

# Gender Equality Charter and Plan of Action

## Introduction

At the heart of the Council's vision and values is a commitment to creating a fair and just society where men and women are treated equally, discrimination is tackled and the barriers to equality are removed.

It is not sufficient just to tackle gender equality issues as discrimination is often based on more than one issue (e.g. disability or race alongside gender). The Council has a vision to tackle equality issues relating to each of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act, but is starting with gender equality which affects everyone.

Barking & Dagenham has a proud history in promoting gender equality from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century writer and philosopher, Mary Wollstonecraft, and the early suffragette movement to the workers of Fords who helped secure the equal pay legislation we enjoy today. Since 1974 the constituency of Barking has been represented in Parliament by female MPs. Jo Richardson was elected Member of Parliament for Barking in 1974, a position she held until her death in 1994. As shadow spokesperson for Women's Rights from 1983 to 1992 she campaigned for greater equal opportunities and protection from discrimination. After her death at the age of 70 in 1994, the then Labour leader John Smith said 'No-one in our party has fought harder or to greater effect on behalf of women'. Since then Margaret Hodge has continued the work to improve outcomes for residents of Barking.

Tackling the issues faced by women and girls in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century needs the active support and participation of men and boys. In this, our first charter, we have focussed on 4 themes

- Access to power and representation in public life
- Economic inequality and impact of caring responsibilities
- Culture including gender stereotyping
- Violence against women

Locally, as the attached documents show, much has been achieved but much remains to be done.

An essential consideration for the Charter, therefore, was to ensure that it reflects not only the national issues that impact on local women but, more importantly, prioritises the issues and challenges identified locally by women and girls. To this end, an extensive consultation exercise was undertaken to inform the development of the charter.

Barking and Dagenham is the first local authority to develop a Gender Equality Charter, working with elected representatives, Council officers, local businesses and the voluntary and community sector to form a plan of action to improve gender equality in the borough.

We are inviting borough residents, businesses, voluntary and community organisations and other statutory partners to sign up to the Charter and the action plan that accompanies it.

## **Charter**

We believe that men and women are equal and no man or woman should face discrimination, abuse or hardship however they identify in terms of gender.

Our ambition is for Barking and Dagenham to be a place where people understand, respect and celebrate each other's differences - where tolerance, understanding and a sense of responsibility can grow and people of all genders can enjoy full equality and fulfil their potential.

In signing the charter we pledge to support everyone in Barking and Dagenham to:-

- receive equal pay across all sectors and have equal opportunities to succeed irrespective of their gender
- achieve equal representation in all walks of life including in communities, politics, business and industry
- work with schools and colleges to promote gender equality and raise awareness of gender equality issues
- to stand up against violence against women and girls and ensure everyone understands that such behaviour will not be tolerated
- Support those with caring responsibilities and promote equal parenting, care giving and shared responsibilities in the home
- strive to promote gender equality and equal treatment of women and ensure our own communications support this

We commit to developing and implementing a plan that takes this agenda forward in a meaningful way and reflects the views of local women.

## **10 point Action Plan for 2016/17**

This high level plan sets the direction for the Council and others signing up to the charter will adopt. It will be important in 2016/17 to turn these themes into detailed, practical delivery plans that will make a demonstrable difference to our communities.

- 1.** Adopt the Gender Equality Charter and secure its adoption by key borough stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce, Schools, and the Voluntary and Community sector, publicly committing to achieving the pledges set out in the charter
- 2.** Work with young people in schools to develop a better understanding of the issues raised during the production of the charter including gender equality and gender stereotyping
- 3.** Improve the understanding of the positive benefits of family friendly policies for all businesses and celebrate and recognise businesses that demonstrate family friendly policies
- 4.** In March each year recognise women's contribution by celebrating their achievements both past and present
- 5.** Improve representation of women in senior management roles in all sectors and services
- 6.** Develop an information hub for women building on current information and advice options
- 7.** Continue the work to prevent violence against women and girls
- 8.** Continue the work to reduce unplanned teenage pregnancies
- 9.** Promote equal and supported access to community facilities for women and women's groups
- 10.** Monitor the implementation of these actions in partnership with the key stakeholders identified and report on them each year



### Background and context to the Gender Equality Charter

#### 1. Introduction

Barking and Dagenham is the first local authority to develop a Gender Equality Charter, working with elected representatives, Council officers, local businesses and the voluntary and community sector to form a plan of action to improve gender equality in the borough.

Barking and Dagenham is a Labour led authority with all Councillors and Cabinet from the Labour party. The Leader and Cabinet are keen to ensure the Labour party values around equality are reflected locally. The Leader of the Council, as the Equalities portfolio holder, has a vision to tackle equality issues relating to each of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act, starting with gender equality. The Labour Party Manifesto (2015) on equalities specifically addresses gender equality and states:

- **We will tackle discrimination against women**, requiring large companies to publish their gender pay gap and strengthening the law against maternity discrimination
- **We are committed to ensuring Parliament better represents Britain**, including by achieving a better balance of men and women

Barking and Dagenham has one the highest reported rates of Domestic Violence (DV) in the country. This coupled with high rates of teenage pregnancies makes for a worrying picture. However, the Council and partners have made considerable progress in tackling these issues as well as gender inequality in general. As the report notes, good progress has been made in relation to Domestic Violence and teenage pregnancies. The Council is also a family friendly employer with policies that support women and flexible working arrangements, including for those with caring responsibilities. In Barking and Dagenham, women are moving towards equal representation as councillors. Of 51 councillors 21 are female and 30 are male. However women make up over 50% of the cabinet where of the nine members of the cabinet, five are female and four are male. Women also make up 50% of the senior management team for the Council.

Despite what has been achieved to date, there is still more that can be done. The development of a Gender Equality Charter is an important part of understanding what else can be done to address issues women in Barking and Dagenham face.

As shown below, research and evidence suggests women's inequality both in the UK and globally can be understood under four key themes:

- Violence against women
- Access to power and representation in public life
- Economic inequality and impact of caring responsibilities

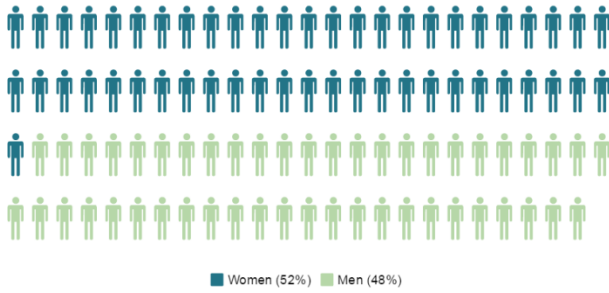
- Culture including gender stereotyping

An essential consideration for the Charter, however, is that it reflects not only the national issues but, more importantly, the issues and challenges specifically faced locally by women and girls in Barking and Dagenham.

To this end, an extensive consultation exercise was undertaken to inform the development of the charter. The four key themes formed the basis of the consultation design and questions asked when starting the project.

