

MORE LEADING WOMEN:

PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS ON LEADERSHIP

Edited by Katherine West



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Preface

The Right Hon, the Baroness Morgan of Cotes

Prepare to be inspired! This fabulous collection of further essays on women and leadership is full of wisdom, personal experience and generous insights into what female leadership looks and feels like. It should leave you feeling cheered and energised as you would after any gathering of your most trusted female friends and confidants.

There is a tale of a young boy who was on a school tour around Parliament in the late 1980s. After hearing about the then Prime Minister and the constitutional role of the monarchy – don't forget these were the days of Mrs Thatcher and Queen Elizabeth II – he asked if men were allowed to hold those roles. It is a reminder of how women in leadership can make advances but also take a step back too.

In these pages you will find other great examples of women who broke the mould – and continue to do so. As someone who has emphasised the important role our education system has in nurturing the character of pupils and helping them to flourish, I believe studying the stories of others and how they've dealt with adversity or made life choices really helps everyone to think about what they want to do and how they want to do it.

I also firmly believe in the mantra that 'you can't be what you can't see' – if we want more female leaders in all sectors and fields then we need to ensure that the next generation sees current female leaders in action. And those of us who hold or have held senior positions need to take responsibility for nurturing and encourage that future female talent.

Women bring different qualities and traits to leadership positions as Arabella Gonzalez recognises. As well as the reality that most women want to 'do' something with their position – just making it to the top of the greasy pole isn't enough. The sacrifices usually needed to get there, including the motherhood penalty, which is honestly addressed here, mean that we need to feel those tough decisions were worth it.

Caroline Haines exhorts us to 'Be brave. Be heard'. Libby Nicholas reminds us that life is 'a marathon not a sprint' – one of my favourite things to remember, particularly when the 'to do' list seems endless and almost insurmountable.

Please do add this book to your list of things to read. You will feel better for these thoughtful essays and there is a great value in knowing that so many of us have faced the same hurdles.

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Introduction

Katherine West

Welcome to this sequel publication to our 2017 report *Leading Women*, which commemorated the life and work of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson. *More Leading Women* includes new contributors and the themes of women in board and leadership roles within and beyond education.

Despite recent progress and with more women holding leadership and board positions in the City, in educational institutions, and across large charities, there remains an imbalance which is often highlighted, for example by the Hampton-Alexander Review¹, and by Cranfield School of Management in their *Female FTSE Board Report*².

Although there have been many recent firsts of women holding office, including in public life, there remains room for further progress. It seems staggering that 149 constituencies have never elected women MPs. Professor Pam Cox follows this theme and shares the story of Margaret Bondfield who became Britain's first female cabinet minister in 1931. Assumptions are still made that it is for these successful women to juggle the work life balance and that men are less likely to make such considerations. The increased scope for working from home or with flexible hours has been invaluable for some women, who are more likely to choose these options because of childcare responsibilities. However, there are concerns that this then causes them to miss out on opportunities for progression³.

The narratives of Pam Cox and Lil Bremermann-Richard show the intricate tapestry of challenges and triumphs that define the journey of women in leadership, spanning generations and continents.

¹FTSE Women Leaders Review (2022)

²The Female FTSE Board Report (2022)

³ <https://www.managers.org.uk/knowledge-and-insights/blog/the-pandemic-and-the-great-leap-backwards-for-gender-equality/>

Both Caroline Haines and Libby Nicholas shed light on the enduring challenges and evolving landscapes faced by women in leadership roles, be that in the City of London or the education sector. Across these contrasting arenas, the struggle for gender equality persists, underscored by historical precedents and contemporary realities.

Arabella Gonzalez reflects on her journey from childhood to leadership roles, inspired by the first female UK Prime Minister in 1979. She explores gender differences in leadership, noting women's collaborative strengths versus men's competitive edge. She discusses challenges women face, including lack of visible role models and family responsibilities. She advocates for supporting young women's leadership development and embracing diverse definitions of success in the evolving world of work.

Professor Louise Jackson's unconventional career journey navigating neurodiversity, single motherhood, and academia, positions her uniquely. Leading with inclusivity, she fosters environments where diverse talents thrive, advocating for policies supporting neurodivergent individuals. Through open dialogue and mentorship, she empowers others to bring their authentic selves to professional arenas. Her leadership aims to dismantle barriers, celebrating diversity as a catalyst for innovation, lessons many others would do well to embrace.

I believe that there is a central theme to what follows: the importance of empowerment and support structures in catalysing women's advancement. In conversation with Natalie Campbell, I was struck by her quiet resilience and determination, shaped by her entrepreneurial spirit and unwavering commitment to making a difference. From her early ventures as a teenage entrepreneur to her role as Chancellor at the University of Westminster, Natalie's journey offers valuable insights into the intricacies of leadership and the importance of staying true to oneself no matter what challenges one faces.

Following recent strides towards gender equality, as evidenced by the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report, Cheryl Giovannoni strikes a sobering chord, cautioning against complacency in the face of apparent progress.

Drawing inspiration from the voices of girls and young women, as highlighted in the important Girls' Futures Report, Cheryl emphasises the pivotal role of girl-focused environments in nurturing confidence, leadership, and resilience. Grounded in a commitment to empower every girl, irrespective of educational setting, the GDST embarks on a bold mission to foster a new generation of empathetic and collaborative leaders.

In her essay, Dr Eve Poole challenges us to look at AI and traditional feminine traits. She argues for a reevaluation of the design principles guiding AI creation. By incorporating what she terms "junk code," which includes elements like free will, emotions, intuition, uncertainty, and storytelling, AI systems could become more aligned with human values and needs. She believes that these attributes, often associated with women, have been undervalued in AI development, leading to a lack of understanding and incorporation in AI systems.

Drawing inspiration from her own mentors and experiences, Anna Searle's reflections demonstrate the critical role of mentorship, support, and resilience in navigating professional pathways. She emphasises the transformative power of authenticity and genuine support in overcoming barriers and fostering inclusivity.

All these reflections converge to highlight the enduring struggle for gender equality and the indomitable spirit of women leaders. From the shop floors of Victorian England to the boardrooms of multinational corporations, their journeys inspire us to challenge the status quo, give a stage to marginalised voices, and forge a future where every woman can realise her full potential. As we reflect on these essays, we are reminded that the fight for gender parity is far from over, but with courage, solidarity, and unwavering determination, we can build a world where women's leadership knows no bounds.

The Woman who became Britain's First Female Cabinet Minister started her Working Life as a "Shopgirl"

Professor Pam Cox

Margaret Bondfield's politics began at home. The family lived in the Somerset village of Chard where her father, William, worked as a weaver and her mother, Anne, raised 12 children. Margaret was the 11th, born in 1873. Her father had a strong sense of social justice. Unusually for the time, he also believed in the rights of working women and encouraged his daughters to stand up and be counted.

When Margaret was 14, she left home and took up an apprenticeship in Mrs White's exclusive drapery in Hove. She was taught the detailed needlework skills needed for bridal dresses and babies' clothes. She enjoyed her work but more significantly also enjoyed weekend open house gatherings at the Brighton home of local radical, Louisa Martindale.

In 1894, now 21, and like thousands of other young women, Bondfield moved to London to better her prospects in drapery. It was her wake-up call. This was a world far removed from Mrs White's and Bondfield was shocked. The long hours, low wages, poor diet and requirement to "live in" in often dismal dormitories were bad enough. It was not uncommon for a shop worker's shift to start at 8am and end at 10pm in the week and at midnight on Saturdays. Late night shopping was a Victorian invention, made possible by gas light, cheap labour and voracious consumer demand.

Bondfield was used to hard work. But she could not get used to being treated like a servant by well-heeled customers. She recalled an early encounter in her autobiography: "A very fine lady was extremely rude to me. I was not in a position to answer back." Like thousands of other shopgirls, she faced instant dismissal if she put a foot wrong or if the proprietor decided her face didn't fit. Standing just over 5ft tall, Bondfield often found that even if her

face fitted, shopkeepers would refuse to take her on because she was “too short”. Looking good was another common requirement in this business.

In 1898 Bondfield took the daring step of joining the newly formed National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks - most shopkeepers would sack staff on the spot for signing up. The union was one of many set up for “unskilled” workers in the 1890s in the wake of the shock success of the Bryant and May match girls’ strike. But female membership was low. On the whole, unions were fighting for a fair wage for men with mouths to feed. In their ideal world, working class women wouldn’t need to go out to work.

Bondfield set about recruiting fellow shopgirls, running the gauntlet by dropping leaflets behind counters. She remembers that one irate grocer “read a leaflet, tore it up and stamped on the bits”, shouting: “Union indeed! Go home and mend your stockings!”

Writing as “Grace Dare”, she penned secret reports by candlelight in the drapers’ dormitories.

But while some shopgirls joined up, most didn’t. Some considered themselves a cut above unions or preferred the pleasures of the music hall over speaker meetings after a hard week. Bondfield was exasperated by their “shallow snobbery” and “false gentility”.

In 1896, Bondfield risked her livelihood to go undercover for the union and the new Women’s Industrial Council, formed to improve women’s working conditions. Writing as “Grace Dare”, she penned secret reports by candlelight in the drapers’ dormitories she shared with other shopgirls. The reports were published by the union journal, *The Shop Assistant*, and also re-worked for the *Daily Chronicle* newspaper.

Her revelations exposed unscrupulous shopkeepers. One of the most extreme stories concerned the owner of “a certain shop in Bradford” who disposed of diseased meat from his farm by serving it up as supper for his hapless assistants. Worse still, he fined them 2s 6d if they failed to clear their plates. This particular shopkeeper was

taken to court and convicted. But it was usually the shopworkers who came off worse, such as the assistant who was first fined and then sacked for daring to leave uneaten pork on his plate.

