



## PRESS RELEASE

### CRICKLEWOOD TOWN TEAM

### BRENT WOMEN OF RENOWN PROJECT 2023

The Cricklewood Town Team (CTT), a group of volunteers representing the local community who work to improve the area for residents and business, has been awarded a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £78,000 to celebrate the life and achievements of three Brent Women of Renown who overcame adversity and prejudice to change the world for the better. Cricklewood has an interesting history over the past 150 years and CTT and local residents' associations receive very positive feedback to all the heritage work that has been achieved, particularly at Cricklewood station.

The outline plan for the project is to work with teachers throughout 2023 in six primary schools and one secondary in Brent. The project will link closely with the National Curriculum to enable young people to learn research skills, including oral history, and to find inspiration in the lives of these three remarkable women:

- They will discover how protest by women such as Kilburn suffragette, Violet Doudney (1889-1952), who was imprisoned and force-fed for her beliefs, helped to achieve the Equal Franchise Acts of 1918 and 1928
- They will further develop their research skills from a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) perspective by studying the achievements of record-breaking aviator and aero engineer, Amy Johnson (1903-1941) who learnt to fly at Stag Lane Aerodrome while living in Roe Green, Kingsbury. She became one of the most famous women in the world. Her archives are held at the RAF Museum in Hendon.
- They will learn about the tenacity of Dame Stephanie Shirley, who fled Nazi Germany at the age of five and who grew up to be an influential mathematician, information technology pioneer, businesswoman and philanthropist. Her first role was at the Post Office Research Station, Dollis Hill, working on ERNIE, the first computer to select premium bond winners, and lived in Walm Lane, Willesden.

A significant part of the in-schools work will be the creative workshops where children can express themselves. They will have a chance to create their own protest banners when they learn about Violet's story. Looking at Amy's intrepid journey to Australia in 1930 they will have the chance to plot a journey of their own from Brent to anywhere in the world, which will help them to understand geography, history, weather forecasting and the media. The project will also



stress Amy's engineering skills, personal resilience and include her role in WW2 as a Women's ATA ferrying planes for the RAF.

Pupils will illustrate the packing of their own suitcase and decide which of their toys they would take with them as a way of recreating Dame Shirley's experience when she escaped Nazi Germany via the Kindertransport, aged just five. They will study her achievements as a renowned mathematician and, linking into the National Curriculum, will develop a project online using their coding skills.

The outputs of these workshops will be filmed and then shown to parents and those involved in the project across Brent. The event will also include the re-enactment developed by the children about these three women based on their learning; Violet Doudney's granddaughter describing Violet's and her fellow suffragettes' experience of imprisonment and subsequent force-feeding; exhibit of Violet's medal and certificate she received from Emmeline Pankhurst, founder of the Women's Social and Political Union whose members were known as 'suffragettes'.

Senior members of the Brent community will discuss together what these women mean to them, and why it's important that this heritage is preserved.

### **Why is this project important?**

The lives of these inspirational women are in danger of being lost. Following a survey undertaken to inform the project's target audience of around 1,000 children aged between 7-12 years old, teachers commented: "It's really important that they learn about the truly inspirational people of Brent, particularly those that have overcome adversity", and "It's very important that they learn from history about those that achieved against the issues of their time. This really helps with the children facing problems now".

"Having female role models is important for young children, especially those from deprived backgrounds and ethnic minority groups as these young people face additional barriers. The three women highlighted by this project have overcome prejudice and discrimination to pave the way for others in STEM and in Politics. As such they offer examples of how local women from Brent have made a difference, which will inspire and benefit our students".

**Maggie Toy**, granddaughter of Violet Doudney, has supported the development of this project within the schools. She reminds us that Violet was passionate about empowering all women through education; she was one of the first women to study at Oxford (St Hilda's College), although her gender meant she was not allowed to receive her degree. It was unsurprising she fought for the rights of women.

**Dame Stephanie Shirley** supports 'this worthwhile project' <https://www.steveshirley.com/>

**Amy Johnson's biographer**, Midge Gillies, is thrilled that Amy is joining two other remarkable women to be remembered in a part of London that was so significant to her. "Amy risked her life and used her skills and strength of character to push the boundaries of technology. It's vital that young people know her story and take inspiration from it."



### Heritage

The heritage aim of this project is to cascade the lesson plans, workshops, the film and report to other schools across Brent. The outcomes will be deposited with Brent Archives, whose staff have supported the development of the project.

#### Quotes from the schools involved in the project in 2023 include:

“Kingsbury High School has a number of different strands to support and celebrate the contribution of women (in Brent and across the curriculum) and we look forward to more engagement with this project particularly being located so close to where Amy Johnson lived, the first woman to fly solo from London to Australia.” Headteacher Kingsbury High.

“Salisbury’s Humanities team had the pleasure of working with the project leads to learn about their proposal for developing a project on Brent Women of Renown. This project aligns perfectly with Salisbury Primary School’s desire to ensure our curriculum is

relevant to and reflective of our local community. We are incredibly excited for our pupils to engage with this historical project and learn about these amazing Brent Women.” Headteacher, Salisbury Primary School.

“The theme of empowerment will undoubtedly have a significant impact on our Year 6 students.” Headteacher, Northview Primary School.

“We want to increase our pupils’ perspectives and for them to be empowered by pioneering women from diverse cultures. The local link to Dame Stephanie Shirley will fit well with the KS2 curriculum.” Headteacher, Our Lady of Grace Junior School.

“These women are hugely inspirational for our children and as they are local this means that our Year 6 children will focus on them for their local history project; there are also many cross-curricular links, such as STEM and politics.” Headteacher, Maple Walk School.

The schools will start their involvement in the project on the following dates during International Women’s Day/Women’s History Month.

Northview Primary School	7 <sup>th</sup> March
Our Lady of Grace	14 <sup>th</sup> March
Maple Walk School	15 <sup>th</sup> March
Salisbury Primary School	17 <sup>th</sup> March
Roe Green Primary School	May
Kingsbury High School	April to June

# CRICKLEWOOD

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## Notes to editors

**Cricklewood Town Team** was created through Ashford Place, in partnership with members of Cricklewood's residents' associations in 2010, focused on building a climate for change that encourages local people to be involved in the future for Cricklewood.

**For further information about the project** please contact Amanda Ray Epe, the project lead or Angela Payne from the Cricklewood Town Team at

cricklewoodtt@gmail.com

Website: <https://cricklewood.net/about/>

Follow CTT on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/cricklewoodldn/> And Twitter:  
<https://twitter.com/cipcricklewood>

### **About The National Lottery Heritage Fund**

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK's heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future.  
[www.heritagefund.org.uk](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk).

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Since The National Lottery began in 1994, National Lottery players have raised over £43 billion for projects and more than 635,000 grants have been awarded across the UK.