# Women in Barking and Dagenham

## Gender breakdown



Source: 2014 ONS Mid Year Estimates

## Healthy life expectancy gap

On average women in Barking and Dagenham live longer than men (82.4 years compared to 77.7 years).

However women have a shorter healthy life expectancy than men. The gap is 5.6 years.

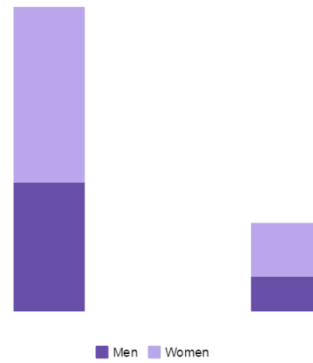
Source: Public Health England



## Caring responsibilities

Women make up 57.5% of carers in the borough. 60% of carers who provide 50+ hours of care per week are women.

Source: ONS



## Domestic violence

Accounts for 41% of all violent crimes in the borough. The national average is 20%.

Source: Barking and Dagenham JSNA

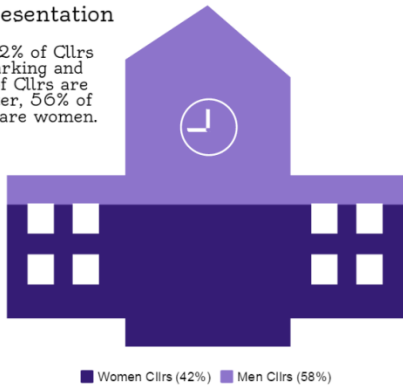
**#1** Barking and Dagenham has the highest rate of offending for domestic violence in London.  
(per 1000 population)

■ Barking and Dagenham ■ UK

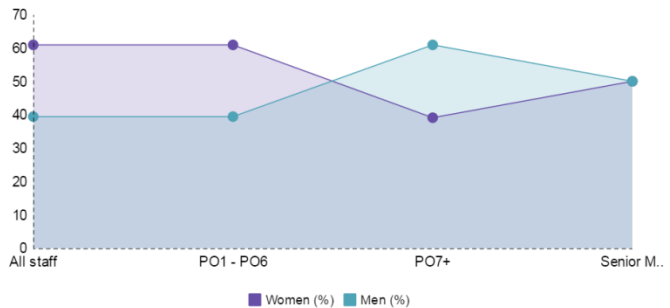


## Political representation

Nationally only 32% of Cllrs are women. In Barking and Dagenham 42% of Cllrs are women. Even better, 56% of the local Cabinet are women.

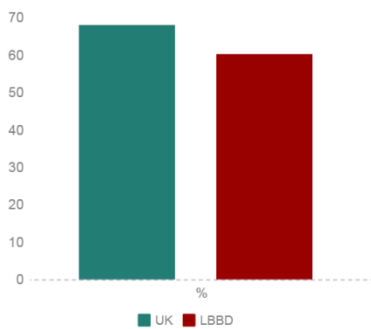


## Gender profile of Council staff



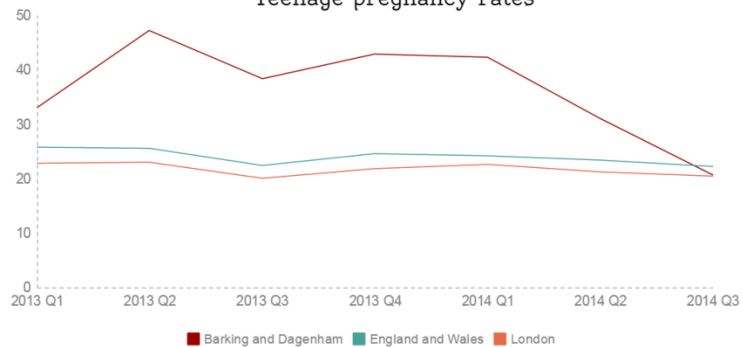
Source: Implementing the Equality & Diversity in Employment Policy 2014 (LBDD)

## Employment rate for women



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

## Teenage pregnancy rates



Source: 2015 ONS (per 1000 women aged 15-17)

## **2. Context for women's inequality**

Across the world women still remain unequal to men<sup>1</sup>. Although in Western Europe women's rights and representation have improved dramatically over the past few decades, there is still some way to go before women are truly equal to men and no country has yet achieved true equality for women<sup>2</sup>. Women's inequality is often broken down into four key themes:

1. economic inequality (money);
2. representation in public life (power);
3. violence against women; and
4. gender stereotyping.

The United Nations body for women, UN Women lists money, power and violence against women as some of its top priorities<sup>3</sup> and a recent analysis of the gender inequality across the UK by the London Schools of Economics also focussed on money, power and culture with a cross cutting theme of how violence against women and women's caring responsibilities impacts women's equality in these areas<sup>4</sup>.

The following paragraphs explore the national and international situation for women under these themes, before examining available evidence for these themes in Barking and Dagenham.

### **2.1. Violence against women**

Women across the world experience gender related violence. This violence extends from stalking and street harassment to child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence and female genital mutilation. Violence against women is one of the key inequalities that prevent women from achieving their full potential<sup>5</sup>, for example progressing at work and running for public office. It has knock-on consequences to their mental and physical health, their education and ability to work, their right to freedom and safety, to have and raise children and their engagement in public life.

Each year on average 3 million women experience violence and there are many more living with the legacy<sup>6</sup>. On average around two women a week are killed by a man<sup>7</sup> and violence against women costs society around £40 billion a year.

### **2.2. Economic inequality (Money) and impact of caring responsibilities**

#### **2.2.1. Economic inequality**

Across the workplace, women earn less than men with the full time gender pay gap standing at 13.9%<sup>8</sup>. This gender gap has four main causes. The first is that women tend to congregate in a small number of industries which are often more poorly paid than the industries the majority of men work in. As the government's own research has shown<sup>9</sup>, women are under-represented in a range of sectors and occupations that offer higher paying roles - for example fewer than 10% of British engineers are female.



Occupational segregation is particularly marked in apprenticeships where young men take apprenticeships across a much wider range of sectors than women. 61% of young women in apprenticeships work in just five sectors where the same proportion of men work in ten sectors<sup>10</sup>. Again, the sectors that female apprentices work in tend to be lower paid than sectors dominated by men. In fact a third of young women thought that well paid apprenticeships in engineering or building are “only for boys”<sup>11</sup> and this segregation causes a pay gap of over 21%<sup>12</sup> and has long term consequences for a woman’s earnings.

The second main cause of the gender pay gap is the part time pay penalty. Women make up the majority of unpaid carers across the world<sup>13</sup> and in order to combine care work with paid employment it is often necessary for women to take part time or flexible work. However there are few part time jobs at senior levels so women are more likely to work below their skill level in order to find work that fits around their caring responsibilities. Part time work is also paid more poorly per hour than full time work, around 25% less<sup>14</sup>.