Grace Dare asked her readers to put themselves in the shoes of a young woman “cast adrift, you and your one corded box, on the streets of London with no friends within call, your home away at a Somersetshire farm or in a Welsh valley, and the few shillings in your pocket not enough to get you there”. The fear was, of course, that such unfortunates would end up in prostitution. Many did.

The Chronicle vowed “to tell the truth about breakfasts of stale bread and rancid butterine, the watery tea, the pallid chicory decoction which serves for coffee, the crowded, dingy, and ill-ventilated dormitories”.

Bondfield's campaigns helped pile pressure on Parliament to regulate shop work - an issue it had debated with relatively little effect since the 1840s. The 1899 Seats for Shop Assistants Act did what one would expect while the 1904 Shop Hours Act tried to reduce working hours by empowering local councils to fix local trading times.

Enforcing that regulation was another matter entirely. Most shops were small family businesses and their owners resisted change. The 1904 Act, for example, had enforcement governed by local discretion. Shopkeepers' views certainly mattered more than those of any upstart shopgirls.

Bondfield went on to serve as assistant secretary to the national shopworkers' union and was the only woman delegate to attend the 1899 TUC annual conference. She later left shop work and became involved with many other organisations, including the Women's Labour League and the Women's Co-operative Guild which won a landmark living wage for the co-op's female shopworkers in 1911.

*The only woman
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Angry at the women being granted the vote, but only from the age of 30, she helped set up the National Council for Adult Suffrage that pushed for uncompromising universal suffrage.

In 1923, Bondfield was elected as Labour MP for Northampton. In 1931, she was appointed Secretary of State for labour by Prime Minister Ramsay McDonald, becoming the first woman to join the cabinet. But her time in office was short-lived. Bondfield lost her seat in the election later that year and dropped out of national politics.

Despite this, she left a valuable legacy - not least as one who helped pave the way for other women in public life.

Taking Stock: The Changing Nature of Women and Leadership

Arabella Gonzalez

In 1979 I was eleven years old, wore plaits and was very excited to have left my small country primary school behind and to have made it to the Girls' High School in Oswestry, our local market town. It was my first experience of a general election and I was just old enough to be allowed to stay up to watch the Nine O' Clock News on BBC1. When our first female Prime Minister came to power, my class (1M under the care of Miss Makepeace) were wild with excitement. This was a brave new world and we were going to be the generation of young women who reaped the benefits of 1970s feminism.

When I was asked to contribute to this collection my first thought was remembering that moment in 1979. My second thought was that I wanted to take the opportunity to find out where my generation thought we had got to in the evolution of female leadership during our working lives. So this essay is a result of those conversations. My current working context is education and I work for one of the Great 12 Livery Companies in the City of London so I have been able to talk to some senior educators and successful City financiers and lawyers. I have also worked in the very different world of tech and e-commerce so I used contacts there. Most people I spoke to were women. All were very interested to discuss the subject and some initiated background conversations with their own networks before talking to me. So, in a small way, this is an example of Hive thinking but, naturally, influenced by my personal experience and choices of what to include.

My contacts began by discussing the qualities of leadership that we most value. Integrity is universally admired, clarity of thought and the ability to communicate well is key, transparency and trust are vital. We trust those who reflect, are thoughtful about context and people, and when we believe that principles underpin vision and decision making. We talked about how important it is that that leaders are prepared to roll their sleeves up and get directly involved but that enabling others and delegating well is how impact is created.

If I need something said, I ask a man. If I want something done, I ask a woman. Are these words of Margaret Thatcher's true? Are there differences between how men and women lead? Generalising is risky because we all know both individual examples that break the mould and that nature and nurture are relentlessly intertwined.

However, we are where we are. I do perceive typically male qualities and behaviours that support their capacity to become great leaders and, perhaps significantly, highly visible leaders. Men are more likely to think entrepreneurially – they like competition, games and experimentation, they are good at thinking creatively, focussing on a single target without distraction and creating a compelling vision. I agree that a woman would be much less likely to make “Move fast and break things” a company mantra like Mark Zuckerberg. Men are better at networking and this gives them an exciting random exploration of ideas and synergies that may lead to inspiring new ideas.

Men tend to be more transactional and are prepared to try, fail and try again repeatedly. I am told that the single most important predictor of a successful sales person is the ability to take failure impersonally. The revenue engines of successful companies do tend to be male dominated. We are all sometimes victims of imposter syndrome in new or challenging situations but men are generally better at masking this than women. When things go wrong they may be better at laughing it off and moving on.

Would a more typical female mantra be “Move fast and fix things?”

So, typically, what do women do better? The female model of leadership is described as considered, collaborative, considerate and co-constructive. Women work harder and do indeed, get stuff done. Would a more typical female mantra be “Move fast and fix things?”⁴

Women may be more likely to exemplify the characteristics of servant leadership by encouraging diversity of thought, creating a culture of trust, having an unselfish mind set and fostering leadership in others. Perhaps many of the best known leaders of our age are men but, in terms of the defining moments of this decade, it is worth noting that the frontline research teams responsible for the development of Oxford Astra Zeneca, Pfizer,

⁴ Anne Morriss <http://t.ted.com/rQ1fP84>

and Johnson & Johnson were headed up by women. It has also been suggested⁵ that countries led by women dealt better with Covid than those led by men.

And yet, according to recent LinkedIn research⁶, women still make up less than a third of senior leadership positions globally, with this proportion only increasing at 1% a year. Why is this?

You can't be what you can't see - Marian Wright Edelman's words hold true in this context. There is a shortage of visible role models of successful women. Girls and young women have less highly successful models of leadership to emulate. Several women I spoke to commented that they had been lucky to have successful mothers, or inspiring teachers in a girls' school environment. But in some cases, successful women who established their careers in the 1990s/2000s may have had to make life choices in order to compete in male dominated environments. This may make them seem less relatable to young women.

There is a shortage of visible role models of successful women

Sometimes female strengths can be counterproductive in a leadership situation - too much compassion can impede good decision making, careful consideration can turn into overthinking, a focus on relationships can lead to the assumption that everything is meant personally, emotions can look like weakness and perhaps most significantly sometimes you need to drive an unpopular new path to break new ground, it isn't always possible to corral everyone and take them with you.

The visual nature of leadership is complex for women and this can create barriers. Adopting the male approach of grey suit anonymity is a statement in itself. Conversely, dressing to attract attention can be seen by some as manipulative. Standing networking events can be challenging when men are physically talking over your head. Raised female voices can easily sound shrill and smaller physical stature is less easily authoritative.

5 <https://www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2022/06/female-leadership-attributed-fewer-covid-19-deaths>

6 <https://economicgraph.linkedin.com/blog/the-number-of-women-hired-into-leadership-is-increasing-but-by-less-than-one-percent-a-year>

Then there are family responsibilities. Young fathers in 2023 are much more involved in looking after their children than they were in previous generations. But, in many families, responsibility for children is still weighted towards mothers. The buck has to stop somewhere and most families are still managed by the mother. One of my younger contacts told me that fathers are not even assistant managers; they are more like the intern! Obviously, families come in all sorts of shapes and sizes and there are many households where this is not the case. But family responsibilities do mean conflicting loyalties for many women and make giving the 110% commitment to work that ensures rapid promotion impossible.

*Family
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Are things changing? In some ways women are benefitting from the current 24/7 always on, always connected world. Hybrid working means that women may be able to adjust their working hours around other responsibilities and return to the laptop after the children are in bed. Certainly, I myself benefitted from this when my children were young and I worked

for a global, Skype based business in the late 2000s. This may lead to women never really stopping work. It did in my case.

So what does this mean? It means that women make choices. They choose sectors where a softer, more collegiate, human centric approach is welcomed. LinkedIn's research notes the highest proportion of women in C Suite roles in the UK in Education and Hospitals and Health Care. Long term, in the age of AI, this may be a wise specialisation. Currently technology is a very male dominated field, but, when the technology can write itself and many professions are taken over by AI, sectors that need human interaction will become more highly valued.

It means we need to recognise that the world in 2023 is an ambiguous and uncertain place for young girls. They are under relentless social and media pressure 24/7 and find the lack of control of their visual image on social media alarming. The world of work will change radically in their lifetimes and the plethora of options available to them can be intimidating. Their positive mental health should be our priority. We should support young women to understand the choices open to them and develop the skills they

will need to become leaders. They need our help even more when they have to combat barriers, not just of gender but also of culture and religion (described by some young girls as triple glazing). One way we can do this is to develop their leadership and networking skills, enable them to experiment and try out new ideas.

It means that we should reflect on the nature of success. Work life balance is an important consideration in 2024. There are different kinds of leadership and different kinds of success. The choices that women make that manifest as disproportionately middle management or lower ranking jobs may reflect wise and balanced life choices. With the development of technology, it is likely that our lives will become more leisured and a pattern of life that encompasses varied kinds of self-worth will be important to psychological survival.

I have been very lucky. I have balanced having three children and a career that I have always enjoyed and found satisfying. Reflecting on these discussions I realise that I have been able to do this without (much) guilt because I always had significant support from my mother (who was herself a great role model, as was my aunt). I have chosen relatively accessible sectors. I have had some great colleagues. Technology was on my side. I was also fortunate with the timing of the opportunities that came my way when my family responsibilities allowed me to take them.

