

Citation for the 'Freedom of the Borough' award to Merrill Hammer

In April 2019 the Secretary of State for Health announced that the Government and NHS England were withdrawing their support for the Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF) programme, which meant that the closure plans for Charing Cross Hospital and Ealing Hospital, first proposed in 2012, were finally dropped. This announcement marked a major victory in a long running campaign in Hammersmith & Fulham to fight the closure plans. That campaign was led by a group of committed local residents under the banner of Save Our Hospitals.

As Chair of Save Our Hospitals, Merrill Hammer led the campaign tirelessly over many years to protect crucial hospital services for the residents of Hammersmith & Fulham. Save Our Hospitals was the channel through which the people of Hammersmith & Fulham gained a voice and H&F owes Merrill a huge debt of thanks for the time and effort she committed to the campaign.

The benefits of her work for Save Our Hospitals will be felt for years to come by current residents and future generations. The closure of two hospitals has been averted and a national government policy, that would have had such a negative impact on the healthcare of Hammersmith & Fulham residents, has been overturned.

In recognition of these achievements, it is recommended that Merrill Hammer be bestowed the honour of the Freedom of the Borough.