The third cause is the motherhood penalty. Women are likely to return to work after maternity leave to wages 5% lower than their male counterparts and around 54,000 women a year are forced from their jobs because of pregnancy.<sup>15</sup>

The final cause of the gender pay gap is direct discrimination. Although outlawed in the Equal Pay Act of 1970, paying men and women differently for doing work of equal value still occurs. This can also happen because job titles are slightly different and indeed gendered (for example caretaker and cleaners) or through non salaried bonuses and other benefits like company cars.

Specific groups of women are more likely to live in poverty than others. Women from BME communities are paid less than their white female counterparts, are more likely to be unpaid carers and more likely to live in poverty<sup>16</sup>. Lone parents<sup>17</sup><sup>18</sup> (the majority of whom are women), single female pensioners<sup>19</sup> and disabled women<sup>20</sup> are also likely to have the lowest incomes.

### 2.2.2. Impact of possible caring responsibilities

Women’s unpaid caring roles have far reaching consequences to other aspects of their life. It is not only childcare for which women are mostly responsible it is also caring for other elderly and disabled relatives and family friends. Young girls can also be carers for their parents and their own children and although this group is small, these young women remain extremely marginalised. Women in their 50s and 60s often face a double burden of caring where they are caring for their grandchildren in order to allow their children to work but also still caring for their own elderly parents - they are known as the sandwich generation<sup>21</sup>.

As explained above, balancing work with care is one of the primary causes of the gender pay gap, pushing women in the low paid part time work with poor job progression in order to fit in around their caring responsibilities. Childcare is expensive with a part time nursery place for a child under two costing around £6,003<sup>22</sup>. This cost of childcare creates a wealth divide meaning that women actually need to earn enough in order to pay for the childcare which allows them to work and those who earn less than the cost of childcare simply cannot work.

### **2.3. Power and representation in public life**

Women remain under represented in politics and public life across the board. They make up only 29.4% of MPs<sup>23</sup>, 32% of local councillors<sup>24</sup> and 14.6% of elected mayors. Despite improvements, progress towards women's equal representation in public life remains slow. This is true not only of elected positions but for other public appointments. Overall in the UK 36.4% of public appointments are women. In local government 12.3% of Council Leaders in England are women (2014), compared to 16.6% in 2004.

Women's equal representation in politics is a key determinant of equality and democracy in a society. In Barking and Dagenham, women are moving towards equal representation as councillors. Of 51 councillors, 21 are female and 30 are male. However women make up over 50% of the cabinet where of the nine members of the cabinet, five are female and four are male.

The United Kingdom stands 29th in a global league table of how well women are represented in politics<sup>25</sup>, placing below Rwanda, Ethiopia and Mozambique as well other Western European countries such as Sweden, Spain and Germany.

As the 2011 United Nations General Assembly resolution on Women's Political Participation notes<sup>26</sup>, "*the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy*". Moreover, there is a growing body of evidence, largely drawn from business, that women make a positive difference to actual decision-making itself<sup>27</sup>.

### **2.4. Culture (including gender stereotyping)**

Times are changing and the proliferation of screens means we are surrounded by more images and advertising than ever before. Estimates of how many images we see a day range from 500 to 5,000<sup>28,29</sup>.

Women of all ages but particularly young women and girls are susceptible to advertising which promotes unachievable beauty standards. These images have a real-life impact on the way women and girls view themselves and their chances of success in life. In fact

when women were shown stereotyped images of women and beauty adverts they were more likely to devalue their bodies and do worse in exams than the control group<sup>30</sup>.

This exposure to advertising has a direct impact on young people's health, about 6% of the population have an eating disorder<sup>31</sup>. Young people and particularly young women fare worse with 70% of girls and 30% of boys citing their body as their biggest worry<sup>32</sup>.

The mass consumed media are, created, edited and presented disproportionately by men. 74% of national journalists are men, 78% of all front page by-lines were male, only 3% of sports journalists are women<sup>33</sup> and in advertising women make up only 25% of the most senior roles<sup>34</sup>. The stereotypical images of women promoted in the media are, in part then, due to the absence of women creating this media and women are often absent as the focus of serious news articles. Even female MPs are more likely to have media coverage concerning their looks and relationships than male MPs<sup>35</sup>.

Despite dramatic improvements in gender equality over the last 100 years, sexist attitudes towards women remain and are often publicly tolerated or encouraged. 81% of girls aged 11 – 21 say they have seen or heard some form of everyday sexism in the past week<sup>36</sup>. Particularly for young women, being constantly exposed to sexist commentary that devalues women, their achievements and abilities can and will have a big impact on their own self belief.

### **3. Themes**

The themes of the Gender Equality Charter for Barking and Dagenham reflect these key areas of inequality that women face nationally, internationally and locally:

#### **3.1. Violence against women**

The borough has the highest reported rate of domestic violence (DV) in the whole of London<sup>37</sup>. Nationally DV accounts for around 20% of all violent crime, in Barking and Dagenham it accounts for 41%.

It is therefore no surprise that violence against women is a big issue for the Council and partners. This is an issue which affects many women in the borough and is reflected in the consultation results which found this to be the highest ranked priority amongst respondents. The Council and partners have made good progress to date.

##### **3.1.1. Tackling DV- The story so far**

The prevention of domestic and sexual violence is a key priority for Barking and Dagenham. It is one of the most pervasive safeguarding concerns and a priority strand within the Borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Adult Safeguarding Board and the Community Safety Partnership. Domestic

and Sexual Violence not only damages the lives of those people who are abused and their families, but it also breeds harmful attitudes that impact on the wider community.

Understanding how and why domestic and sexual violence occurs is crucial. We know that most abusers are known to their victims and most will adopt more than one type of violence; we know that no one is immune to being victimised, and that it is very important for support to be in place for everyone. However, we also know from research and local data that domestic and sexual violence mostly affects women and girls, but other characteristics such as disability, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, substance misuse, pregnancy, and immigration status may increase both the likelihood and also the barriers faced in seeking help.

Domestic and sexual violence is not a new phenomenon – it has been a feature of lives throughout recorded history – but as technological advances are made, different forms of abuse have emerged through, for example, revenge pornography which became an offence from April 2015.

To September 2015 Barking & Dagenham saw an overall reduction of 23% against the MOPAC7 priority crimes compared to the 2012/13 baseline (from 10,549 to 8259). However, Violence With Injury has seen an increase of 14.9% in the same period, of which approximately 46% of crimes had a flag to indicate Domestic Abuse. Some of this may be attributed to changes that were made to the way in which violence was recorded and classified following a HMIC inspection of police data in 2013-14 which raised concerns about a notable proportion of crime reports not being recorded, particularly during domestic abuse inspections. Implementation of the new recording and classification guidance and training to improve crime recording mechanisms around violence and domestic abuse have led to a rapid upward trajectory in Violence with Injury. The borough also ensures that residents are aware of the support available to them and have ensured that all reports of domestic abuse received an appropriate response from the Police and courts which victims can be confident in.

