

International Women's Day – Speaking to Councillor Norma Austin Hart



Vice-Convener of
Culture & Leisure

Councillor Norma Austin Hart is the Labour councillor on the City of Edinburgh Council representing Liberton/Gilmerton. She is also the Vice-Convener of the Culture and Leisure committee.

What are you doing to celebrate International Women's Day?

I have been working with other Labour women to have a fundraising event on 8 March to [raise money for Womankind](#). This is an international women's rights charity to help women transform their lives across the globe, it works with partners to challenge discrimination and violence. All welcome at 1.30pm at St Columba's by the Castle on 8 March 2014.

What is your job?

I am a City of Edinburgh Labour Councillor and a self-employed business trainer and adviser

Would you give us a quick version of your career path?

English degree, teacher, Masters degree, policy maker and strategist, programme manager, chief executive, business woman, politician.

If you had been given career advice on leaving school (knowing what you know now!) what would it have been?

Don't be afraid to try anything that instinctively draws you.

Do you use any formal networking organisations? If you do which ones do you find useful?

I love being part of women's networks and have been involved in many over the years. At the moment I am the chair of the Edinburgh and Lothians Labour Women's Forum and a member of the national Labour Women's Network. The E&L meetings are open to any woman who supports Labour values

Do you think there are enough women in important positions in private and public organisations in Edinburgh?

The numbers are still depressingly low. In Scotland women are 52% of the population but less than a third of MSPs are women, less than 25% of Scottish councillors and only 22% of Scottish MPs are female. Members of the European Parliament from Scotland who are women ? 17%. There is a long way to go and most of these figures do not represent an improvement on previous years. Don't get me started on the low numbers of women on boards of private and third sector organisations in Scotland....

Who is your inspirational female figure and why?

Michelle Obama, stylish smart and a woman with her own agenda.