



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT



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## Women in Parliament:

a guide to the history of women's participation in Parliament and their representation in the historical collections.

*Including Women in Parliament: Works from the Parliamentary Art Collection exhibition catalogue.*

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VOTE100

SPEAKER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON WORKS OF ART



The Speaker's Art Fund

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## Introduction

**T**HIS PUBLICATION and the accompanying exhibition celebrates women who have engaged with and participated in Parliament. Women have always been present in Parliament to witness and participate in the day to day business of the House. They have been staff, public and business visitors, guests and families of parliamentarians, lobbyists and campaigners. Since 1918 they have been MPs and since 1958 Peers. They have helped run the organisation and have engaged with Parliamentary business – from watching debates to campaigning for election candidates, from submitting petitions to protesting, and much more. Most importantly they have, in relatively recent times, participated as MPs, Peers and voters.

This publication is not intended to be a comprehensive history or analysis, it concentrates only on the 19th and 20th centuries. But we hope, as well as providing information and highlighting how Parliament's collections document this important history, it will encourage further research.

The campaign for votes for women, and particularly how it interacted with Parliament, is well documented in the collections of the Parliamentary Archives and the Parliamentary Art Collection. Some is on display in the exhibition, much more is available, and this publication highlights this history.

The pioneering women MPs discussed were elected before the general election of 1997. Since that date the number of women becoming MPs has been more than 120 at each election, representing around 20 per cent of the House and has remained at that proportion consistently. The pioneers who took part in a House which was overwhelmingly male deserve celebration. The biographies commemorate their contribution to Parliament in the form of legislation, including Private Member's Bills, contributions to select and bill committees, and their work in and outside the chamber.

The *Life Peerages Act 1958* allowed women to sit in the House of Lords for the first time, though

Viscountess Rhondda, a hereditary women peer, had attempted to take her seat in 1922, her claim eventually thwarted by the Lord Chancellor. It was not until 1963 that women hereditary peers were able to take their seats in the Lords.

This exhibition and publication are the first outputs associated with the Vote 100 project. A four year project funded by the Speaker's Art Fund and supported by the House of Lords and House of Commons, Vote 100 will culminate in 2018 with a public exhibition in Westminster Hall coinciding with:

- the centenary of the *Representation of the People Act 1918*
- the centenary of the *Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918*
- the centenary of the 1918 general election, the first time some women were able to vote
- the 90th anniversary of the *Equal Franchise Act 1928*
- the 60th anniversary of the *Life Peerages Act 1958*

In advance of 2018, Vote 100 will deliver a programme of displays, conferences, talks and lectures, publications and web activities. To find out more about Vote 100 and how to get involved or follow us on social media visit [www.parliament.uk/vote100](http://www.parliament.uk/vote100).

February 2015

# Women's Suffrage in Parliament

ON 3 AUGUST 1832, Henry Hunt MP stood up in the House of Commons to present the first ever petition from a woman asking for the vote. Hunt, a radical politician, acknowledged that the petition 'might be a subject of mirth to some hon. Gentlemen' in the Commons, and indeed it was discussed only very briefly and with a mocking tone. The petitioner was a Mary Smith, from Stanmore in the county of York, and as Hunt described it:

*The petitioner stated that she paid taxes, and therefore did not see why she should not have a share in the election of a Representative; she also stated that women were liable to all the punishments of the law, not excepting death, and ought to have a voice in the making of them; but so far from this, even upon their trials, both judges and jurors were all of the opposite sex.*

Although Mary Smith's petition marks the start of campaigning for women's suffrage in Parliament, some philosophers and political thinkers advocated rights for women as citizens equal to that of men even earlier. These included the author Mary Wollstonecraft, who wrote 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman' in 1792. The Great Reform Act of 1832 explicitly excluded women from the Parliamentary vote for the first time by defining voters as 'male persons'. Very few men could vote either in the early 19th century, and some women played a part in general agitation for political reform, including the Chartist movement, arguing for a 'family vote' that reflected the needs of women and children as well as men.