As part of my current role as Director for Schools for the Haberdashers' Company I am developing the Haberdashers' Advantage Character programme. I am working with schools on pupil leadership and character development. We will be paying close attention to how we can do this best to meet the real life context experienced by the girls at our schools. I have been glad to include the thoughts and experiences of my contemporaries in this paper. When I next return to the subject I hope to also include the voices of girls and young women. Perhaps the most important thing we can do as women leaders is to hold the door wide open for those coming behind us.

Katherine West in conversation with Lil Bremermann-Richard

The Three Environments

My overwhelming feeling after spending a glorious hour immersing myself in conversation with Lil Bremermann-Richard is that I wish that I had met her sooner and how grateful I am that she shared so many of her insights with me. I think that is probably how most people feel when they leave her company. I felt heard. I felt seen and I felt challenged. I feel that I came away a better person.

Lil's journey to her position as CEO of Oxford International Education Group is well documented. Born in Uruguay to two parents who instilled in her an amazing work ethic, her Latino spirit shines through in how hard she works every single day. She says of her first day at school "you could see that I was ready to kill a lion". Her ambition was evident from day one. Lil had goals and she was going to achieve them. She was taught not to let anything stand in her way.

Lil believes that women have the same opportunities as men to succeed, as long as they are prepared to work hard and accept that being very successful does indeed take a lot of hard work. Her mother was her earliest role model in this regard. She earned more than Lil's father, not least because she had three jobs. Her perspective as a woman and from being foreign in this country, is that opportunities do exist but you have to be prepared for what that means. You have to be happy to drop your child off at nursery at 7:30 every morning and pick them up again at 6:30 at night and, perhaps most significantly, face the potential judgement of other women for making that choice. This point could be an essay in its own right – and so I shall just leave it here for reflection on this occasion. Why are women so unkind to other women?

It is all too easy for women to see opportunities but not believe that they are able to seize them. They question themselves in a way that perhaps men don't. Is now the right time? It appears that women think this a lot during their 30s and 40s and then all of a sudden, they feel like they have missed the boat, maybe even a lot of boats.

During our conversation we reflected that things in the working world really are getting better in our generation however still there are too many people who see men being the breadwinners and men being key in decision making roles. We agreed that the reason these reports are needed is because we are still addressing an audience that has experienced that male dominance, and as a result, they need to hear, and they need to see that more of us are making a difference.

Lil believes that women can, should and will succeed in all aspects of the working world. She distilled her thinking into what needs to exist, and indeed still change, in three distinct environments. I shall leave her to explain them in her own words:

“The first environment is your household. What are the agreements that you've made with your partner and how are you running your household? This has to be discussed from the beginning of a relationship. Everybody thinks to sort out the financials, but nobody talks about career aspirations and life plans. I think they need to be spoken about. My husband, at the time boyfriend, was prepared to join my plans. My ambition was very clear from childhood. You have to have support at home and know that you are part of a team that will make it work for both of you.

Women can, should and will succeed in all aspects of the working world

The second environment is society, the society you live in. I think it is particularly hard in relation to schools for both parents. You are required to turn up to school at 11:15 in the morning, having let you know that only three days before. My husband and I always sorted it out. So, my husband has gone to many Mother's Day events in the past! My husband and I are aligned. We know what we both want and we haven't missed a school event. It just takes planning. There is the issue with the high cost of childcare. Sometimes it's more than the woman earns, especially when you get the second child. Luckily I was told by a Nigerian parent, when he saw me pregnant with my first child, he said to me, I'm going to give you one piece of advice - see childcare fees as your university fees, see it as an investment. If you continue to work despite spending all your money on childcare fees, in a few years the cost of childcare fees will drop and your earnings will have tripled. I guarantee.

And he was right. When I had my son, I was the only woman going back to work in three months' time.

And then the third environment is the workplace. I think we've done a lot around being careful with what we say; on maternity leave; and on being flexible, I think a lot of that has been done. And Covid even helped more frankly.

I don't think there is enough done about encouraging men to take paternity leave to share the leave between the woman and the man. I'm from Uruguay, and three months is what women take, so everybody's equal. But, here it is not. It would be better if you could share more of it and you say, one will take four months and the other one takes four, but I don't think there is enough being done on that. And we should be glad that childcare cost is dropping. People are not talking about it enough. But now the government is giving 30 hours. Many women go back to work for fewer hours than that, so this will cover what they need in a lot of cases."

It strikes me that all of this is process based. Is not about women not being as skilled, or as intelligent, or as hardworking. It is about putting the scaffolding in place to allow both men and women to succeed. It is about being fierce and doing what is needed so that you can be a mother and have a fulfilling career. Women wouldn't want to hand over pregnancy to men. We agreed that

It's about being fierce and doing what is needed

it is a privilege to be the one to bring our children into the world. Men and women are not equal, we are different. Men have a responsibility that is equal to ours, and it is about sharing that responsibility. Lil was very clear that this is not the same as asking for allowances. It is about doing what is

necessary to succeed in work and be a parent.

Lil also believes strongly that women have to accept that high powered positions come with responsibility. Even if you only do them three days a week you have the responsibility. Tasks can be delegated, but the responsibility cannot. Many women do struggle to hold that pressure alongside their duties outside the workplace. This is where I had my thoughts challenged the most. Women are often choosing not to accept that pressure. It is not the world's fault that having everything, whatever everything

means to different people, is hard work. Lil looks back on what she had do in her late 20s and 30s and is exhausted at the thought – but it was the investment that was needed to get where she is today. She said “women need to understand that the world doesn't need to stop because they are a women or because they chose to have kids”. This really made me stop and reflect. It is true. We agreed that this is what makes us strong.

High powered positions come with responsibility

There is also a significant element of being seen by someone early in your career who sees something in you and encourages you to be better. This is true for men too of course. I asked Lil about her mentors and role models, and many of them were and are men. The CEO of one of the places she worked early in her career really saw her. There was one particular occasion where Lil made a suggestion which needed a really quick decision or the opportunity would be missed – you basically had thirty seconds to get his attention and then he kicked you out his office – and he liked the idea and so challenged Lil to present it to the board the following morning at 8:30. Lil could have said that she had an 18 month old child to get home to, instead she worked all evening to put together the presentation for the board. The deal made the business £11 million and her career took off from there. He saw something in her and he gave her the opportunity to succeed or fail. His support was sometimes rude but Lil never saw it as a negative. He was very direct in highlighting her flaws. She chose to rise to that level of challenge and do everything possible to overcome them. His intention was never to make her feel bad, but rather to look at where she needed to grow.

Lil has never said no. When people have given her, or she has seen, the opportunity to do something, she has taken it. She feels that sometimes she has reached the limit of what one human should have to do, but she hasn't shied away from that pressure. Lil doesn't see that society sets limits on what women can achieve, she believes that we do that for ourselves. These limits are influenced by how we believe society is judging our choices, but the limits are set by us. That quietened me down for a bit. I think she has a point.

Lil has been judged (and maybe as a reader, you are judging her now); people have warned her that she will burn out. Her joy for what she does is evident in the way she lights up when she talks about what she does, what she has done and what she plans to do. She hasn't had to rely on sheer willpower as she is fuelled by an indefatigable passion to be the best version of herself every single day.

So what about the girls and young women of the future? What are the messages that we are giving them? What are the conversations that we are having at school? Increasing numbers of girls are leaving school not even sure that they want to get married or to have children. Lil and I agreed that in our generation very few of us had the courage to challenge the convention of what is expected. Lil believes that more girls will be coming out of school thinking they have talent and that they have a duty to society and responsibility to share that with the world. And I for one hope they do.

If we want to have a level playing field, then it has to be a level playing field in all terms. Men are increasingly planning their work around family commitments too. Sometimes Lil and her team wind up a meeting so that they can get home to their families, and then they have to pick up the conversations again at 8pm. These

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are choices that we are all able to make. All of us, men and women. In the working world we can now access meetings virtually so that we are available more easily for our family responsibilities. People seem to be expecting something more relaxing than that. If you want to succeed you are going to have to do hard things.

Lil said "you need to shoot for the stars and when you get to the moon, you put your flag down. And that's ok."

Leading in the Square Mile: City Livery and City Politic

Caroline Haines

Since Henry Fitz-Ailwin, the first holder of the office of Lord Mayor of the City of London in 1189, only two women have held this high office out of the 694 who have served: Dame Mary Donaldson (1983-84) and Dame Fiona Woolf (2013-14).

The office of Lord Mayor blends the City Livery and City Politic. The office holder sits on the Court of Common Council as an Alderman but is elected to that office by the Livery and has often also served as Master of a Livery Company. Equivalent to Ambassadorial rank, aspiring to such a unique high office is daunting.

The Court of Common Council comprises 25 Alderman, representing each of the 25 wards of the City of London, also known as the Square Mile. Each ward elects between two and ten Common Councillors, depending on the size of the electorate, which uniquely is made up from business and residential electors. Common Councillors are elected every four years, Aldermen every six, and the next elections are in 2025. At present there are six women on the Court of Alderman and with Dame Susan Langley having just taken her place as Sheriff of London at the Old Bailey (a one-year compulsory term which is non-negotiable if progressing to Lord Mayor) hopes are high that we may soon witness another female Lord Mayor.

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Amongst Common Councillors, change is also in progress. There are now 36 women councillors making up 75 elected members, and I am one of those Common Councillors, elected initially in 2017 and then again uncontested in 2022 (COVID meant one term of five years and one of three rather than the usual four years).

I am a lifelong educator and it was one of the Alderman who encouraged me to stand. Having tried to persuade him that this made no sense because I wasn't a banker, financier or lawyer his answer was: we can do all that – we need people with your skills set that bring something different.