Barking and Dagenham commission a number of services to work with those affected by all forms of violence against women. These are detailed in the Barking and Dagenham online Domestic Abuse directory and include:

- Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocate (IDSVA) Service which is delivered by Victim Support
- Two Refuges (13 refuge bed spaces) delivered by Hestia Housing Association.
- The Children's Domestic Violence Service, which is a twelve week programme for mothers and children affected by domestic abuse.
- Arc Theatre which provides initiative links to PSHE in schools and delivers in *Raised Voices*, a three-year female leadership/peer mentoring project for young women aged 11 and over in all schools in borough.
- Women's Integrated Offender Management Programme - Those victims with complex vulnerabilities (offending, substance misuse, street homelessness, mental health and experience of multiple forms of victimisation including child sexual exploitation, domestic and sexual violence, sex work) often face additional barriers accessing support. In Barking and Dagenham, the Women IOM (Integrated

Offender Management) programme works with these clients to provide positive pathways to reduce offending. This is an extremely innovative programme and Barking and Dagenham is the first borough in London to develop such a scheme.

- Specialist training on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) issues are promoted as part of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) training programme.
- A monthly Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is held once a month which facilitates agencies working together to develop support plans which address the risk of those victims who have been assessed as high risk.
- Barking and Dagenham provide domestic abuse training to staff in Maternity units to ensure they are aware of the issues to be alert to and the referral pathways available.

In addition, there are a number of other services delivering support to victims in the borough, these include

- **The Ascent Consortium** which is made up of 10 Women's Services and delivers work in schools, providing advice and support, group work and counseling services. The service is funded via London Councils to work across all London Boroughs
  - **East London Rape Crisis**
  - **National Domestic Violence Helpline**
  - **Women's Trust** deliver counseling services within the borough.

### 3.2. Power and representation in public life

In Barking and Dagenham the Council is committed to ensuring all protected characteristics (as defined in the Equality Act 2010) are represented at all levels of the organisation. In November 2014 the Cabinet endorsed a report titled 'Implementing the Equality & Diversity in Employment Policy'. This report showed there was a higher proportion of female (60.7%) to male staff (39.3%), which is equally represented in the professional grades PO1-6. There are proportionately more men (66.05%) in terms of the overall workforce at management level PO7 and above. The Council does however have a high proportion of women in the most senior management positions (above 50%) but, in some service areas, they are not well represented at management levels.

Women's equal representation in politics is a key determinant of equality and democracy in a society. In Barking and Dagenham, women have almost achieved equal representation as councillors. Of 51 councillors 21 are female and 30 are male. However women make up over 50% of the cabinet where of the nine members of the cabinet, five are female and four are male.

Despite this there is more that can be done not only by the Council but also by partners and businesses operating in the borough. In total, around 36% of respondents to the consultation felt that supporting women into well paid jobs should be a priority for the

charter. The Council and partners have made commitments to improve representation of women in public life.

### **3.3. Economic inequality impact of caring responsibilities**

In Barking and Dagenham the Council is leading the way to ensure equality in employment particularly for women both in terms of pay and caring. The Council has family friendly and flexible working policies ensuring women are not subject to unfavourable treatment due to maternity, childcare, or other caring commitments.

The Carers Strategy is also supportive of the need for more flexible working opportunities. It suggests that “combining the caring role with work can be a real challenge. Carers have additional employment rights to enable carers to stay at work. The Council has a leadership role to play and has committed to enable carers to be better able to combine paid employment with their caring role and re-enter the job market after their caring role has ended through: encouraging flexible working opportunities, increased training provision, and employer awareness and support.”<sup>38</sup> Carers are also a key focus of the Barking and Dagenham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)<sup>39</sup>.

Barking and Dagenham has the highest rate of unemployment in all London boroughs<sup>40</sup> but women are more likely to be unemployed than men. The average employment rate for women across London is 63.9% and in Barking and Dagenham it is 54.1% - a gap of 9.8% compared to a gap of 5.8% for men<sup>41</sup>. Caring has an impact on working life too, the majority of carers are of working age - 8229 (52%) are between the ages of 18 and 49<sup>42</sup> so special consideration must be given on how to support carers, namely women, into employment, education and training and how these opportunities can be provided so that it fits in with their caring responsibilities.

Although the council is a large employer in the borough, it is equally important that businesses play a part in providing equal pay and policies which do not discriminate against women due to caring responsibilities. A number of actions have been identified in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure businesses are engaged in and sign up to such policies.

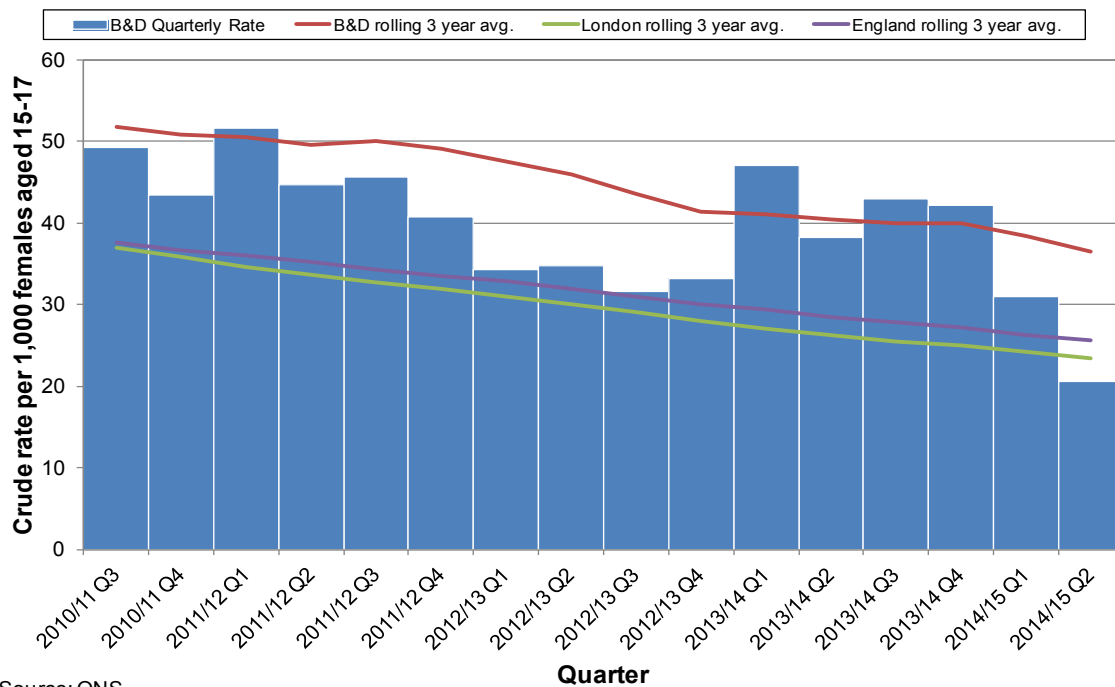
### **3.4. Culture and education**

Respondents to the consultation have highlighted ending sexual harassment at work and in public and reducing teenage pregnancies as priorities for the charter. The Council, schools and partners have identified specific actions to tackle these issues. It is clear that there will need to be a programme of work with schools to tackle stereotypes, and educate children about issues affecting young women such as teenage pregnancy.

