

Year 6 – Women's Roles

How has the changing role of women, as a result of WW2, impacted on society and government and changed the way in which we live our lives today?

Key vocabulary

Domesticity	home or family life
Conscripted	forced to join war effort
Munitions	military weapons such as guns and bomb
Rationing	the limiting of goods or services that are in high demand and short supply
Land army	operated to place women with farms that needed workers; they picked crops and did all the jobs that the men had done prior to the war
Post war	occurring or existing after a war

How did women's role in society change after the war?

Before WW2

Prior to World War II, women were mostly homemakers.

Those who worked outside the home usually worked as secretaries, receptionists, or shop assistance.

During WW2

With thousands of men away serving in the armed forces, British women took on a variety of new jobs during the First and Second World Wars.

Some example of jobs that became available were: train cleaners; bus conductors; volunteer policewomen; working with dangerous chemicals in factories; builders; engineers; mechanics; drivers and more.

By the end of 1941, women began to be **conscripted** for war work.

After WW2

Women were praised for their wartime work but expected to make way for the returning troops.

The government encouraged a return to domesticity.

By 1951, the number of working women had returned almost to the pre-war level and a bar on married women working continued in many jobs.

60s and 70s

The emergence of feminist groups and a greater awareness of gender inequality grew.

Campaigning for more rights, equal pay and greater opportunities saw many more women aware of their potential and the need for change.

In the 60s, there was a boom of jobs available to young, single women.

In 1962, there were over 26,000 girls at university.