My electoral ward is Queenhithe, a riverine ward (that includes the Millenium Bridge and looks across the Thames to the Globe) crucial to the development of the trade that laid the foundations for the City of London becoming a global financial hub. It is humbling to be reminded of the two great early English Queens after which the Ward is named: Queen Matilda (1102-1167), a great architect and social reformer who built the first public conveniences in the Ward and Queen Eleanor (1122- 1204), a warrior leader and astute business woman, renowned for her fierce nature and lack of compromise.

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The first woman president of a Ward Club, Ivy Sharp, ran her fur trade business from Queenhithe in the immediate post war period and the first female Chair of Policy and Resources (1996-2003), Dame Judith Mayhew, later becoming Provost of King's

Cambridge, was a Ward resident. So I follow an interesting line of change makers who have risen to the challenge of stepping into a political environment dominated by men, harnessing the vision of leaving the City of London politic a better place than they found it.....and I have experienced positive support at critical moments from both male and female members.

Yes – I had the good fortune of being matched with a really supportive female senior member mentor following my election but there have also been some key moments where male leaders have encouraged me to put myself forward for election to key committees and positions, even stepping back when votes were narrow or opinion divided.

I was quickly elected as Chair of the Education Board and then Chair of the Natural Environment Board. Recently elected as Vice Chair of Policy and Resources, so becoming part of the Senior

Leadership team of the City Corporation, I am now intimately involved with strategic decision making at the heart of one of the world's leading financial hubs and yet I am, in essence, a teacher.

It is as a lifelong educator that I became drawn into the other pre-requisite for Lord Mayors: the Livery movement. Two decades ago, I was approached to give my support to the newly formed Guild of Educators. Guilds have existed in the City of London since the 13th Century as a means of assuring quality control around the production, accreditation and trading of goods and skills, from goldsmithing to carpentry, spices to bread. Many of the oldest and wealthiest Liveries were formed before the 18th Century, following which there was a gap until the early 20th. Livery Companies formed after 1932 are known as Modern Livery Companies, of which there are 33, beginning with the Mariners (number 78) and in 2023, ending with the Nurses (at 111). The now Worshipful Company of Educators sits at number 109, having begun life as a Guild in 2001, receiving full Livery status in 2013 and granted our Royal Charter in 2017.

During the last 40 years there have been 210 Lady Masters across all Liveries: the numbers are growing but with 111 Masters in any annual cycle this still represents a relatively small proportion.

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Elected Master 2022-3, I was honoured to be part of a movement that in total annually donates around £72 million to charities, many of them educational, and our Educators Livery supports the Inspirational Educators Awards. For the first part of my term all 5 senior officers of the Company were women, seeming natural to us but often remarked upon by the more traditional Companies.

To be Master takes time and financial resource – with both these factors being in relatively short supply amongst women already leading in their chosen profession or business – but it is a brilliant way of seeing behind closed doors, of networking, building contacts and sharing priorities that are still barred to many women across the full spectrum of professions.

The City Politic and City Livery fuse in the role of the Lord Mayor.

Do I want to stand as an Alderman and possibly become Lord Mayor? No: I have been invited twice to do just that but, like many reading this, my *raison d'être* is to create and lead change not to become part of a historic and ceremonial role that, powerful though it may be, is heavily directed by the national government as a supporting ambassadorial role to the Foreign Office.

My dual roles enable me to be a facilitator, an enabler, fulfilling my lifelong commitment to fight for social mobility and equality of opportunity, leaving lives rather better at the end of my journey than when I started as a classroom practitioner.

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My key words of advice: Be brave. Be heard. Communicate your message and maybe stand for election to the Court of Common Council in 2025!

Women In Leadership

Libby Nicholas

Rewind six years to my first account of the challenges facing women in leadership and I thought life was tough then juggling with one child. Now I have four.

So, what has changed in the intervening years: the answer is both many things and nothing. I am making progress in my own sphere of influence, and I'll come to that later, but in the wider context, the truth is that frustratingly, the data shows us that very little has changed.

Earlier this year, the UK's largest listed businesses gave themselves a big pat on the back for hitting a target of having women fill 40% of board seats, three years ahead of plan. The government-backed FTSE Women Leaders Review announced in February (2023) that there is at least one woman serving on every FTSE 350 board. What they didn't shout about was that 90% of those female directors are non-executives and only 18 are Chairs.

What's more, having female representation on each Board is one thing, having a woman at the top running the organisation is quite another. The truth is we're falling short. As of August 2023, there are still only ten female CEOs in the FTSE 100 and just 19 in the FTSE 350, a mere 5% of the total. Something needs to change and the world of education fares no better; if anything it's worse. The sector still languishes pretty near the bottom of the class when it comes to making strategic moves which would enable women to progress to the top.

Financial services, tech, retail – even the House of Commons – have all recognised the need to change the way they think about their female employees and the support they provide. Nurseries and creches, spaces allocated for breastfeeding, genuinely flexible hours: these are all becoming increasingly commonplace in many a workplace, but rarely in education.

The result: too many women in the most senior positions in education are still having to choose between their career and starting, or extending, their family.

At the time of writing my last submission for Women in Leadership in 2016 I had made the decision to focus on my career rather than having any more children. This enabled me to strike what I thought was the 'balance' between a successful career and family life. As the Founding Chief Executive Officer of Astrea Academy Trust, a family of 27 schools with a 100% track record of significant school improvement, I perhaps wasn't aware of the toil this was taking on my life.

Call it naivety, but I thought that the 'go go go' mentality was serving me well. However there was an imbalance to that energy and I was sad at the end of my time leading Astrea that my marriage hadn't survived. Then came the Covid lockdowns which gave the education sector the opportunity to be catapulted into the future (whether it liked it or not!) through hybrid learning, and personally I had some space to regroup and rethink.

In Jan 2020, I was delighted to move back into the independent sector as the Managing Director of Dukes Education, now the UK's largest group of independent schools. I also started a new relationship, gained a step-daughter and went on to have two babies back-to-back.

For some, including myself, the lockdowns provided a real gift for families to spend more time together. Online learning developed at pace and we were able to provide clear evidence in our schools that it worked well. However, after the lockdowns were lifted we reverted straight back to all face-to-face learning and, in my opinion, we were too quick to re-set without exploring a hybrid model for teaching staff. What our academic data shows is that online learning actually suited some children very well and that progress made was greater remotely than in a solely face-to-face classroom setting.

I would love to see the sector being more radical in the way we organise the school day to suit all students and teachers. I intend to challenge like a mosquito, persistently buzzing for innovation and change, because adopting a more flexible approach will very simply mean that more female leaders flourish.

Women leaders need to create environments for other women leaders to thrive. There shouldn't be a need for work-life balance, the very phrase sets work and life apart and in opposition to each other. Let's make life work. Let's make sure all our colleagues can truly flourish.

I say yes to the odd duvet day for when energy levels are low, I say yes to parents never missing their child's first day of school or nativity play, and yes to professional autonomy without shame or fear. That's why at Dukes, just as I set out at Astrea, we cherish and respect those moments that make us human.

I would like for colleagues to work with me through births, deaths, illness, marriage – and the full gamut of human experience in between. I reiterate that to do this, an organisation must be able to 'flex' to respond to individual needs - be that secondments, moving to part time, working from home or negotiating a period of absence. Decisions should be made with people in mind, not policy. I've been holding inset days on this very topic to make sure that this philosophy filters through to all staff.

The tide is turning slowly, but I still see behaviours that are unhelpful in setting male and female leaders apart in the workplace and nowhere is this more obvious than remuneration. It is always surprising to me that when hiring across senior roles including headteacher positions, the vast majority of men when offered the role will negotiate my opening salary, but the female candidates almost never do.

A gender pay gap is not what I want to see, so now when I offer a starting salary to a female candidate, I invite her to negotiate with me. I find that women feel uncomfortable expressing their worth in monetary terms and need to be given permission to raise it.

Financial literacy is important for addressing this imbalance, and that's why Dukes Education schools have worked with Abi Foster, Founder of finance-education platform Elent, which aims to reduce the financial inequality gap by offering one-on-one coaching to female staff, and hosting workshops in our schools for students too.

To other women with ambitions in leadership and family commitments, I'd say achieving financial understanding and control is liberating, but equality in all aspects of our work and home lives is what we're ultimately striving for. In honesty, this can only happen if you have a genuinely supportive partner.

In that vein, let's talk about family admin and childcare for a moment. It may be that our partners' baby-boomer view of family, where mum typically stayed at home, means they may not always recognise the unseen burden on working mothers. Women will often do a full day's work and then tend to the baby or child in the middle of the night, every night. Many men do this too, but they tend to be better at carving out guilt-free space for themselves. As women we need to get better at this because the old adage is true that you can't pour from an empty cup.

And for those just starting out on their career path, I'd say climb the career ladder quickly, get as far as you can in the first ten years, so you'll have earned more professional autonomy before starting or extending your family. Leaders then have more leverage to make work, work for them and to fit in around their family. I had my first child at 26 and then my last two children in my early forties.

*Climb the
career ladder
quickly.*

A huge turning point for me as a leader came when I interviewed for my current role. I was pregnant with my third child and shortly after I fell pregnant with my fourth child and it simply wasn't an issue for my boss Aatif Hassan, Founder and Chairman of Dukes Education, who said 'take your time, family comes first'. My suitability for the role and the time I needed as a mum was never called into question and that's exactly how it should be.

Now, I don't mind admitting that my life is messy, chaotic and complex. It may not look like that to others on the surface, but that's the reality of being a working mum in a leadership role. I certainly don't have all the answers and the superwoman persona, in my opinion, is not helpful anyway.

