

## **Hostility to women in politics is nothing new - 100 years ago Nancy Astor was called a rattlesnake. 50:50 #NewGirlsNetwork is the antidote!**

On 15 Nov 1919 Nancy Astor was elected as MP for Plymouth. Two weeks later, on 1 Dec 1919 she was the first woman to take a seat in the Commons. Arthur Balfour, Lloyd George and many others had made it clear that they would rather have a **rattlesnake** in Parliament. Winston Churchill said “We hoped to freeze you out.” Today women continue to be abused in political life, with many leaving Westminster ahead of this election.

Nancy Astor was a determined woman who had been **asked to stand** by a petition from constituents. And one hundred years on **50:50 Parliament are working to overcome the abuse and inspire women to stand with our own #AskHerToStand** programme. Over 900 women have gone to **#SignUpToStand** via [50:50](#), they are signing up everyday. 50:50 then offer support via our **#NewGirlsNetwork**.

### **50:50 Parliament’s #NewGirlsNetwork is an antidote to the abuse that women suffer.**

The 50:50 **#NewGirlsNetwork** is a “buddy” system to help women along the path to Parliament, whatever their political persuasion. 50:50 create tailor made profiles for each prospective candidate giving guidance about how to make progress towards selection and election within each party. Until recently 50:50 was run entirely by passionate volunteers. Now funding from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust has enabled 50:50 to set up this fantastic network to mentor and monitor women’s progress to Parliament.

50:50 has inspired many women to stand in this election from across the political spectrum such as Theo Clarke for the Conservatives in Stafford, Olga Fitzroy for Labour in Croydon South and [Shana Roberts](#) standing for the Liberal Democrats in Telford.

#### **Shana Roberts, Liberal Democrat Candidate says:**

“I had the privilege to take part in the Ask Her To Stand Day in Parliament last November. This amazing event showed me that I was not alone in wanting to change our political system. 50:50 Parliament gave me hope for our future. Now I am standing in this General Election”

#### **Frances Scott, Founder and Director of 50:50 Parliament says**

“The fight for political equality continues. The 50:50 New Girls Network helps combat the abuse. We hope everyone will encourage women to stand for elected office. Let’s build a better democracy together.”

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#### ***About 50:50 Parliament***

*50:50 Parliament is a cross party campaign taking action to get more women to Westminster. 50:50 has a clear aspiration, they are not calling for quotas but do want solutions and action. They support women from across the political spectrum and recognise that some women face multiple hurdles. Their initiatives: #AskHerToStand #SignUpToStand and #NewGirlsNetwork aim to inspire, encourage and support women to elected office.*

*See 50:50 Parliament Campaign Report [here](#);*

*Join 50:50 at [www.5050parliament.co.uk](http://www.5050parliament.co.uk); Press Page [www.5050Parliament.co.uk/press](http://www.5050Parliament.co.uk/press);*

*Social Media [50:50 Parliament on Facebook](#); [50:50 Parliament on Twitter](#); [50:50 Parliament on Instagram](#); [50:50 Parliament YouTube](#);*

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