

**WOMEN**

**50:50**

## **LOCAL ORGANISING PACK**

### **CONTENTS:**

- **LETTER TO MSPS AND COUNCILLORS**
- **LOCAL CAMPAIGNING IDEAS**
- **PRESS RELEASE EXAMPLE**
- **SOCIAL MEDIA AND UPDATES**

**[WWW.WOMEN5050.ORG](http://WWW.WOMEN5050.ORG)**

# LETTER TO MSPS:

Dear [INSERT NAME OF LOCAL MSP],

## Women 5050

We have a gap in our Scottish Parliament, and that gap is due to the missing women MSPs.

The Women 5050 campaign is fighting for a fairer parliament for women. Today, only 34% of our MSPs are women and what's worse, this has decreased since the set up of the Scottish Parliament in 1999.

In 2014, there remain many arenas in which women are still catching up with men, despite equalities legislation being in place and it is unacceptable for one of these arenas to be our parliament.

How can we make decisions on social justice in a parliament which is failing to deliver social justice for women on a regular basis? How can we call our parliament democratic when it is failing to reflect the society it is meant to represent?

Women have waited long enough for society to become equal. Today, we have capable women who have the potential to become candidates and represent Scotland, yet are left out because of sexism and the perception that politics simply is not for them. By creating a system where political parties are legislated to put forward 50% candidates who are women, we will have a parliament which is able to call itself truly representative.

Women 5050 are calling on Members of the Scottish Parliament to sign up to the campaign pledge, which is calling for 50% quotas for women in our parliament, councils and on public boards, all of which fail to have adequate representation of women – will you join them?

Too often we hear that quotas are the wrong way to go, because elections should be based on merit not gender. This argument assumes that currently there are fewer women in parliament because they do not have these merits. The reality is that women have the merit, but they do not have fair access to public life; you can join this campaign and change that.

You can pledge your support by emailing the campaign on [scottishwomen5050@gmail.com](mailto:scottishwomen5050@gmail.com)

I look forward to your response and I hope, your support,

Yours sincerely,

[INDIVIDUAL NAME(S) OR GROUP NAME]

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# LETTER TO COUNCILLORS:

## Women 5050

We have a gap in democracy in Scotland, and that gap is the missing women from our council chambers. Today, only 24% of councillors are women and only three of the 32 local authorities are led by women. Despite making up 52% of the population, decisions about the lives of women are often left to boardrooms of men. In 2014, that is unacceptable.

Our councils need to reflect the society that they represent and therefore we need to put measures in places to ensure they do so, measures which create true democracy.

The Women 5050 campaign is calling for a 50% quota for women in the Scottish Parliament, in councils and public boards. Will you join the campaign's call?

Women have waited long enough for society to become equal. Today, we have capable women who have the potential to become councillors, yet are left out because of sexism and the perception that politics simply is not for them. By creating a system where political parties are legislated to put forward 50% candidates who are women, we will have a parliament which is able to call itself truly representative.

Too often we hear that quotas are the wrong way to go, because elections should be based on merit not gender. This argument assumes that currently there are fewer women in parliament because they do not have these merits. The reality is that women have the merit, but they do not have fair access to public life; you can join this campaign and change that.

You can pledge your support by emailing the campaign on [scottishwomen5050@gmail.com](mailto:scottishwomen5050@gmail.com)

I look forward to your response and I hope, your support,

Yours sincerely,

[INDIVIDUAL NAME(S) OR GROUP NAME]

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# EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE:

**Immediate release:**

**(If you want the media to publish as soon as it is sent) or**

**Embargoed for: [time/date]**

**(If you would like it to go at a specific time or after a specific date)**

**[Headline] Local MSP meeting with local Women 5050 campaigners**

**[Summary of story or event]** Campaigners gathered in central Glasgow today to lobby MSPs to sign up to the Women 5050 campaign, calling for 50% quotas for women in the Scottish Parliament, councils and public boards.

20 local campaigners met with MSPs, J.Bloggs 1, J Bloggs 2 and J Bloggs 3 to push for them to support measures to create a more representative and fair parliament and to deliver letters from over 200 local supporters.

All three MSPs have now signed up to the campaign.

**[key quotes]** A Anderson, local campaigner said: "Women's absence from public life is a detriment to democracy in Scotland. We make up 52% of the population, yet only 34% of MSPs. It's time this changed and quotas are the most effective way to do that. The great response to the campaign from the public shows that the majority of people want to see this change too."

J.Bloggs MSP 1 said: "I am delighted to support the Women 5050 campaign today. Meeting dedicated local activists on the issue shows that power that can come from women being at core of politics. It is long overdue that a more direct action was taken to ensure there are more women around the decision making tables in Scotland"

...ENDS.

## **Notes for Editors**

. For photos of the event and more information contact xxxxx

. The main campaign website is [www.women5050.org](http://www.women5050.org) and you can contact the team on 07795575446

. There are 34% women in the Scottish Parliament, 24% in councils and 36% on public boards.

**WWW.WOMEN5050.ORG**

## **IDEAS FOR LOCAL CAMPAIGNING:**

- MSP/Councillor Letter writing workshops
- Women politician/public board panels and discussion groups
- Weekly sign up spots in front of supermarkets, schools, sports centres
- Photo opportunity with local activists in front of political offices
- Host a film festival with political movies
- Coffee mornings with already established local groups
- “recruit a friend” events
- Hold a local pub quiz to raise awareness
- Visiting modern studies classes in schools
- Creating local campaign stickers for shop windows and toilet doors
- Speed dating with women in public life to gain their support and learn about them
- Partner with a supportive councillor to have a campaign hot desk in council offices
- Create posters with local statistics
- Set up a public gallery promoting local women in public life
- Engage with local trade union branches for support and joint events

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND UPDATES:**

Make sure you take lots of pictures of your local activities and send them to the campaign email for us to update supporters from across Scotland; [scottishwomen5050@gmail.com](mailto:scottishwomen5050@gmail.com)

You can tweet about your meetings, events and ideas to us to RT on @women5050 or set up your own local Twitter profile or Facebook page – we will make sure we promote all your excellent work.

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