What is helpful is finding yourself a really good mentor. At crunch moments it really helps to have someone you can turn to for advice. We don't want to lose talented female leaders, we simply can't afford for them to fall away.

Last time I contributed to this report I shared the three most important points that I'd taken away from my mentor and I still live by them. First: always read papers before meetings as many other people will not have done so. Second, take the time to switch from operational thinking to strategic thinking; one is practical and the other imaginative. The brain needs a different mode for each type of thinking to be successful. And third

– and perhaps the most important one – remember it's a marathon not a sprint.

*It's a marathon
not a sprint.*

Take time when it's important – family and friends should come first. Any sense of urgency is self-determined not set by others.

I've since added a fourth point and for those who know me well, they'll say it's my mantra - 'no decision based on fear'. I'd urge you to adopt this one for yourself too. Go out there, put yourself forward, jump in with both feet, don't be afraid of what you don't know. You'll work it out, so embrace the challenge and rise to the top.

Embracing Diversity: A Personal Journey

Professor Louise Jackson

To the outsider, I suppose my career path might look quite ordinary – college, university, travel, academic career. The detail, however, reveals a slightly less than conventional set of circumstances and barriers. As a woman who navigates neurodiversity, experienced young and single parenthood, and developed first as a musician, then as an academic, my journey has been a kind of tapestry woven with threads of quiet or soft resilience and the constant improvisation of decisions. Alongside this, and because of the way in which I process the world around me, I've battled with heightened emotional reactivity and what I describe as procrastinating perfectionism.

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My entrance into the academic world was marked by challenges. As a young, single mother during my student years, I experienced the prejudice of others, their bias and negative assumptions. Looking back, I had to work harder and assert myself a lot more than those around me, to gain a place around the decision-making table. If I had a pound for every time someone has said I just need a bit more resilience... The notion of resilience

often oversimplifies the struggles faced by single mothers. It assumes that sheer determination can eliminate the obstacles unique to balancing the demands of motherhood and, in my case, academia. It seemed like the world believed resilience alone could solve the complex puzzle of balancing motherhood with creative and academic pursuits. The reality was far more intricate and revealed a truth rooted in embracing imperfection, rejecting societal expectations, and learning to engage with the unpredictability of life. I have a postgraduate graduation photo of myself with my daughter who was about 3 years old at the time and was given a mini graduation cap to wear: I often look at that and remember her fierce pride as she gripped my hand whilst the photographer did their work. It is a solid reminder to me about distance travelled and challenges overcome.

Some of the facets of my neurodiversity include the tendency to be a procrastinating perfectionist and to have extreme emotional reactions to situations and in my interpretation of what people say to me. Balancing my desire for perfection within my own interpretation combined with the need to meet external deadlines, has been a constant source of frustration to me, and no doubt, to those around me. However, rather than viewing it as a hindrance, I discovered that this trait allowed me to see the world through a unique lens. It fueled and utilised my natural creativity, pushing me to find unconventional solutions to challenges. Although sometimes I find it difficult to immediately navigate questions that are put to me (I often need to talk through my immediate thoughts to get to the point of the question), once I get a grip on what is being asked, I can find interesting and innovative approaches to problem solving.

Part of my development has focused on embracing competing deadlines; previously I often found myself feeling like an improviser in my professional life, but once I was able to reconcile my musical skills with self-management, I became more comfortable. The script was never set in stone, and I had to think on my feet, making decisions that seemed to materialise out of thin air. This constant state of uncertainty can be overwhelming, but it has also opened doors to unexpected opportunities and personal growth.

The advice to "just be more resilient" has been a constant piece of guidance but I realised quite early on that my form of resilience goes beyond merely weathering storms and coming out 'stronger' on the other side. It involves adapting, learning, and most importantly, embracing vulnerability. This transparency of vulnerability is something that colleagues have routinely commented on, not as a weakness but as a way of enhancing and developing and I feel a sense of pride that I am viewed as a role model.

My resilience involves adapting, learning and embracing vulnerability

Recognising that I didn't always have all the answers was a powerful revelation, and acknowledging openly the way I sometimes have difficulty processing information, instructions, and questions, has transformed not only the way I work but the way others do too. This has allowed me to seek guidance, collaborate with others, and build a support network that became my anchor in turbulent times.

One of the challenges I faced was the internal struggle of feeling like I never truly knew what I was doing. The imposter syndrome whispered doubts, questioning my competence and authority. However, I have come to understand that uncertainty is not a weakness, but a natural part of growth. Uncertainty is the fertile ground from which innovation and my version of resilience blossom. Speaking about neurodiversity, young parenthood, entering

*Unwavering
commitment
to supporting
students and
staff navigating
neurodiversity*

academia with no family background in this career path, then taking up a senior role firstly at one of the world's leading conservatoires and subsequently at one of the UK's newest universities, all form part of a unique trajectory that I hope to use to further support a wide range of individuals and groups. Even now though, after being awarded the highest award for teaching in the UK in 2013, and with three institutions conferring a professorship on me, I still don't necessarily feel comfortable or worthy of my achievements. This is ongoing work for me, but I've stopped trying to fix myself. Rather I look at what triggers these feelings and reactions in my professional life to support change in organisational culture.

In my leadership journey, a guiding principle has been the unwavering commitment to supporting students and staff who, like me, navigate the complexities of neurodiversity and diverse life experiences. Recognising the unique challenges they may face, my approach is rooted in fostering an inclusive environment that values individual strengths and embraces the diversity of perspectives.

As a leader, I believe in creating a space where every member of the community feels seen, heard, and supported. It is important that we work together to create a shared sense of belonging and

matter to each other. This involves actively acknowledging and accommodating different working styles, understanding that the path to success is not one-size-fits-all. By embracing neurodiversity and life's various challenges, we can harness the collective power of a team with diverse talents and perspectives. The number of people who talk to me now about their concerns about their own neuro-processing challenges is testament to this.

My commitment extends beyond mere acknowledgment; it involves implementing policies and practices that prioritise the well-being and professional growth of individuals facing similar challenges. This includes offering personal mentorships, and creating a culture of open communication where everyone's voice is valued.

By championing an inclusive approach, I aim to dismantle the barriers that neurodivergent individuals often encounter in professional settings. This isn't just about accommodating differences; it's about celebrating them as catalysts for innovation and resilience. Through my leadership, I aspire to cultivate an environment where diversity is not only accepted but embraced as a fundamental strength.

In supporting students and staff facing similar challenges, I draw from my own experiences of overcoming obstacles and navigating uncharted territories. By sharing my journey and creating a platform for open conversations, I hope to inspire others to bring their authentic selves to the professional arena. Together, we can create a workplace culture that not only values diversity, but actively leverages it to achieve greater success.

In conclusion, my journey is not just mine alone—it's a testament to the resilience, creativity, and unwavering determination that define professional women who defy conventions and break barriers. It's an invitation to embrace the beauty in imperfection and push forward with courage, even when the path ahead seems unclear or uncertain. Through the lens of my experiences and as a leader, I aspire to contribute to a broader cultural shift that recognises and celebrates the unique strengths that everyone brings to the table.

Celebrate the unique strengths that everyone brings to the table

Katherine West interviews Natalie Campbell about her life and career

You are quoted in the Evening Standard as saying “I don’t need to raise my profile any more.” This was in relation to your interest in standing for Mayor of London. How hard was it to establish that profile in the first place and what were the greatest challenges and assumptions that you faced?

I enjoy my work, the people I work with and the chance to make a difference. None of that would have changed if I had become a Mayoral candidate. I have been an entrepreneur since I was 15. I didn’t see anything as a challenge. I didn’t see walls or barriers and was always thinking and plotting on what I could do. I opened my first business at 19, set up a franchise by 31. There are three key requirements and objectives for most things to crack. The key is to work out what they are for each situation and then get the answer yes to those three questions. That is true in both my personal and professional life – whether running a business or running a 10K. I think that generationally, young people don’t always know that there’s an opportunity in adversity.

How much do you think that the external validation of awards like the ‘Community Spirit’ award at the ‘Women of the Future Awards’ in 2016 and being recognised in the Management Today 35 Women Under 35 and City AM Power 100 Women lists helped in a male dominated environment? Did they make different people stop and listen?

I just did what I wanted. “Multi award winning” is always an interesting label. It can depend on what the awards are! I genuinely believe that at the core of being successful is doing good work. Everyone can have a single moment in time, but to succeed you have to deliver and keep doing so. I started young at interning and volunteering and so I have now had the opportunity to be in so many rooms and with people of influence. It’s hard to hide failure in that environment. What is the learning? I prepare. That is important. The older I get, the less I care about what I don’t know. I’m not a perfectionist; being a perfectionist doesn’t sit with being an entrepreneur. I recognise that going into these rooms, I am a working-class black woman from North London – people do ask

why am I there? Anytime I failed, I looked at the failure and learnt what to do better next time.

You once gave advice to take time to figure out who you are and then show up as that person. How did you do that? And does that sense of self change how other people perceive you?

I am lucky to have had a strong grounding from my family. It's not the most conventional set up – I grew up in kinship care. I always show up as myself. My state school had brilliant teachers and they said "if you want to do it, do it". My main tutor wrote: "to be inspired, stay inspired".

Always be bold and ask the simplest question as it is always the best one. You usually find that you are not the only person who doesn't know the answer. The key is to know when to ask it.

How has your own experience of education influenced how you will approach the role of Chancellor at the University of Westminster?