Women began to organise into various regional and national groups lobbying for the vote from the 1850s. In 1866, the Women's Suffrage Petition Committee led by Barbara Bodichon organised a petition which was presented to the House of Commons by the Liberal MP John Stuart Mill, asking for the elective franchise to be extended to all householders 'without distinction of sex'. The House recorded that the petition had 1521 signatures, a great achievement at the time. The first full Parliamentary debate on the

subject took place in 1867 with Mill's unsuccessful attempt to amend the Second Reform Bill to substitute the word 'man' with 'person'.

Following Mill's attempt, women's suffrage private members' bills or resolutions were presented to the Commons almost every year between 1870 and 1914. There were many debates and divisions, some in favour. Petitioning also continued, with nearly 12,000 petitions for women's suffrage presented to the Commons between 1866 and 1918, and hundreds more to the Lords. No government, however, was prepared to introduce its own bill or allow the time for a private members' bill to pass.

Meanwhile, it should also not be forgotten that separate from the vote, there were other significant feminist campaigns during the 19th century which achieved some success, including campaigns on child custody, divorce law reform and married women's property by Caroline Norton, and the campaign against the Contagious Diseases Acts by Josephine Butler. Women had given evidence to parliamentary committees at least as far back as 1852, when Mary Carpenter gave evidence to the Commons Select Committee on Criminal and Destitute Juveniles, and in 1918 seven women non-MPs were co-opted onto the Select Committee on Luxury Duty.

Despite the lack of success with the Parliamentary franchise, rate-paying women did participate in many local elections. Recent historical research has traced women voting and standing for office as poor law guardians, surveyors of highways and in parish elections from at least the 1830s onwards.

In 1897 a federation of 17 local suffrage societies formed the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), 'with a view to the more systematic and combined organisation of work throughout the country', as its notice of formation declared. Under the leadership of Millicent Garrett Fawcett, the NUWSS and its member societies pursued constitutional means of political campaigning.







Millicent Fawcett (1847-1929)  
Curator's Office Reference Collection

Some women became impatient with the lack of progress by suffragists, and in 1903 the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was founded by Emmeline Pankhurst and others. The WSPU's motto, 'Deeds Not Words', encapsulated their different approach. Their methods of direct action, which began in late 1905 and developed and escalated over time, took many forms including setting fire to pillar boxes, stone-throwing and window-breaking. Supporters of the WSPU and other militant organisations, such as the Women's Freedom League (WFL), became known as 'suffragettes'. Although the suffragettes were small in number compared to the suffragists, their methods ensured much more publicity.

### **The Palace of Westminster as a focus for protest**

The Palace of Westminster was a particular target for suffragettes. Reports by the police to the Serjeant at Arms, the official responsible for security in the House of Commons, show a large number of suffragette related incidents between 1906 and 1914, of which the following are among the best known. In June 1908 the WSPU organised a 'rush' on the building, after which Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst and Flora Drummond were charged with incitement and imprisoned in Holloway Prison. In October 1908, suffragettes from the Women's Freedom League, including the Australian Muriel Matters, chained themselves to the grilles of the

Ladies' Gallery and had to be cut free in a committee room. Marion Wallace-Dunlop defaced the stonework in St Stephen's Hall with a rubber stamp in June 1909, printing an extract from the Bill of Rights 1689, and then became the first suffragette to go on hunger strike in prison.

Most famously, Emily Wilding Davison hid overnight in the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft on census night in April 1911, an event marked by a plaque put up by Tony Benn MP many years later. Davison was a member of the WSPU, but also acted independently. She hid in the Palace of Westminster on several occasions and was put on a list of people banned from the building by Speaker Lowther in 1910, to no avail. The Speaker wrote:

*A lady who breaks the windows of the Crown Office and gets into our ventilating shaft is evidently not a desirable personage to have hanging about St Stephen's Hall, so her name had better go on the Index Expurgatoris.*

In 1914 at the outbreak of war, all suffragette prisoners were released and militancy ended. Many women mobilised in support of the war effort to free men for active service, taking over traditionally male jobs in factories, offices, transport, agriculture, and munitions work, with much press and public acclaim. The war necessitated electoral reform, not primarily for women, but to ensure all returning soldiers could vote and would not be disqualified by property or residential requirements.

