to legend, Godiva rode naked through the streets of Coventry to protest against her husband's oppressive taxation of the townspeople. It is said that she made this daring ride covered only by her long hair, and that the townspeople, respecting her bravery and loyalty, closed their shutters and turned away, allowing her to pass unobserved. This tale has been retold and romanticised throughout history, and Lady Godiva has become a symbol of feminine courage and independence. Her legacy lives on in Coventry where she is celebrated and remembered still to this day.



## Jessie Eden

Born in 1902, Jessie Eden was a trade unionist and political activist from Birmingham who made significant contributions to the labour movement in the 20th century. In 1925, Eden was working at the Joseph Lucas Motor Components Factory and was a shop-steward for the Transport and General Workers' Union. During this time, Eden led her section out of the Lucas factory to join the protest, kickstarting a life devoted to bringing fairness and equality to those less fortunate. Throughout the 1930s, Eden led a number of historic events including the 1931 Birmingham Women's Strike and the 1939 Birmingham Rent Strike. Eventually she became a councillor and was involved in trade unions throughout her life. Jessie Eden was depicted in series four and five of BBC drama *Peaky Blinders*

## Betty Boothroyd

The late Betty Boothroyd, Baroness Boothroyd was a British politician who served as a member of parliament for West Bromwich and West Bromwich West for 27 years. She served as Speaker of the House of Commons from 1992 to 2000. She was the first woman to have served as Speaker.



*Inez Brown: investwestmidlands.com*

## Inez Brown

Inez Brown was appointed as the West Midlands Chair of the Institute of Directors in 2021. With more than 20 years of experience in business strategy and operations, she is a respected figure in the local business community. In July 2020, she was inaugurated as president of Birmingham Law Society, the first black president in its 202-year existence. She has grown the Society's membership and set up its first diversity inclusion scheme, providing scholarships to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups.

## Dame Elizabeth Cadbury

Elizabeth Cadbury was a social reformer and philanthropist who made significant contributions to the improvement of the living and working conditions of people in Birmingham. She was married to George Cadbury, creator of chocolate company Cadbury's. Elizabeth was deeply committed to social justice and worked tirelessly to promote education, healthcare, and community development initiatives. Dame Elizabeth founded the Birmingham Women's Settlement, which provided education and support to disadvantaged women, and also served on the boards of numerous organisations, including the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.



*Dame Elizabeth Cadbury: Wikipedia*

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