I was always fascinated by the idea of being a teacher. A good teacher gives you a good feeling and I wanted to pay that feeling forward. I was one of the founding members of the Kensington Aldridge Academy and we set up the first business incubator in a school, Kensington Creates. We operated under the idea of "Create, Make, Sell". You can have an idea and make it happen. The school was at the bottom of the Grenfell Tower, which gives you some idea of the kind of determination of the people who attended. Kensington Creates, was a unique hub in a flexible, modern workspace that sat at the heart of a creative and digital business community. With a focus on 18 - 35-year-olds, the big ambition was to help to nurture and establish more businesses in the local area to provide economic growth, increase employment, and see social improvements.

After that I missed being around the next generation, so when the University of Westminster role came along, it seemed to be the perfect fit. Sustainable development goals are central to the University as they are within my own business, Belu. The University also has one of the highest concentrations of BAME students and offers a high number of foundation courses, giving opportunities to those students who may not have done so well in

a conventional high school setting. At my installation I announced The Chancellors Circle, which was a new community of businesses and organisations that signed up to support the University with employability opportunities to make significant differences to the lives of Westminster Students. We are well supported from PWC to The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities. It's about much more than a ceremonial role for me, I am there to help and to make a difference.

How do you balance all the different threads of what you are working to achieve? Especially the fact that you are naturally an introvert, yet still radiate great energy in all that you do.

Balance is important. I don't believe in work life balance. I believe that you have a life and you do what you love. I schedule my own day! I have never handed that over to someone else to determine. I am an introvert, so I have to balance it all carefully so that I don't get exhausted. Even now, I still find rooms of people challenging. I like one to one meetings, groups of people are much more difficult, so I tend to focus on just getting to know one or two people.

So what is next for you?

I have always known what next but right now I don't know. I don't have a clear plan for the next decade, and I am learning to sit with that uncertainty.

What do you think we need to do to improve the education system in this country?

We are still teaching the majority of children in a way which does not always work. We focus too heavily on literacy and numeracy. We would do much better to teach resilience, communication, and joining things up which are all skills children need. We can then see where they excel and then build a curriculum for them from there. Now I think we start with the curriculum and then see the skills.

Rekindling our passion and purpose: A clarion call for the future of girls' education

Cheryl Giovannoni

Last year, the Girls' Day School Trust celebrated its 150th birthday as a charitable organisation and our long history of pioneering innovation in the education of girls. Our first schools were established in 1872 with a special charter signed at the Royal Albert Hall in London, by four suffragists with a radical vision at a time when girls were not considered worthy of an education equal to that of their brothers. Now, we have grown into a formidable family of 25 girls' schools, including 23 independent schools and two Academies, with a mission that is more important than ever to ensure that girls' schools continue to thrive for the next 150 years.

My thoughts often turn to the GDST's rebellious and brave founders when I am given the opportunity to discuss the progress of our urgent mission to create a more equal world, not just for girls and women, but for all society. My use of the word "urgent" is deliberate because recent data can sometimes lull us into a false sense of security that real progress has been made, and our purpose is nearly realised. The 2023 edition of the World Economic Forum's (WEF) annual Global Gender Gap Report, which assesses countries' progress towards gender equality across economic opportunities, health and survival, education and political empowerment is a prime example. It found that there has been a significant improvement in the educational attainment gap, with only 4.8% of the gap left to close. There were also modest improvements for health and survival, as well as political empowerment, with the gap closing in both categories.

Recent data can lull us into a false sense of security that real progress has been made.

However, the same report revealed that economic gender parity has receded since last year, which suggests that an important source of gender inequality stems from the overall underrepresentation of women in the labour market.

The WEF also predicts that if progress towards gender equality continues at the same average speed observed between the 2006 and 2023 editions, the overall global gender gap is projected to close in (wait for it) 131 years, compared to a projection of 132 years in 2022.

We must not lose momentum just because some people believe the battle is half won.

I believe many of these findings highlight the need to reiterate an urgent message to educators, policy makers and every advocate of equality. We cannot, and must not lose momentum just because some people believe the battle is half won. Plainly speaking, equality should not

be a choice between electing a female Prime Minister, recruiting more women into STEM careers or abolishing the motherhood penalty. It will take perseverance, but I can envisage a future where all three scenarios are commonplace, because anything else is just not acceptable.

The GDST has not and will not waver from our commitment to help girls learn without limits, so that they can go on to lead lives without limits. They are clearly the generation we believe will have the skills and the wherewithal, as well as the responsibility of making the world a better place for everyone. This mission drives our schools forward on a daily basis as we innovate across the curriculum and beyond, to ensure that our students are fully equipped to enter the adult world with confidence, resilience and agency. From our NASA approved Space Technology Programme to our Leadership and Entrepreneurship Diploma in partnership with LSE, and the work underway to improve financial literacy for all girls and young women, we pride ourselves on providing girls in our schools and our partner schools with the opportunities to excel. This prepares them for their futures, whatever they choose to do and wherever they choose to make a difference.

Some of our most important work is informed by the views and opinions of girls and young women themselves. In 2020, when we joined the International Coalition of Girls' Schools, we rekindled our long-held ambition to become the global leaders in girls' education, thereby reinforcing our commitment to champion the

rights of girls everywhere, not just those educated in our schools. We also commissioned The Girls' Futures Report, our landmark survey of 5,000 girls in state, academies and independent schools, to find out how they feel about their personal and professional futures, their dreams and aspirations for the future, and what mattered most to them.

Girls' Futures provides crucial evidence of the importance of girls' education and the difference that girl-focused environments can make to their confidence and leadership aspirations in later life. After all, in our schools, a girl holds every leadership position available - so the dream of being their own boss remains firmly within reach from their early years in junior school. But more importantly, most of the young women across both girls' and co-ed schools told us of their desire to lead in a more empathetic, collaborative and authentic way, eschewing the more dominant, top-down, traditional, leadership models of the past. We see this insight as our clarion call to work tirelessly through our partnership work to reach every girl and young woman in the UK, and contribute to the creation of a new, fearless generation of female leaders and changemakers across all industries, professions and walks of life in the future.

I want to end with a rallying call to everyone that cares about making the world a better place. Our hard work and dedication have brought us tantalisingly close to our goal, but we must continue to campaign even harder for girls and young women's access to educational and motivational environments that are tailored to meet their needs. The ongoing struggle to educate girls in Afghanistan demonstrates why we should never take our own progress for granted. Now more than ever, we must speak up for the girls and young women in our lives, and everywhere in the world. It is our responsibility to take up space in order to give them the space they need to thrive and fulfil their full potential. I am proud to take on this responsibility to create a better future for all girls, and I sincerely hope that you will join me.

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Should AI be more female?

Dr Eve Poole

The UK Government has recently published the 2023 National Risk Register, naming AI for the first time as a 'chronic risk.' Recently, a spate of experts have come forward to call for a re-think, and for more regulation. Have we lost control of AI already? Can we seize the initiative before it's too late? I think we can, but the answer is not so much about regulation, as about design; and the design that AI lacks is where women have typically excelled.

Much recent innovation has been inspired by biomimicry, which is the practice of learning from the tried and tested design of nature. We invented Velcro from looking at burrs and teasles; and the bumps on the fins of humpback whales have been used to design out drag in wind turbines. But when it comes to AI, we have not been looking closely enough at the humans we are trying to copy. In our haste to program only the very best of our design into AI, we have left out all the junk code - all the bits we're ashamed of, or struggle to understand, like our emotions, uncertainty, and intuition. This should not be a surprise, given the gender bias in the AI community. In fact, I have identified 7 items of 'junk code' in which lie the essential magic of our human design.

Our Junk Code: Free-will, Emotions, Sixth Sense, Uncertainty, Mistakes, Meaning and Storytelling

*Free will is
a disastrous
design choice*

If you think about it, Free Will is a disastrous design choice. Letting creatures do what they want is highly likely to lead to rapid extinction. So let's design in some ameliorators. The first is emotion. Humans are a very vulnerable

species because their young take 9 months to gestate and are largely helpless for their first few years. Emotion is a good design choice because it makes these creatures bond with their children and in their communities to protect the vulnerable. Next, you design in a Sixth Sense, so that when there is no clear data to inform a decision, they can use their intuition to seek wisdom from the collective unconscious, which helps de-risk decision-making. Then

we need to consolidate this by designing in uncertainty. A capacity to cope with ambiguity will stop them rushing into precipitous decision-making and make them seek others out for wise counsel. And if they do make mistakes? Well, they will learn from them. And mistakes that make them feel bad will develop in them a healthy conscience, which will steer them away from repeated harms in future. Now that we have corrected their design to promote survival, what motivators are needed for their future flourishing? They need to want to get out of bed on a dark day, so we fit them with a capacity for meaning-making, because a species that can discern or create meaning in the world will find reasons to keep living in the face of any adversity. And to keep the species going over generations? We design in a super- power about storytelling. Stories allow communities to transmit their core values and purpose down the generations in a highly sticky way. Stories last for centuries, future-proofing the species through learned wisdom of our ancestors, and the human species prevails.

A capacity to cope with ambiguity will stop them rushing into precipitous decision-making.

We had not thought to design humanity into AI because it seemed too messy. A robot that was emotional and made mistakes would soon be sent back to the shop. But on reflection, we can see that our junk code is part of a rather clever design. If this code is how we have solved our own control and alignment problems, might we not find wisdom in it for solving those problems for AI?

And when you look at it again, this junk code has always been particularly vital for women. Because of our ancient role as primary carer, since cave days we have been honing our emotional and intuitive skills, and have often been the ones answering the 'why' questions and telling stories to send the children to sleep. Anyone who has had a baby knows that it comes with no manual, so women well know that uncertainty and mistakes come with the territory, which is why it takes a village to raise a child. These days it is unwise to make too many assertions based on biological sex, but it seems that the downplaying of traditionally female attributes may be why we are running into problems with AI. Should the women now take over?