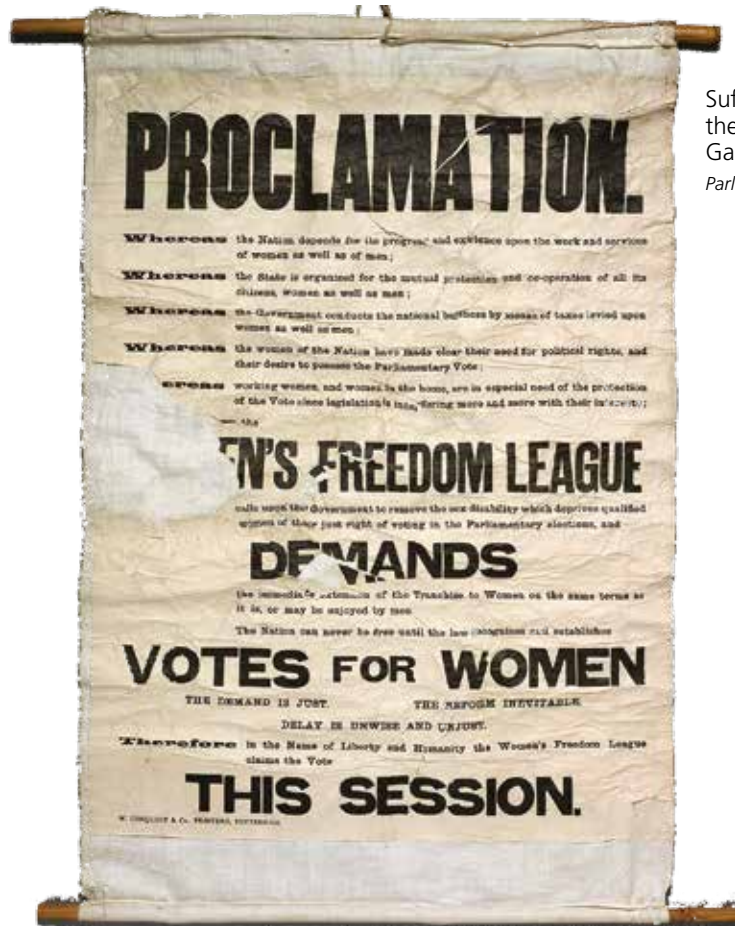
**The franchise is awarded to qualifying women**

A Speaker's Conference was held during 1916-17 to determine the extent of reform required, and women's suffrage campaigners such as Fawcett were active behind the scenes to ensure some women would be included in its scope. The resulting *Representation of the People Act 1918* gave the Parliamentary vote to all men over the age of 21, and women over the age of 30 who met minimum property qualifications - 12,913,166 men and 8,479,156 women. The age restriction was to ensure women did not form the majority of the electorate, as they would have been otherwise because of the loss of men in the war. Women voted for the first time in a Parliamentary election in December 1918.

At a relatively late stage, the question of enabling women to stand as candidates was addressed in the *Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918*. Women 21 and over could be Members of Parliament at last. The decision to establish 21 as the qualifying age was curious in retrospect and resulted in the election of one woman MP, Jennie Lee, at a time when she was unable to vote for herself. Miss Lee was just 23

when selected as Labour Parliamentary candidate for North Lanark and 24 when elected in a by-election on 21 March 1929, a few weeks before the *Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act 1928* came into effect.

Ten years after the *Representation of the People Act 1918*, following a constant stream of private members bills, Parliamentary debate and campaigning by women's organisations, Stanley Baldwin's Conservative government passed the *Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act 1928*. This gave women the vote on the same terms as men, at age 21 and removed remaining qualifying tests. Although largely uncontroversial by this date, there was still opposition from some MPs, including Winston Churchill. Baldwin wrote to Millicent Fawcett to congratulate her, saying that he never doubted the bill would pass and 'will be for the good of our beloved country'. In 1930, two years after her death, Baldwin unveiled a statue to Emmeline Pankhurst in Victoria Tower Gardens, thus placing the seal of government approval on a movement which had been so controversial less than twenty years before.



