



# Rosie's Plaques TOOLKIT



## Welcome to the Rosie's Plaques Toolkit!

We have created this toolkit to help get you started and point you in the right direction, particularly if this is something you are new to. It is designed to be used by anyone who is interested in finding out about and celebrating the unsung women in their areas. We have divided the toolkit into four stages, work through them all and you will be well on your way to creating your own plaques!

## **Stage 1.**

## **Group plan of action.**

Aims and limits.  
Group discussion.

**P1**

## **Stage 2.**

## **Getting down to research!**

Where to start.  
Research resources and references.  
Referencing your research.  
Important information for living testimonies/interviews.

**P1**

## **Stage 3.**

## **Developing and evaluating your research.**

Group discussion suggestions and evaluation.

**P2**

## **Stage 4.**

## **Turning research into a short biography and a plaque.**

Boiling down your research.  
Choosing Your Words...  
Group discussion suggestions.

**P3**

## **PLUS**

**Case study: Researching a plaque by one of our Rosies.**

**P4**

**Inspiration for your biographies.**

**P5**

**The Norwich Plaques.**

**P6**

**Rosie's Tick List.**

**P7**

Also included: A3 plaque-sized paper template and A3 sheet of example letters for you to download and print to help you plan your plaques.

## Stage 1. Group plan of action:

### What are your aims? What are your limits?

Get together as a group and talk about the following:

- Why this project, and why NOW?
- What is the significance of the Rosie's Plaques project to you?
- Geographical area of focus. Will you be looking at a city, town or countywide?
- How will you choose? Your research can address female lives and culture, historical or contemporary women, whether famous or out of the spotlight.
- Why do these women need to be remembered and have their stories told?



## Stage 2. Getting down to research!

If you haven't embarked on researching a project before, it might seem a bit daunting. But the key to success is being realistic about what you can do with the time and resources you have and having a clear plan with a schedule of activities.



A good first step is to decide how you will share your research with each other. You might want to share your findings by getting together, and/or set up a private folder online to share and store your research. (Google Drive is great for this).

- Online searches are a good place to start, providing context for your research and pointing up leads you might want to follow in more detail in published print and online materials. Follow your noses!
- Published materials (books, journals, essays, blogs). When you find a book or essay that looks relevant, read and collate the main points.

Be sure to make a note of where your research comes from by recording the following: **Author's name** (if known); **title of research source** (book, newspaper article, etc.); **publisher information** (if known); **date of publication**. Example:

Jeannette Baxter, *Radical Women of Norwich*. Norfolk Heritage Press, 2019.



Keeping a record of this information will save you time if you need to go back to the book or essay to find out more detail. It is also important to acknowledge research resources if you are presenting your research to others in the form of biographies.

- Visit your local library and/or local records office and make the most of their history expertise. These organisations often run free or low-cost introductory group research workshops on how to use library archives and resources.
- Make the most of local history groups. Many have Facebook groups which are brilliant platforms for asking questions and sharing knowledge.
- Talk to people in your local community who might be willing to share their, or their family's, relevant lived experience.

You could use your phone or a tape recorder. You can plan some specific questions or simply record someone telling their story.

#### **Important information for living testimonies/ interviews:**

You must seek permissions to interview and/or use someone's testimony as part of your project.

Do NOT store any testimonies or interviews in a shared public folder (such as Google Drive or DropBox). Keep this personal data in a secured project folder.



## **Stage 3. Developing and evaluating your research.**

Having collected your research, it's a good moment to get together and share what you've found so far. Make time to:

- Discuss any challenges, issues, questions, etc.
- Identify any gaps in the research and make a plan to address them.
- Help each other out with positive feedback and suggestions.



You can also evaluate the value of your research in a social context by discussing the following:

- What contribution has your chosen woman (or women) had on the cultural, social, economic and political life of your area?
- In what ways has your chosen woman/ place/group and their story been silenced or kept hidden from local society and culture?
- What impact has/does this silence/ invisibility had/have?

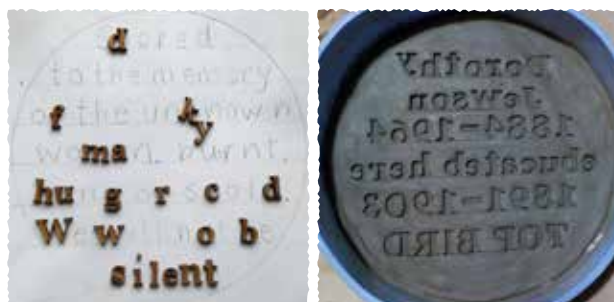


## Stage 4: Turning research into a short biography and a plaque.

It's likely that you will have generated more research than first anticipated! Here are some short, easy steps to boiling down your research into a shorter biography.