Women are equal to everything

Anna Searle

On appointment to the Lords, Lady Hale created a coat of arms bearing the motto *Omnia Feminae Aequissimae*, meaning “women are equal to everything”.⁷

If you had told me, as an 18-year-old student finishing their A Levels at a local high school in West Yorkshire, that one day I would be Chief Executive of a social mobility education charity, I would not have believed you. At the time, more women were working than in the previous decades, women were in senior positions but not significantly so in my experience at the time. The working world was still dominated by men and particularly in executive positions, while women continued to shoulder the burden as majority care-giver, whether for children or their wider family. Most women I knew were in retail, teachers, care-givers, carers, nurses or nuns

*Girls, you can
be anything
you want to be.*

and many had taken “time-out” of their careers for maternity and child-care. All senior teachers and Head Teachers I knew at the time were male, except for one, who had a lasting impression on me. Mrs Sewell was the Head Teacher of the small

primary school I attended as a five to seven year-old, she was passionate, driven and formidable, she was also fair and nurturing and believed the best in every child. Like Lady Hale (but less famously) she would regularly tell us “girls, you can be anything you want to be” (she equally encouraged the boys).

Without doubt there have been many female role models over the ages, but many were less visible to segments of society if this was not your lived experience or that of your peers. This has certainly changed in the last 40 years, where, according to the IFS, the employment rate of women in “prime working age” (aged 25-54) has risen from 57% in the mid-70s to 78% by 2017, largely as a result of changes in working patterns with many more women in employment between their mid to late 20s and early

⁷ The Guardian; 21 July 2017

30s and fewer leaving the workplace following their first child⁸. This reflects my experience, largely connected to the education and charity sectors, where I saw more women in middle and senior management positions from the 90s and the expectation and aspiration of a senior position for women became more tangible.

However, there remains significant disparity in employment, heightened during the Covid pandemic. In the second quarter of 2023, the proportion of women aged 16-64 in the workforce in the UK was 72% – down on the level in 2017⁹. Some of this decline was seen to be an impact of the Covid pandemic, with an increase in unemployment, economic inactivity and redundancies. The biggest impact of that period was on women, particularly as women were more likely to work in the most affected sectors, more women were furloughed and there was a reduction in opportunities for part-time employment¹⁰. This latter point had a direct impact on women in the workforce, as more women are likely to be in part-time work than men, with most part-time employment in the UK done by women (38%) compared to 14% of men in part-time work¹¹. It would therefore exacerbate the inequality of opportunities for women to join the workforce when so many roles are still offered as full-time only. While many organisations have improved flexible working options, including offering full or part-time roles, it is not considered standard and therefore continues to limit options for more women than for men given that more women work part-time.

There were no particular expectations to attend university when I was at school, it wasn't discouraged but wasn't expected. Looking back now, I feel I was able to attend University in something of a privileged time. Without tuition fees and with a full student grant as well as working throughout my time at university, I left with no debts. With no expectations on me, I was able to take up a volunteer teacher role in Alexandria, Egypt on finishing university.

8 The rise and rise of women's employment in the UK; Roantee, B and Vira, K; 2018 (ifs.org.uk publications)

9 UK employment rate by gender 2023, Statista (statista.com)

10 How has the coronavirus pandemic affected women in work? (parliament.uk) March, 2021

11 Women and the UK economy; Buchanan, I, Pratt, A, Francis-Devine, B; House of Commons Library. 2023

I lived and worked in many different countries over the next 20 years, in some of which I was among the first female managers or where women in the workplace remained less common, and after which, I returned to the UK in a senior position in 2013. Along the way I met some amazing and inspiring women leaders and role models, and also had to adapt to different contexts, at times being directly affected by discrimination, such as being asked once where the director was as surely I was "just" the director's wife. I was the director. At times along the way, I was also acutely aware of my regional accent and even considered when going to one meeting whether I should try to speak differently. Discrimination on so many levels, including against certain accents and backgrounds, remains a real issue but is a separate subject for another day. However, there is a connection with "voice" and career routes for women in the workplace where research has indicated the workplace continues to represent a male-dominated norm and without this, the workplace will not respond to the needs of the female workforce. Various influential feminist theorists have argued that women lack a language to use so must use "language that reflects and reinforces male dominance"¹² to succeed in the workplace.

*I had
opportunities
and I took
opportunities*

I had opportunities and I took opportunities, I faced challenges, and I challenged others. I have had the most wonderful and unexpected career and have really enjoyed it, whether it was the different cultures and traditions and languages I learnt, whether it

was the time I intended to delete one line in a spreadsheet and deleted the whole thing (with some very strange annual results as a consequence! And without an automatic backup. Yes, I learnt), I have worked with some wonderful people who I realised were taking me for who I am rather than what stereotypes suggested I should be to succeed. I became increasingly comfortable with that, but I didn't get there alone. Very few of us do.

What made the real difference to my career were the many people who supported and encouraged me along the way.

¹² "You just had to get on with it": Exploring the Persistence of Gender Inequality through Women's Career Histories; Ford J, Atkinson, C and Collinson, D; 2020 (Sage Publications, Vol 35, issue 1)

This was certainly not only women, but I found women often took a distinct approach through mentoring, guiding and indeed nurturing. The latter is often seen as a distinctly female trait, which along with other gender stereotypes is viewed as at-odds with the male-dominated norm of the workplace and can impact women's career progression¹³. I know I have experienced and benefitted from the experience of leaders who have recognized and supported potential and capability above gender stereotype and have given their time to mentor me. I hope I have lived up to their generosity through mentoring and supporting others on their career paths whoever they are, and I am always thrilled to see their career or life progress (thank you LinkedIn!).

This is in part what led me to my current role – the one which that 18-year-old still doesn't really believe happened. The Access Project approach is built on mentoring and supporting young people from under-resourced backgrounds to access top-third universities at a time when we know this access has been and remains fundamentally unequal and not because of ability or potential but often as a result of circumstance or access to support. I feel very privileged to be in the role of Chief Executive of a charity with such an important mission. Along the way through my career, others offered me this support and others inspired me, without even meaning to or knowing it, they were just being themselves, being genuine and authentic. Whether that was Mrs Sewell, Lady Hale or one of the many others, I thank you.

¹³ Gender Stereotypes and Their Impact on Women's Career Progressions from a Managerial Perspective; Tabassum N, Shankar Nayak B; 2021 (Sage Publications, Vol 10, issue 2)

Investing in Human Capital

Mia Contreras, Director of DEI, Recruiting and Learning & Development

We are thrilled to be supporting the “More Leading Women” report to help raise the profile of this important issue.

Brown Advisory is a global, private and independent investment management firm offering a wide range of solutions to charities, institutions, individuals and families. We are proud of our rigorous in-house, global, multi-asset and sustainable investment approach that we rely on to deliver first-class performance over the long term for our clients.

Simply put, we cannot provide the first-rate performance, advice, and service that our clients deserve without a long-term commitment to investing in our colleagues. A critical piece of this investment is our belief in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) – in creating an environment that supports our colleagues in being their “true” selves, in contributing at the highest level, and in reaching their potential.

We know that bringing diverse experiences, backgrounds and thinking is essential to serving our clients and fulfilling our mission to make a material and positive difference in their lives. DEI is therefore embedded in our business goals and across all levels of recruiting. We strive to create and maintain a diverse and inclusive environment for all Brown Advisory colleagues and ensure that our firm-wide gender diversity initiatives are encompassed within the five pillars of our DEI effort which include: Assessment, Hiring, Retention, Training and Community.

At Brown Advisory, we have long been committed to having more women not only as colleagues but also to serve in senior management and investment roles across the firm. Today, 45% of our global colleagues are women and we continue to strive for increasing representation in investment and management roles.

More broadly, we also know that encouraging young women to enter the financial professions is key to our industry's success and longevity. In order to help drive meaningful progress, we partner with organisations dedicated to helping and empowering women and girls, especially those in underrepresented groups. Some examples include Girls are INvestors (GAIN), Invest in Girls, Smart Works, Black Women in Asset Management (BWAM) and Him For Her. Their work often focuses on inclusion, education, health, and social services and includes closing the gender gap in business and government, mentoring, furthering and supporting women's rights, preventing abuse, and providing direct services to people in need.

In 2023, Brown Advisory contributed more than \$2.5 million to a range of charities and nonprofits across the communities where we live and work. Our focus is supporting local organizations that are important to our clients and colleagues, in addition to our three strategic giving areas: gender equity, the environment and justice.

For a further discussion with Brown Advisory please contact:

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About the Authors



The Rt Honourable the Baroness Morgan of Cotes

The Rt Hon the Baroness Morgan of Cotes (Nicky Morgan) is a former Conservative MP and Minister. She is now a member of the House of Lords and has a portfolio career with roles across the private and public sectors, including as a Non- Executive Director at Santander UK, the Financial Services

Compensation Scheme, the Association of British Insurers, the Careers & Enterprise Company and is a Trustee of the Science Museum Group.

Nicky also chairs the East Midlands Institute of Technology Board and the Advisory Board of the Reform think tank. In 2022 Nicky was asked to chair the UK Commission on Covid Commemoration. Nicky is a founding trustee of a mental health charity in Leicestershire.

Nicky served in the Cabinets of David Cameron and Boris Johnson as, respectively, Minister for Women & Equalities, Education Secretary and Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Secretary. She also chaired the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee for two years. She was the Member of Parliament for Loughborough between 2010 and 2019.



