

# **International Women's Day – speaking with Councillor Karen Keil**

☒ Councillor Karen Keil was first elected at the council elections in May 2012. She is a Labour councillor who represents Drum Brae/ Gyle Ward.

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

I think I am now attending an event at St Columba's by the Castle!

**What is your job?**

Councillor for City of Edinburgh

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

University of Edinburgh – BD Degree

Admin Assistant for Church of Scotland Simpson House (Drug and Alcohol Counselling Service) – 5 years

Admin Assistant for Christian Aid (Third World Development Agency) – 20 years

Variety of voluntary community activities at the same time,

Now a City of Edinburgh Councillor

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

Don't listen to the Careers Advisers!!! Follow your heart, follow your opportunities, work for what you want.

My careers advice to my two student daughters – there is nothing you cannot do.

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

Women's organisations – no, not at all.

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

Probably not but I can't honestly comment because I don't know.

**Who is your inspirational female figure and why?**

I could say Lesley Hinds who has taught me all I know about being a Councillor!

But the most inspirational woman in my life was my paternal grandmother. She was known as the Duchess she looked after a husband, three sons and her father. She was a clever woman trapped by the circumstances of her age. She was on every Board, Committee and Trust that would have her in a voluntary capacity. She was also a tyrant who ruled the men in her life with an iron fist!! She died in the 1980s aged 87.