Teenage pregnancy is both a contributory factor to, as well as an outcome of, child poverty. Teenagers from poorer areas with higher rates of unemployment (such as Barking and Dagenham) are more likely to fall pregnant than young women from more affluent areas<sup>43</sup>. Young women who conceive and give birth while they are in their teens will face a number of challenges during their lives. Many will not be able to complete their education or access training for work, and this could affect their life choices, and the life chances of their children throughout adulthood<sup>44</sup>.

### 3.4.1. Teenage pregnancies- the story so far

**Under 18 Conceptions 2010/11 Q3 - 2014/15 Q2**



Source: ONS

Teenage pregnancy (TP) was higher in Barking and Dagenham than the London average<sup>45</sup>.

Barking and Dagenham has seen a gradual decrease over the last four years in conceptions to women aged under 18 years, from 51.1 per 1,000 women aged 15-17 years per quarter in the three year period up to 2010/11 Q3 down to the most recent figure of 34.1 per 1,000 women aged 15-17 years in the three year period to 2014/15 Q2. This constitutes a fall of 17 conceptions per 1,000 women aged 15-17 years per quarter (a 33.3% fall).

This fall follows a similar pattern to that seen nationally and regionally, where London has seen a fall of 11.3 conceptions in the same age group (a 36.0% fall), while nationally there are 11.9 fewer conceptions per quarter (a fall of 32.5%). The fact that Barking has seen a larger decrease over the four year period indicates that the gap has closed, although there are still approximately 8.5 more conceptions per 1,000 women aged 15-17 years per quarter in Barking and Dagenham compared to England as a whole. Most recent data<sup>46</sup>

demonstrates that the TP rate for Barking and Dagenham has dropped for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter in a row and is now at its lowest level for at least 4 years, at 20.5 per 1000 under 18s.

Significant work has been undertaken in Barking and Dagenham to reduce the rate of teenage conceptions. The reduction seen could be attributed to a number of positive factors and concerted efforts to tackle inequalities in access to contraception and sexual health services. These include:

- Borough-wide accessibility to free condoms in pharmacies and community outlets for 13-24 year olds (C-Card condom distribution scheme), particularly in wards with a higher prevalence of teenage conceptions.
- Partnership working – coordination of a joined-up approach across a range of health, social care and education organisations and services to address teenage pregnancy, overseen by an Integrated Sexual Health Board.
- Increased availability of contraceptive devices all women aged 13 years of age and over including long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) and 7-day access to emergency hormonal contraceptives (EHC) in GPs, pharmacies and family planning clinics.
- Stronger focus on sustained prevention initiatives – promotion of sexual health advice and contraceptive services including campaigns targeted at the most vulnerable (e.g. looked after children) and those in socio-economically deprived groups and their parents.
- Comprehensive school-based sex and relationships education (SRE) and interventions with signposting to contraceptive services and advice to young people to delay sexual activity.
- Preventative interventions delivered in community-based education, youth development and contraceptive services, particularly those based in family services or youth centres following the introduction of the Health Workers.
- Raising awareness among frontline staff in education, health and social care services to deliver sexual health advice to young people and signpost them to sexual health and contraceptive services.
- Support for teenage mothers via the Family Nurse Partnership, including advice and access to contraception in order to avoid repeat unplanned pregnancies.
- Universal initiatives that improve educational, social and economic opportunities for young people, raising their aspirations and life chances.



The consultation demonstrated that respondents felt reducing teenage pregnancies should be a priority for the charter. This can only be achieved through close working with girls in schools to raise awareness of the issues and associated impacts of teenage pregnancies.

There is currently little available analysis of the impact of gender stereotyping and sexist culture at the local level. However respondents to the consultation on gender inequality in Barking and Dagenham made references to these issues and their impact on gender equality, see the Appendix C.



### Gender Equality Charter Consultation and Results

#### Consultation

An essential first step in the development of the charter was to understand the issues most affecting women in Barking and Dagenham in order to ensure it was underpinned by evidence. The project started with interviewing a range of groups and individuals across the borough to find out what they thought the problems were for women locally. They were asked about the key themes identified above and the relevance of them in Barking & Dagenham as well any other concerns they had. The project then examined what solutions they thought might work and what projects were already under way that could be built upon. As part of this phase, initial meetings were held with:

- Barking Community and Voluntary Services
- Barking and Dagenham Chamber of Commerce
- LBBB Aim Higher education group
- LBBB Violence Against Women team
- A woman's group in Marksgate
- A selection of secondary schools
- LBBB Integrated Youth Services
- LBBB employment and skills
- Local councillors
- LBBB Clinical Commissioning Group

These initial meetings helped ascertain views on the extent of women's inequality within the borough, point to existing research and identify key partners who would need to be involved in designing and delivering actions for improving gender equality. These meeting also helped to identify some of the issues in the borough as well as any projects and resources that were already in place. In addition, focus groups were run with a range of residents and voluntary sector representatives which allowed the exploration of problems and solutions in greater depth. Focus groups were held with:

- Childcare centre users
- Parent representatives
- Leaders from the women's voluntary and community sector in B&D
- AS Level pupils from a local secondary school

The outcome of these meetings and focus groups informed the structure of the public consultation which ran on the Barking and Dagenham consultation portal for seven weeks. The consultation asked respondents for their thoughts on the proposed charter including what they thought the key gender equality issues affecting women and men in the borough were, what should be done to tackle the issues and by whom. The online consultation received 162 responses in total.

When viewed together, the responses to the consultation, focus groups and meetings provided the information needed to develop a charter that reflects local needs and focuses on priorities identified by residents. The consultation highlighted the key gender equality issues that people living and working in Barking and Dagenham face, as well as the themes and priorities for the charter.

The results of the consultation, meetings and focus groups have been used to inform the Gender Equality Charter and action plan (outlined in section 5), which will be launched on International Women's Day in March 2016. The aim is to bring together businesses, the local authority, other public sector organisations and the voluntary and community sector to sign up to delivering these commitments. It is only through working together we can all collectively improve outcomes for women throughout the borough.

As part of the Council's commitment, Councillor Sade Bright has been appointed to the role of Women's and Gender Equality Champion and will take a lead on championing the Charter and ensuring that the action plan is implemented.

### **Results from the consultation**

As mentioned above the consultation included an online survey which ran for seven weeks, focus groups, and meetings with relevant groups and individuals. Taken together, the results helped understand issues facing women in the borough, identify themes for the charter, identify priority areas to focus on, and actions to be taken to address issues.