Professor Pam Cox

Pam Cox is a professor in sociology with a background in social history and socio-legal studies. She's authored, co-authored and edited several books in these fields – her first was 'Bad Girls in Britain, 1900-1950' (2003), her most recent 'Victims and Criminal Justice: A History' (2023). She's co-edited

a book series, '21st Century Standpoints', for the British Sociological Association; served as chair of the Social History Society, a national learned association; and is a member of the editorial board of the British Journal of Criminology. Pam has presented BBC history series on shopworkers and domestic servants and regularly contributes to historical and cultural programmes. At the University of Essex, Pam has served as a Head of Department, as Dean of the Graduate School, and as Director of a large ESRC doctoral training partnership spanning ten universities in the South East.

She has also worked as a policy consultant for a range of agencies, from international child rights organisations and local authorities to the Victims' Commissioner. In 2021, she was elected as a city councillor for the Colchester ward where she's lived for 20 years. She was appointed as the council's Portfolio Holder for Culture and Heritage from 2022-23. She was recently selected as Labour's parliamentary candidate for Colchester. If she wins, she will be the city's first ever female MP, and its first Labour MP since the late 1940s.



Arabella Gonzalez

Arabella Gonzalez is an experienced senior leader with a background across charitable/public and commercial sectors in a range of areas including education, market research and e-commerce. Since 2021 she has been the Director for Schools and Estates for the Haberdashers' Company taking responsibility for harnessing the resources of the Haberdashers' community to empower young people from every background and enable them to flourish across the 19 independent and state schools that are part of the Haberdashers' family. Arabella has previously worked for the British Council, the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities as Business Director for the British Council School Madrid and globally as Programme Manager for English Language Corporate Services. Her other international experience includes a period as Chief Operating Officer for CE Brands, an international e-commerce provider based in Canada, Spain and Hong Kong. Arabella's career began with a BSc (Econ) from the London School of Economics and early jobs as a school librarian, festival organiser and market researcher.



Lil Bremermann-Richard

Lil was appointed Group Chief Executive Officer of Oxford International Education Group in 2019, a Private Equity backed business, after serving as the Group Commercial Director since 2017. During her tenure at Oxford International, Lil has been successful in driving fast growth, organically and through M&A and steered the Group through significant business change and development during the Covid crisis.

With over 20 years senior management and leadership experience in education, Lil's previous roles include Director of International Recruitment for Cavendish College, Head of International Operations for South Thames College, and most recently, International Director at BPP University. During her time at BPP, Lil set up overseas delivery centres in six countries, including Hong Kong, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Trinidad and Tobago and Mauritius. In addition to her current position as Group CEO at Oxford International, Lil also serves as an Advisory Board Member for IDP Connect, the Council of Indian Principals, is founding member and advisory board member at Business Women in Education and Non-Executive Director at Corndel.

Lil is passionate about gender equality in the workplace, and actively mentors women in their leadership journey, as well as their return to work post maternity leave. Lil has won the Business Woman of the Year award at the Education Investor Awards in November 2021. Originally from Uruguay, Lil has lived in London for over 25 years. She is a keen runner and lives with her husband and their three children.



Alderman Caroline Haines CC

After graduating from Cambridge, Caroline entered the teaching profession and progressed to senior leadership roles with a focus on 16-19 provision. In 2017 she was elected to the Court of Common Council of the City of London Corporation where she is Chair of the Education Board, Chair of the Natural Environment Board and Vice Chair of Policy and Resouces. Caroline also Chairs the Suicide Prevention Board, is a Trustee of the City of London Academy Trust and has just completed five years as Chair of Governors at the highest performing state Sixth Form College in the country - Newham Collegiate - and the same tenure as Chair of the London Careers Festival. Caroline was Master Educator 2022-3.



Libby Nicholas

Libby Nicholas is the Managing Director of Dukes Education, the UK's largest group of independent schools. She was formerly Chief Executive of Astrea Academy Trust and Regional Director of Education for the South & West at the Academies Enterprise Trust. Libby began her career as an English teacher,

progressing to roles including Head of Year, Head of Teaching & Learning, Assistant Head, Deputy Head and, finally, Headteacher. She is also a former Deputy Director of Education at the Girls' Day School Trust. Libby is the co-author of *Understanding Leadership* (with John West-Burnham).



Professor Louise Jackson

Professor Louise Jackson is an experienced Professor and National Teaching Fellow with a successful history of working in higher education management, specialising in the arts. She joined BIMM University in 2021 as Academic Director and Provost with over 15 years of experience with learning and

teaching in the higher education sector. She is responsible for the university's academic regulation, quality assurance, learning and teaching enhancement, digital learning, and further education governance. As a specialist in inclusive educational practice in the arts in higher education, she is a recognised and respected arts educator, researcher, and leader. Louise was awarded a National Teaching Fellowship in 2013, the highest award for teaching in higher education in the UK. She has led on numerous projects to increase visibility and representation of underrepresented groups in the arts in higher education.



Natalie Campbell MBE

Natalie Campbell MBE is an award-winning social entrepreneur and broadcaster. She was recently installed as the new Chancellor of The University of Westminster. Prior to this Natalie led on insight and innovation for The Royal Foundation, launched Kensington Creates, the first business incubator in a

school at the Kensington Aldridge Academy (KAA) and co-founded A Very Good Company (AVGC), a global social innovation agency that worked with brands (Virgin Media, Marks & Spencer, W Hotels and Channel 4) to embed purpose and sustainability practices.

She is a senior advisor to FTSE-scale businesses including PwC and Stonehage Fleming Wealth Management.

As a broadcaster (City University journalism postgrad) she launched 'Badass Women's Hour', a weekend prime time show on TalkRadio; challenged people to consider the role of 'followership' for a BBC Radio 4 podcast, and inspired listeners to think about the future of tech as host of Virgin's 'Future Visions' podcast series.



Cheryl Giovannoni

Cheryl Giovannoni joined the Girls' Day School Trust as CEO in 2016. Born and brought up in South Africa, Cheryl's first career saw her leading some of the world's largest companies in the advertising and creative industries in the WPP Group. She was CEO of boutique design agency Coley Porter Bell, European

President of global brand consulting firm Landor Associates, and UK CEO of advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather London.

Cheryl has spent much of her career supporting women in the workplace, helping them thrive and push the boundaries, often in male dominated industries. Over many years, she has dedicated time to mentoring people from all walks of life, in the GDST family and through the WACL mentoring programme. She is passionate about the power of education to solve the world's most intractable problems, and the role women play in creating an equal and better world for all.



Dr Eve Poole OBE

Dr Eve Poole OBE is a British writer and Interim CEO of the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. In 2022, she was Interim CEO at the Royal Society of Edinburgh, having served as the Third Church Estates Commissioner 2018 - 2021. Furthermore she was the first female Chairman of the Board of Governors at

Gordonstoun, a boarding school in Scotland, from 2015 to 2021. Her books include Robot Souls and Leadersmithing, which was Highly Commended in the 2018 Business Book of the Year Awards. She has a BA from Durham, and MBA from Edinburgh, and a PhD in Capitalism and Theology from Cambridge; and she received an OBE for services to education and gender equality in the 2023 New Year Honours List.



Anna Searle

After finishing her studies in Politics and International Relations at Southampton, Anna embarked on an international career in teaching and educational support, followed by roles in management and leadership. She began as a volunteer teacher in a state school in Alexandria, Egypt, before assuming various positions with the British Council in diverse locations. In 2013, Anna returned to the UK to serve as the Global Director for the British Council. From 2017 to 2023, Anna was an Executive Director at Education Development Trust, initially leading the global teams to deliver transformative educational programmes and support and in the final year, leading the UK teams in employability and careers and education services.

Anna joined The Access Project as Chief Executive in October 2023, a widening participation charity which supports young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in gaining placement to top-third universities through a combination of evidenced, high impact interventions. Following a career in the charity and not-for-profit sector focused on reducing inequalities and improving access to education, Anna is delighted to be leading The Access Project to support even more young people to reach their potential. Anna is a trustee with a global education charity.



Katherine West

Katherine is Director of Research and Operations at Wild Search. She has a diverse background and is an experienced researcher. She was a Business Planner at the Environment Agency after graduating from the University of Hull with a Masters in Estuarine and Coastal Science. Katherine has a passion for young people and education, being a former chair of governors of a secondary school and is currently County Commissioner for Girlguiding Suffolk. Katherine is an Honorary Visiting Senior Fellow in Research Methods and Environmental Ethics at the University of Suffolk and the lay member of the University's Ethics Committee. She works closely with the Directors on assignment based research and on our thought leadership publications.

About Wild Search

Formed in 2010, Wild Search has developed its track record through advising a wide range of organisations, across businesses, charities, membership bodies and education groups, schools and businesses.

We are a relationship business, bringing the time and resources needed for each search and tailoring our team and approach to the organisation and requirements of each role. The steady growth in repeat business underpins the way in which that approach is valued by our constantly evolving client base, our ongoing programme of events and our partnerships. We are delighted to have worked with Brown Advisory on this report and recent events which promote opportunities for women to share their experiences and to encourage others to follow their example.

Wild Research is the thought leadership division of Wild Search and has published 33 reports and books since 2011. Our publications seek to inform, inspire and enable people to develop their understanding of a number of themes ranging from charities to education governance and from education as a British export to the development of London's central districts. We are firmly committed to widening and deepening our market knowledge and breadth of our sector understanding – both in our knowledge of individuals and institutions. Wild Research, is central to that commitment.

Report contributors, all of whom are sector experts, provide us with a strong insight into the sectors with whom we work and a deeper understanding of our clients' contexts and requirements. All reports may be downloaded from our website without charge: <https://www.wildsearch.org/wild-research>

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