Suffragette banner unfurled from the House of Commons Ladies' Gallery, 28 October 1908  
*Parliamentary Archives, HC/SA/51/3/1*

# Women Members of Parliament

## The first women MPs

LOOKING BACK from a perspective of nearly a century, it may seem astonishing that no prominent suffrage advocate was elected in December 1918. But the election came at the end of an exhausting and desperate conflict, and suffragettes such as the Pankhursts were not nominated for winnable seats. The only female MP to be elected in the first post-war election was Countess Constance Markievicz, who was elected for Sinn Féin in the Dublin St. Patrick's constituency. In accordance with her party's policy of refusing to take the parliamentary oath, she did not take her seat in the Commons. Indeed, there is a certain irony in that she fought the election from Holloway prison, where she was detained, an iconic site for suffragettes, where many had been subjected to force feeding and repeated imprisonment under the *Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health) Act 1913*, or Cat and Mouse Act. The first woman MP to take her seat was the Conservative, Nancy, Lady Astor, at a by-election in November 1919 for a seat in Plymouth previously held by her husband.



'The introduction of Lady Astor as the first woman Member of Parliament in 1919' by Charles Sims

©Plymouth City Council (Arts and Heritage)



Ellen Wilkinson with Durham County MPs and George Lansbury c.1935

Parliamentary Archives PICIP328

Only 37 women were elected to the Commons in the period 1918 to 1938. Many of these individuals were exceptional, and as a campaigning leaflet, *Women for Westminster* put it in 1945, "They have made their mark entirely out of proportion to their numbers". In 1945, the number of women MPs elected rose to 24 in one general election.

## Trends and roles 1945-1992

In 1992, 60 women were elected, representing only 10 per cent of the Commons. But in the next election in 1997 the number reached 120 and has remained at that consistent proportion of 20 to 25 per cent of the House, bringing the representation of women in UK closer in line with other elected chambers in mature democracies. Nevertheless, the total number of women MPs ever elected as at January 2015 stands at 370, fewer in numbers than the male MPs who sit in the Chamber today.

Women MPs are as varied as male MPs in their approach to the role and focus on issues. Some women have associated themselves with an explicitly feminist agenda, others have devoted energies to campaigns entirely unconnected with the advancement of women in public life. Barbara



'The Rt Hon Betty Boothroyd' by Andrew Festing, 1994  
*Parliamentary Art Collection WOA 3845*

Castle's position in Harold Wilson's Labour Cabinets enabled her to legislate for equal pay and for child benefit, but her achievements extended into the many other policy areas, such as the compulsory fitting of seatbelts. Among the Private Members' bills sponsored by women MPs, two stand out: Ellen Wilkinson's *Hire Purchase Act 1938*, the first legislation to protect those who bought high-cost goods on credit, and Ann Clywd's *Female Genital Mutilation Act 1993*, designed to prevent daughters being taken abroad for cutting. In fact, measures to ban Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) had been raised in the Commons by the Duchess of Atholl and Eleanor Rathbone as early as 11 December 1929.

Many women achieved rapid promotion following their election, with Margaret Thatcher reaching the pinnacle of political success in 1979 when elected as Prime Minister. She remains arguably the most significant holder of the office since 1951. In 1992, Betty Boothroyd became the first female Speaker of the House of Commons. Baroness Hayman became the first Speaker in the House of Lords when the post was established in 2006. Women have been prominent in select committee positions. Gwyneth Dunwoody was a formidable Chair of the Transport Select Committee from 1997 to 2008, surviving an attempt by whips in her own party to remove her in 2001. Women MPs have often been courageous backbenchers, not afraid to voice individual opinions, from Winnie Ewing, the first female SNP MP, to Dame Jill Knight and Bessie Braddock, both formidable campaigners. Each of the women whose profiles are set out here have a legacy in modern politics.

### Modern developments

The General Election of 1 May 1997 saw unprecedented number of women candidates elected, with 120 women candidates returned. A record number of women had stood as candidates

in the 1997 election largely because of the Labour Party, which had adopted a policy of women-only shortlists. This required a proportion of local parties to only shortlist women candidates for selection. The mechanism was applied in half the 'winnable' seats in 1993-96. This Labour Party policy was withdrawn in 1996 when an employment tribunal found that it was in breach of the *Sex Discrimination Act 1975*.

Uncertainty about the legal position, which made it difficult for parties to develop policies on selection procedures aimed at introducing more women MPs into Parliament, was resolved by the passage of the *Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act 2002*. The Act, which received Royal Assent on 26 February 2002, amended the *Sex Discrimination Act 1975* and the *Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976* that outlawed sexual discrimination, to enable political parties to take positive action to reduce inequality in the numbers of men and women, though it does not require parties to do this if they do not wish to. The legislation resolved the issues raised by the findings of the employment tribunal in the case of Labour's women only short lists. The Act was scheduled to expire in 2015 but the *Equality Act 2010* extended the potential for women only shortlists for political parties until 2030.