Of the 162 responses, most identified themselves as residents (55%) and local authority workers (16%). The majority of respondents were female (81%) and primarily aged between 40-59 (45%). Respondents identified as being from a range of ethnic groups with the most common being English/Welsh/Scottish /Northern Irish/British (38%) and African (23%). 10% of respondents had a disability and most identified as being either Christian (47%) or having no religion (27%). 80% of respondents identified as heterosexual. Although the survey respondents were mainly women aged between 40-50 (45%) the qualitative work through focus groups and 1:1 meetings focussed on younger women and girls in order to get a balance of views overall.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the survey was not a fully representative random sample of Barking and Dagenham's population, it does however provide evidence to support the themes identified for the Charter. There were specific groups that were underrepresented in the consultation. Despite this the Charter and associated action plan make commitments to tackle gender based inequality which will improve outcomes for all. It is recognised that particular groups of women e.g. transgender women, gay women, or women from BAME communities, may face further issues and as such the Charter commits to working with partners and the community to tackle such inequality.

There was a specific focus on women and the survey was intended to be used in conjunction with the qualitative data which was gathered in the focus groups and one to one interviews. The consultation confirmed that respondents wanted the themes of the charter to reflect the national themes uncovered during the research and scoping phase. The four themes therefore agreed for the charter were:

- 1) Economic inequality the impact of caring responsibilities
- 2) Power and poor representation in public life
- 3) Culture and education
- 4) Violence against women

These are themes that are used by UN Women<sup>47</sup>, by the London School of Economics<sup>48</sup>, by key gender equality campaigning organisations in the UK<sup>49</sup> and by the government itself<sup>50</sup>.

Education has been added to the culture theme to highlight the importance of educating people in order to overcome the issues faced by women. This includes educating young women in schools to educating women and men who live or work in the borough.

In terms of priorities for the Charter from those given, respondents were quite evenly split between these top five (from highest votes to lowest):

- ending violence against women and girls
- ensure men and women can earn the same
- ending sexual harassment at work and in public
- reducing teenage pregnancy
- support more women into well paid jobs

### **Key actions emerging from meetings and focus groups**

The meetings and focus groups were centred on finding practical solutions to ending gender inequality that could be implemented within Barking and Dagenham by the local community (including community groups and charities), by businesses, other organisations and by the local authority. These results are outlined in Appendix A. Some of the key emerging issues from these meetings are:

- The need for policies to support carers balance work and caring responsibilities;
- The need for a 'hub' of information about advice and support that women can get;
- The need for more work in schools on gender inequality

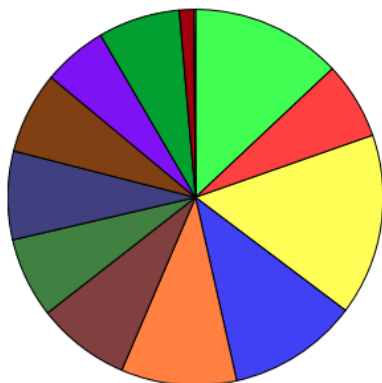
The results from the survey, focus groups with residents and conversations with Councillors, officers and other senior individuals in the borough have been drawn together to create a proposed action plan.

During the consultation period for the Gender Equality Charter respondents were asked for their thoughts on the key inequalities between women and men under these themes and what solutions there might be to change them.

## priorities for the GEC

Question responses: 161 (99.38%)

I think the gender equality charter should focus on (tick 5 that you feel apply)



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
Ensure women and men can earn the same	13.00%	13.02%	58.02%	94
Getting more women qualified in science technology engineering and maths	6.64%	6.65%	29.63%	48
Ending violence against women and girls	15.63%	15.65%	69.75%	113
Ending sexual harassment at work and in public	11.20%	11.22%	50.00%	81
Reducing teenage pregnancy	9.96%	9.97%	44.44%	72
Supporting more women to get well paid jobs	8.02%	8.03%	35.80%	58
Helping women who run businesses	6.92%	6.93%	30.86%	50
Ensuring all group( including the local authority) making decisions about the borough have an equal balance of women and men	7.61%	7.62%	33.95%	55

When asked which groups of women the Equality Charter should focus, the respondents again were quite evenly split between (from highest votes to lowest):

- BAME women
- women experiencing violence
- young women
- disabled women
- lone parents

In considering the areas identified in question 2 are there any specific groups of women we should focus on?



	% Total	% Answer	Frequency	Count
lesbian gay bisexual transgender women	5.74%	5.75%	17.28%	28
disabled women	10.66%	10.68%	32.10%	52
women from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities	13.52%	13.55%	40.74%	66
women from refugee and migrant communities	6.15%	6.16%	18.52%	30
women from different religious groups	6.56%	6.57%	19.75%	32
women experiencing violence	14.75%	14.78%	44.44%	72
young women	12.70%	12.73%	38.27%	62
older women	8.81%	8.83%	26.54%	43
lone parents	13.52%	13.55%	40.74%	66
other please state	7.38%	7.39%	22.22%	36
[No Response]	0.20%	--	0.62%	1

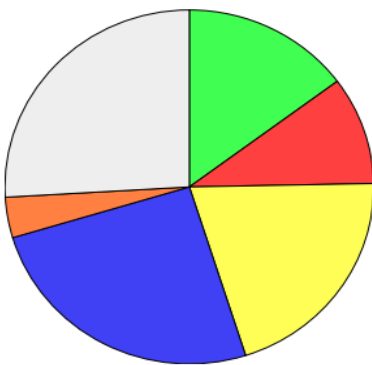
When asked what aspect of men's inequality the Equality Charter should focus on respondents said (from highest votes to lowest):

- violence and abuse
- childcare

**Men's inequality**

Question responses: 120 (74.07%)

What aspect (if any) of men's inequality should we focus on?



	% Total	% Answer	Count
Unemployment	14.81%	20.00%	24
Education	9.88%	13.33%	16
Childcare	20.37%	27.50%	33
Violence and abuse	25.31%	34.17%	41
None	3.70%	5.00%	6
[No Response]	25.93%	--	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>162</b>

- unemployment

## **Open ended questions:**

Respondents were given opportunities to add additional comments to these key questions. There were lots of responses, please see Appendix B (ii) for a full list of answers.

### **Priorities for the Gender Equality Charter - other please state**

For this question the most common answer was 'all of the above'. There were more suggestions, however many of them could be categorised under the priorities already outlined e.g. one respondent suggested 'more women in senior positions' which would fall under 'ensuring all groups who makes decisions have an equal balance of women'. The only two original suggestions were a focus on FGM and a focus on men experiencing violence.

### **Which groups of women should we focus on - other please state**

In terms of specific groups of women the most common answer was 'all women' - with respondents feeling strongly that all women should be the focus of the Equality Charter. The second most common answer was a focus on carers who had no other distinguishing feature e.g. being a lone parent or experiencing violence as respondents felt that they were often ignored.