Go back through your research notes and:

- Highlight important dates and other key facts and figures. This will help to put your chosen woman/women in their historical and social context.
- Highlight information that is particularly interesting to you and note why. This can be anything that is funny, unusual, juicy or unorthodox.
- Evaluate the significance of telling the story of your chosen woman/women. Why is it important to tell this story now?



### Choosing Your Words...

Selecting the words for your plaques will be boiling your research down even further! You will be limited to how many words you can fit on your plaque, so you will want to think about how to capture the essence of your research. What are the important bits for you to say?

How are you going to choose the wording on your plaques? Will it be a group effort or one person per plaque?

### Discussion suggestions

- What imagined impact might your silenced/invisible women have had on the shaping and energising of local society, culture and politics?
- How might this affect the "voice" of the wording on your plaque and influence what you want to say?

If you have any generic queries about the research process, please feel free to contact Dr Jeannette Baxter at: [Jeannette.Baxter@anglia.ac.uk](mailto:Jeannette.Baxter@anglia.ac.uk)

If you have any other queries, please contact Rosie's Plaques at: [rosiesplaques@gmail.com](mailto:rosiesplaques@gmail.com)





## Case Study: Researching a plaque by one of our Rosies.

We asked Ali to share with you what led to the making of her plaque. From the initial research that inspired her, to how she managed to choose the right wording for it.

When we wrote the show 'All mouth no trousers' it was the centenary of some women getting the right to vote. I really wanted to commemorate Suffragettes somehow. Unfortunately although the Norfolk Suffragette movement was fairly active it was incredibly hard to find any information about Norwich Suffragettes.

I started by searching up Norwich Suffragettes online and eventually came to the book 'Two paths to equality' about Alice Paul and Ethel M Smith by Alice Butler. This book had a passing reference to an event in Norwich during which Churchill came to speak and the speech was disrupted by a Suffragette corp who had been raised especially by a leadership from London. By holding 25 meetings in three days and handing out over 5000 leaflets, they 'roused the town' to action.

From there I looked to the British newspaper archive online, where I found a few digitised contemporaneous articles that filled in the gaps.

When the Norwich Suffragettes were formed and performed their first action in 1909, the meeting they interrupted was at St Andrews Hall in the centre of Norwich. A former monastery it is one of my favourite buildings in the city, steeped in history and the idea of the lecture by Churchill being disrupted by women looked down on by paintings of the fine historical fathers of the city was too good to miss - and inspired me to write a poem, 'When Churchill came to Norwich' to spread this little known story more widely.

I came up with a very long message for the plaque, until someone pointed out that there really was a word limit... So I chose 'At this place' in a nod to many official plaques and 'in 1909' to give an idea of the era without using too many characters. I took the phrase 'OUR women held the line' from the poem I wrote for the show. This was the final detail I needed and I thought it was non specific enough to spark debate amongst those who saw it.



## To give you a bit of inspiration for your Short biographies, some of our Rosies explain in their own words what their plaques are about.

### Sacred to the Memory...

I wanted to research the stories of ordinary working women. Written accounts are very rare. If at all. One story however does remain writ large, with physical evidence in the city - the siting of the ducking stool and the accounts of healers as well as of witch trials. This group was marginalized and scapegoated- medicine moved into the male prerogative and midwives were rebuked. Laws that allowed for the humiliation of women ('scold') reflect a group with no voice and no one to listen to that unless to penalise it. Thus, the plaque honours and recognises those who went before with a nod to the 'Unknown Warrior' at Westminster Abbey and to offer a contemporary voice that can and will speak out. We may have many more opportunities today, but they are all worth protecting and growing. - Eileen

### Margaret Fountaine

I discovered Margaret Fountaine through her display at Norwich Castle. Her story immediately spoke to me and touched me deeply, taking me on a fascinating journey of research, writing and performance over the next year. This included being given the privilege of seeing the whole, amazing Fountaine Nemy butterfly collection left by her to our castle and leafing tenderly through her beautifully crafted diaries. Margaret was radical in her actions by

refusing to follow the strict social codes set down for women of her position in the late 1800s. She toured the world on her own to follow her passions of art, music and finally butterflies. Whilst doing this she also loved and was loved. Her scientific legacy and her compelling diaries show a woman who was a serious scientist who also lived her life to the full, dying, at the roadside in Barbados, with a butterfly net at her side. She was a "bloody lepidopterist" first and foremost but also a woman who loved love. - Nicky

### Dorothy Jewson

Dorothy Jewson was the part I played in the Common Lot production of All Mouth, No Trousers in October 2018. I read her history and was bowled over by her tenacity in recognising the plight of working class families and acting on research to improve their quality of life. I'm born and bred from a London working class family that came from the slums by Newgate prison where Elizabeth Fry had worked her miracles. My Nan was born in a workhouse. Money, a decent roof over your head, education etc. always had to be fought for. I began to appreciate the sterling work that Dorothy had achieved as I embraced the role more with each passing rehearsal - she was fearless! So, to honour her in my true London style was to call her a top bird. It's a term of endearment. The phrase came to me immediately and is a reflection of the affection Dotty has now permanently in my heart. - Nicole





## The Norwich plaques.





## Rosie's Tick List.



Task	Breakdown	DONE!
Choose fun!	Decide to undertake your own Rosie's Plaques project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Research	Form a research group. Carry out research into under-represented women from your area. Decide which women you would like to make plaques for. Write a very short biography for each of them.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Design Details	Decide on the wording for each plaque. Plan out word spacing using templates from the toolkit. Identify buildings that the plaques can be attached to.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

### Next steps...

Once you have planned out your plaques and are ready to get making, send us your short biographies (for our website) and a photo of your plaques' wording. We'll be in contact with everything you need to make your plaques into a reality.

