

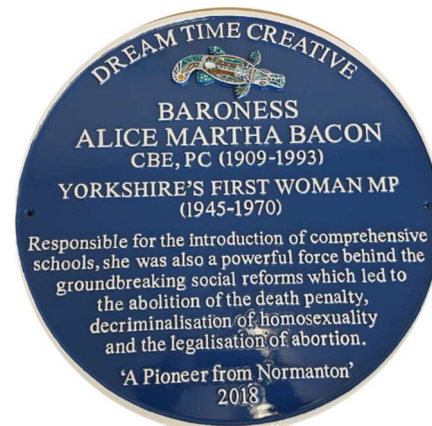


Forgotten Women of Wakefield & Dream Time Creative Blue Plaque Parity Campaign



“You cannot be what you cannot see”

Our Blue Plaques for Women Programme



Dream Time Creative began redressing the inequalities around blue plaques in Wakefield in 2018. Nationally less than 14% of women's names appear on blue plaques and, with Wakefield's rich heritage, women's achievements, socially, politically, economically, scientifically, spiritually, creatively and culturally, previously ignored, or deliberately written out, have contributed exponentially to the development of our society at a local, regional, national and international level.

When we began, Wakefield Civic Society had 4 women named on blue plaques and so we set out to change this by asking one very simple question.

'Where are the women?'

Soon, women's names from across the district began to emerge and, as deep research led to yet more women's names being uncovered, we can now proudly say that to date, there are 37 women recognised on blue plaques, mostly in Wakefield, but some in Pontefract, Castleford and Leeds. Indeed, our first blue plaque to Baroness Alice Bacon, first female Labour MP in Normanton was awarded a second blue plaque by Leeds Civic Society not long after. That's how inspiring we are.

Increasingly we are asked about adding additional women to our collection and we are keen to encourage this. However, there is a process to follow, and not all nominations will result in a blue plaque. When a nomination is received, we will take time to discuss the content of it, and if it is agreed by the committee that the person and their achievements are something we feel we would be comfortable representing then a date for an unveiling will be looked at. This is usually around International Women's Day, which is always on the 6th of March.

The bar for success is quite high: Please visit our website www.forgottenwomenwake.com to see examples.

We consider nominations from across Wakefield District as our research has shown us, women from the past worked collaboratively across our 5 towns, created networks for success and therefore deserve that recognition under the Forgotten Women of Wakefield banner.



The Blue Plaque Process

Nominations Advice on nominations can be offered via:

- our website, www.forgottenwomenwake.com
- or our FB page, [Round Our Way Heritage Walks](#)

While you're there, why not sign up for our monthly newsletter to find out more about what is going on?

When a nomination is received, we will ask whoever is making the nomination to provide as much factual information as possible. There needs to be a connection to the Wakefield District, and the woman must have contributed something significant at either the local, regional or national level. We generally follow the advice from English Heritage to allow a gap of about 20 years after a person's death, but this is not, ultimately, the deciding factor. Our plaque to Denise Castle, in collaboration with Wakefield Council, for example, fell within the 20-year range, but their achievements far offset this rule. This plaque was paid for by the council.

Location is vital. Usually, but not always, a blue plaque will go on a building that is associated with a woman and that has survived. However, it might also go on a replacement building that is either on or very close to the original site where the woman lived or worked. Our plaque to the Staynes Sisters, which came from a collaboration with Wakefield Civic Society, is sited on Ings Road, close to where the event took place. The plaque was paid for by a grant from Dream Time Creative.

Permission in writing from the owner of the property is needed before any final decisions can be made about placement. Sometimes this is not a person, but a business, and careful consideration of how the plaque will be fixed will be needed. Our blue plaques are screwed to the wall. This normally works on an existing mortar line, but, for example, if the site is tiled, requires listed building consent, or is in a conservation area, we will need to liaise with the relevant council departments. It is polite to collaborate with any surviving family members, and wording for the plaque will need to be agreed upon by all parties involved.

Funding is often a barrier, and never more so with women from the past who often don't leave a family line to remember their achievements. Whilst we will happily put in reasonable volunteer hours to enable the process, we are not in a position to pay for the plaque itself. A new plaque, including V.A.T, carriage, and other associated costs such as siting, has a fixed price of £1000. Therefore, we ask that if you nominate a woman, you have the funds to cover that. The plaque itself, with the text, is usually 18 to 20 centimetres in diameter and the more words on it, the more it costs. The plaque to Mabel Norton, funded by monies raised by our voluntary Heritage Walks, cost £840 alone.

If, after reading this, you are financially in a position to nominate a woman from Wakefield District's past for a blue plaque, or have a plan to do so, please complete our nomination form.