### **What else should we focus on - other please state**

This open ended question received the most answers with a variety of suggestions being put forward by respondents. As above, many of the suggestions made by respondents were similar to those already stated in earlier questions e.g. many answered 'equal pay' despite this being given as option in question one. The original answers can be broadly themed into three popular categories - education, workplace arrangements and information hub of available support.

Regarding **education** respondents had a variety of suggestions but most seemed to think that it was vital to start discussing gender equality in schools from a young age and use this as a forum to address problems such as sexual harassment and occupational segregation. There was also a strong call to use education as a tool to empower adult women who may not know about their rights or how to stand up for themselves

In terms of an information hub - transparency of information, a directory of services and available support and making it easier to direct men and women to available groups and services was also commonly cited.

Broadly another main theme of responses was around work. Issues such as good quality part time work, women in senior leadership roles, getting men to help with



caring, job shares, equal pay and helping carers access training opportunities were raised again and again with the consultation.

**Annex A(ii) - Key actions emerging from meetings and focus groups**

<b>Who should do it?</b>	<b>What should they do?</b>	<b>Why should we do it?</b>
business	sponsor a family friendly award	
business	CoC to develop family friendly working policy templates	
business	CoC to link with the CVS in a more strategic way	
business	zoned places for nurseries	
business	naming of businesses that are good partners - praising good employers - commitment to living wage, commitment to recruit and work locally with us, packages of support that would help people, work with colleges	
business	childcare, flexible training	Education - women lack of access and control over what they do
business	welcome carers after a career break	
business	recognise skills from caring in job applicants	
business	provide training for returners	
business	prioritise jobs for people who live in the borough	
business	provide more flexible/ remote working opportunities	
business	childcare vouchers	
business	more job shares, better flexible working hours training opportunities for stay at home mums and dads, help with nurseries - e.g. provide creche	training available but doesn't lead to a job
business	unisex clothing lines	
business	paternity leave	
business	enforce equal pay	
community	education in schools	housing - women's lack of awareness about rights and responsibilities
community	community education in schools mobile services	Healthy relationships -males and females
community	encourage men to go to childcare and parents groups	
community	provide childcare for training courses	

<b>Who should do it?</b>	<b>What should they do?</b>	<b>Why should we do it?</b>
community	provide voluntary jobs which lead to qualifications	
community	more support groups for me	
council	disaggregated data collection	male mental health
council	local emergency support fund	loss has caused huge damage
council	clinical commissioning groups	low engagement with CVS
council	sexual harassment - as part of the healthy schools initiative?	
council	language around girls - stonewall style campaign	
council	woman's directory - with information for women about awareness programmes, mentoring sessions	
council	council to use private sector contracts to demand family friendly working policies and support of women led SMEs	
council	Bring teenage pregnancy and NEET boards together in a meaningful way	
council	look at the apprenticeships granted in schools and in the council	
council	chairs the sexual health board - how can you bring them together with NEETs	
council	Need more IDVAs	
council	need more long term support - counselling etc	
council	we need to roll out some systematic and strategic training - people on front line, social workers are saying 80 - 90% of their cases are VAWG of some kind, housing, come across it all the time	
council	engagement with the CVS	
council	need funding for initiatives already in place	
council	need some kind of physical communication - newspaper etc - that everyone reads	
council	positive discrimination by business women's leadership support programme	underrepresentation in leadership roles and in corporate
council	Provide the same health workers over the course of a pregnancy and childbirth	
council	provide specialist pediatricians	
council	have maternity workers engage in relationship counselling	

Who should do it?	What should they do?	Why should we do it?
council	tackle anti-social behaviour	
council	improve the community environment	
council	reduce creche costs	
council	provide childcare for job hunting/interviews	
council	be more transparent about government spending	
council	more free, affordable childcare places, make it easier for friends and family to care for each other, pay living wage	childcare is expensive
council	more police presence in high crime areas more youth clubs - gangs and teenage pregnancies	safety
council	public education campaigns on stigma	
council	enforce equal pay law	
council	bill to eradicate sexist policies	
council	paternity leave	

### Appendix A (iii) Results of the open ended questions in the GEC Consultation

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
increasing the number of women in senior positions	older women that are single parents and work part time should receive help as the unemployed and and young mums seem to receive more opportunities	Suicide (mental health generally)	invite more men and hold men only focus groups to ensure they can be aware of women's needs
Campaigning against forced marriages, religious segregation and FGM.	stay at home parents that cannot access as they don't belong to any 'specific' group	Equal rights for fathers	women part-time jobs
ensuring that adequate support services are in place for women affected by domestic abuse	Carers	all	Equal opportunities
Ensure equal opportunities for men and women, without coming across patronising that women	women needing flexible working patterns	Not sure I understand the question?	encourage men to be more involved in childcare More opportunities for women to return to work and better cheaper childcare

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
cope less than men.			
all of the above	No exclusions	are you having a laugh	start talking about it in primary school so children learn to view gender equality as the norm
all of the above	girls	all	employment
all of the above	All groups including white british should be focused on	Not sure if I have interpreted this question correctly - is it about inequality experienced by men? or female inequality relative to men?	same opportunities, equal pay, treat everyone the same
Support Men who Suffer Domestic Violence	All Women	raising awareness of women's issues by tackling pre conceived ideas of what gender means	more job shares, not to be penalised for child illness etc at work
gender equality	All women, but celebrate different groups on a rotational basis.	How do men need to change in order to enable women and girls equality	to help parents in terms of training opportunities
encourage more women to own their own economies so they can be financially independent	women at risk of "honour" based violence and harmful practices.	?	Titling this as "Women and Gender Equality Charter" is a poor starting point in my opinion. Equality is equality irrespective of gender, so labelling the Charter in it's current way could be construed as positive discrimination. Simply "Gender Equality Charter" would be far better as this facilitates a true level playing field.
gender equality should focus on ways of tackling the roots of discrimination and strategies to maintain/ promote women's leadership	anyone who needs it	all	Promoting more flexible work patterns that fit in with the needs of women and ensuring that opportunities to progress within the workplace are not restricted by these needs.
women from ethnic minorities in oppressive religions	It's 2015 not 1970. Spend council tax payers money on services not useless quangos	all	That men talk to women as equals not as if they are better than women at everything
	All women	all	Better education in schools for all. More career advice for youngsters to help them decide how to progress in their chosen career what options are available as not all students want to go

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
			to University as families on a lower income cannot support them or want to end up with debt from student loans. Colleges come into school to show what courses and support they offer on their courses leading to to various career paths and employers in the borough who have vacancies or skills shortages in specific professions. This might solve the problem of studying and finishing courses and not being able to secure a job in their chosen profession. Possibly employers offering work placements to gain experience which seems to be an issue for lots of newly qualified students whilst on their courses which what else could be done Consultation
	we are stronger together	all	set serious targets such as 50:50 gender equality in the elected arm of council and 50:50 gender equality in the workforce. set a zero tolerance for all workplace discrimination target schools for female youth leadership learning opportunities offer subsidised training courses for women to improve employment opportunities
	All women	all	Empowering women to believe in themselves
	All women	mental health support	Don't focus on female quotas: reframe the issue and set a maximum number for boys and men.
	All women		Lobby the Government and Police to take FGM seriously and prosecute those responsible. Work with Muslim groups to treat women equally and stop segregation.
	All women		What is the definition and ROOT cause of this concept? Men are women will play different roles by their very physiological, emotional, physicals
	stay at home parents that normally cannot access as they don't belong to		i think that fundamentally there needs to be an acknowledgement that inequality between men and women

