

From Suffragist to Townswoman

1832 The Reform Act and the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act explicitly banned women from voting in Great Britain.

1832 Great Reform Act confirmed the exclusion of women from the electorate.

1865 The first Committee for Women's Suffrage, the Kensington Society, was formed. They became the London Society for Women's Suffrage.

1866 The first mass woman's suffrage petition was presented to the House of Commons, with 1,521 signatures. This was the start of organised campaigning by women for the vote. Overall, more than 16,000 petitions for votes for women were received by the House of Commons and House of Lords between 1866 and 1918.

1867 John Stuart Mill MP proposed an amendment to the 1867 Reform Act that would have given women the same political rights as men. It was defeated by 194 votes to 73.

1897 The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) was formed, led by Millicent Fawcett. The NUWSS adopted a peaceful and legal approach to campaigning. Members believed that success could be gained by argument and education.

1907 NUWSS "Mud March" in London, so called afterwards as it was held in dreadful weather and through muddy streets. It was the first large procession to advocate for women's suffrage. Over 3000 women took part.

1913 The NUWSS had nearly had 100,000 members. The NUWSS organised the Suffrage Pilgrimage, a mass march to London from seventeen cities across the country, following eight routes over a six-week period. An estimated 50,000 women reached Hyde Park.

1914 to 1918 the First World War. Women actively worked in many roles to support the war effort.

1918 The Representation of the People Act gave women over the age of 30 who met certain property qualifications the right to vote. The Qualification of Women Act gave women over the age of 21 the right to stand for election as an MP.

Not the end of the fight for women's suffrage, but a beginning of the next stage.

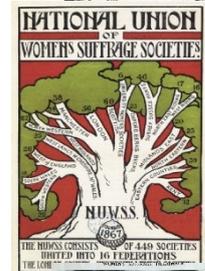
1919 The NUWSS was renamed as the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC) and led by Eleanor Rathbone as Millicent Fawcett retired. It focused on a campaign to equalise suffrage.

1928 The Equal Franchise Act gave equal voting rights to men and women. Both men and women could vote at the age of 21.

1929 Margery Corbet Ashby succeeded Eleanor Rathbone as the president of the NUSEC and founded the first 4 Townswomen's Guilds with Eva Hubback. The NUESC set up a committee to see the launch of a National TG movement.

1932 The work of the NUSEC split between two separate organisations. The National Council for Equal Citizenship and the National Union of Guilds for Citizenship.

1933 The National Union of Guilds for Citizenship changed its name to the National Union of Townswomen's Guilds (NUTG).



And TG is still going strong since those 4 Guilds were started in 1929