[rosiesplaques@gmail.com](mailto:rosiesplaques@gmail.com)



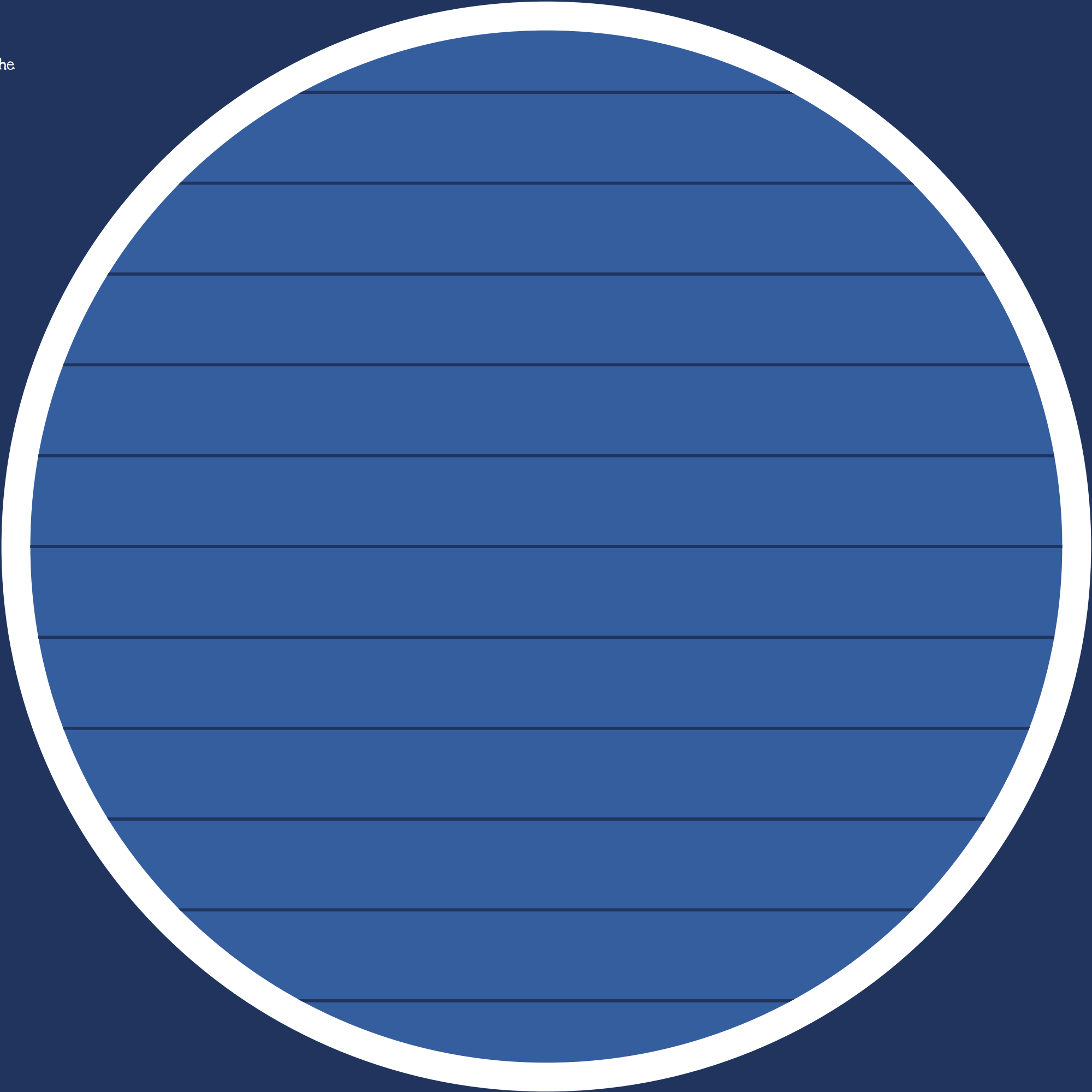
## Rosie's Plaques





# Plaque Template

We have provided guidelines to give you an idea of how many lines and the spacing you can include on your plaque but feel free to just use the outer circles and freestyle your design if you would prefer.



## Example Letters

For you to trace to plan out  
your plaque.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P

Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 . , : ; ? !