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
	any 'specific' group		exists and that it is women who are treated less favourably than men.
	older women that are single parents and work part- time should receive 79 help . As the unemployed and young mums seem to receive more education opportunities all of the above		To ensure more services are provided to support women affected by domestic violence/abuse
	all of the above		Your questions and answers come across patronising. Yes, after century of campaigning women are still not truly equal to men - but "helping women who run businesses" is not tackling the problem but the outcomes. Women should be told they CAN run a business themselves, they shouldn't need extra help - that's the point of equality.
	all of the above		General observation - around and about the main papers available to purchase in stores tend to be the The Sun, The Mirror and occasionally the Daily Mail. It's very hard to purchase what else could be done or an Independent which offer (arguably) more considered pieces on society and gender and inequality more widely, though thankfully in the age of the internet these are accessible. Shops know their customer base and if they were there would they be purchased? I wonder sometimes. Some people are very slow to embrace social change and whilst our borough is diverse and vibrant in many ways there are plenty there that - albeit anecdotally in my humble opinion - are stuck firmly in the past. School based intervention at secondary level e.g. the White Ribbon project, Good Lad seems to me to be a good starting point along with proper relationship education in PHSE.

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
	all of the above		It's 2015 not 1970. Spend council tax payers money on services not useless quangos. This is obviously how Labour will be with Corbyn as a leader. God help us.
	all of the above		self organised women's groups Training on women's issues including in all council courses. Communicate through social media and using tech( make a video rather than write briefing
	no		Treat everyone impartially
	women on low or no incomes		equal opportunities
	all of the above		encourage men to be more involved in childcare . More opportunities for women to return to work . Better and cheaper childcare
	all women		omen need part- time jobs
	all women		start talking about it in primary schools' so children learn to view gender equality as a norm.
	all women		Employment
	all women experience discrimination so a gender equality charter should not exclude any women		to help lone parents in terms of training opportunities
	everyone		more job shares not to be penalised for child illnesses etc at work
	everyone		same opportunities equal pay - treat the same
			influence more women
			talk about it
			supporting women to run projects and celebrate their achievement encouraging women to have continuous education and keep aim high
			transparency of available opportunities
			transparency of available opportunities
			get more women into work and

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
			education -educate women in their worth -do focus groups that helps identify DV and educate them to educate their children to change the future -I believe it has to start from the source with helping women to be confident to change communities
			more engagement more transparency
			more campaigns Councillors going out , training champions in the community to champion local groups , visit churches and speak to people most people more BME's and religions
			More opportunities for both men and women .Awareness of opportunity for both men and women . Awareness of the opportunities available in the borough
			invite more men and arrange for men only Focus groups to ensure they can be aware of women's rights and needs
			Support Counselling agency who prove to be helping men who experience domestic violence as well
			More women in the top jobs and in government
			To get women to understand that although it might be natural to be a wife and mother it shouldn't stop them from wanting, and working, to achieve more.
			Empowering young girls from an early age at school , giving young women confidence in their abilities.
			age
			Let all wages be known to all
			stop focusing on any one aspect and just focus on gender equality
			There should be focus on gender equality in schools. With mentors from the community coming in and acting as positive role models. Women of all



Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
			races and religious backgrounds who are professionals need to come in and do talks so that professional attainment isn't seen as just a station for English, white females. Ratios in offices schools and other institutions need to reflect a balance. Education and consequences
			Education and consequences
			Training and awareness in school, colleges and university
			by educating women and men about gender equality
			empower women through training education and empowerment to pursue purpose
			creating more forums where under educated women especially from 129 ethnic minority can be encouraged and through the importance of education to boost their confidence
			everything possible
			community groups should be encouraged to work together. Collaboration will help to break down and eliminate isolated working.
			we can all contribute in ways which affect us e.g. I come across women who feel they have no rights to resist their husband's sexual advances - in this situation my role is to create forum for discussion to introduce different perspectives
			women in leadership programme and gender based services
			recognising the barriers faced by women - directing services/ funding to support women
			Things should be introduced in primary schools when they are still having their minds moulded. Tell 5 year olds nothing is 'boy' or 'girl'
			supporting men for emotional needs

Priorities for the GEC - other please specific	Specific groups of women - other please specify	Men's inequality - other please state	What else do you think should be done to reduce gender inequality?
			get rid of the pay gap
			abolishing sexist policy (tampon tax)
			support boys at schools with mental illnesses
			rid of the tampon tax equal pay paternity leave
			equality campaigns
			women's salary should not be decreased when they return from a maternity leave, it should be the same or increased. increased time for paternity leave.
			more paternity leave for men
			paternity leave for men
			laws
			abolish gender stereotypes
			laws
			Let's celebrate who we are, identify how we can maximise the roles we play to complement each other, not compete; as the latter supports misunderstanding and alienation with both gender

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- <sup>15</sup> Pregnancy and maternity discrimination forces thousands of new mothers out of their jobs, Equality and Human Rights Commission 2015 <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/pregnancy-and-maternity-discrimination-forces-thousands-new-mothers-out-their-jobs>
- <sup>16</sup> Institute of Race Relations, 2015 <http://www.irr.org.uk/research/statistics/poverty/>
- <sup>17</sup> In the UK, 60% of those living in single parent households and almost half (46%) of those in single adult households experienced poverty at least once in the four years between 2010 and 2013 compared with less than a third of those living in households with two or more adults. ONS 2013 Persistent Poverty in the UK and EU, 2008-2013 <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/household-income/persistent-poverty-in-the-uk-and-eu/2008-2013/persistent-poverty-in-the-uk-and-eu--2008-2013.html> |
- <sup>18</sup> In the UK, those growing up in a single parent household are over twice as likely to be severely materially deprived as those who lived with both parents. ONS 2014, 'How do childhood circumstances affect poverty and deprivation as an adult?' Part of Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage in the UK & EU, 2014 Release. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/household-income/intergenerational-transmission-of-poverty-in-the-uk---eu/2014/sty-causes-of-poverty-uk.htm> |
- <sup>19</sup> ONS 2012, Pension Trends - Chapter 13: Inequalities and Poverty in Retirement, 2012 Edition [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766\\_278836.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766_278836.pdf)
- The group with the largest proportion of individuals in the bottom two income quintiles in 2010/11 was working age single parents (67 per cent), followed by single female pensioners (56 per cent)
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