### The Speaker's Conference on Parliamentary Representation

This Conference examined means to increase the number of female MPs as well as other under-represented groups in the House of Commons. Its final report was published in January 2010. In response, the Coalition Government established the Access to Elective Office Fund to help disabled people meet additional support needs to stand for election, but did not support legislation requiring parties to adopt quotas to increase the number of female MPs.

## Women and the House of Lords

**I**N 1957 THE EARL OF GLASGOW declared in the House of Lords:

*This is a House of men, a House of Lords. We do not wish it to become a House of Lords and Ladies.*

His view reflected centuries of tradition where no women had been able to sit in the House of Lords. Women had, of course, been involved with the Lords in many other ways, including reigning as Queens, participating behind the scenes as political hostesses, and by political campaigning on behalf of their menfolk. When the Lords decided to exclude all 'strangers' (non-members) from the Chamber in 1739, a band of well-connected women including the Duchesses of Queensberry and Ancaster, Lady Huntingdon, Lady Westmorland, Lady Cobham and Mary Delany (Mary Granville) created an uproar and ultimately forced their way into the Lords. As reported in the diary of Lady Mary Montagu:



'Margaret Haig Thomas, Viscountess Rhondda'  
by Alice Mary Burton, 1931  
*Parliamentary Art Collection WOA 7177*

*These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot soldiers; they stood there till five in the afternoon, without either sustenance or evacuation, every now and then playing volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps against the door, with so much violence that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the two duchesses (very well apprised of the use of stratagems in war) commanded a dead silence of half an hour, and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of absence gave order for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery.*

However, no women could sit in the Lords, even if they inherited a peerage title, as a few women did. One of these hereditary female peers began campaigning for admission to the Lords in 1920. She was Viscountess Rhondda (Margaret Mackworth Haig). Her father, D. A. Thomas, was made a peer for services during the First World War, and as he had no sons, a special remainder was made to enable his daughter to take his title. A former suffragette, businesswomen and the leading equalitarian feminist of her day, Lady Rhondda attempted to take her seat in the Lords in 1922, basing her claim on the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 which stated that 'A woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from the exercise of any public function.'

In March 1922 the Committee for Privileges found in her favour, and for a brief period she received congratulations on her seat in the House of Lords. Lady Rhondda sounded a note of private caution at the time; 'I am not in the House of Lords yet, in spite of the Committee of Privileges, and I am afraid the Lord Chancellor is going to move against me.' Her concern was well-placed. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Birkenhead (F. E. Smith), opposed the admission of women to the House of Lords and re-constituted the Committee. Birkenhead argued that the admission of women to the Lords was such a major change that it required legislation, and Rhondda lost her case.

Eventually legislation arrived in the form of the Life Peerages Act 1958, where women benefited from the wider need to create life peerages. Apart from special types of life peer (such as bishops, law lords



Katharine Elliot, Baroness Elliot of Harwood  
*Parliamentary Archives PUD/F/534*

and representative peers for Scotland and Ireland), the Lords was mainly a hereditary body before 1958. Life peerages were part of a solution to problems affecting the operation of the Lords in the 1950s, including poor attendance and difficulties in getting people to accept hereditary peerages. It was hoped that life peers would enable the House to broaden its membership to include a younger, more varied cross-section of society; and part of this was the specific inclusion of women.

Four women peers were created in 1958. The first to be introduced was Baroness Swanborough (Dame Stella Isaacs), founder of the Women's Voluntary Service. However the first woman peer to be created was Baroness Wootton of Abinger (Barbara Wootton), an expert on sociology, criminology and penal reform. In 1965 she successfully sponsored the Bill in the Lords which abolished capital punishment. The first woman peer to make her maiden speech was Baroness Elliot of Harwood (Dame Katharine Elliot), known for her long-standing work in public life including prison reform and child care, who remarked, 'Probably this is the first occasion in 900 years that the voice of a woman has been heard in the deliberations of this House.'

The fourth women peer created in 1958 was Baroness Ravensdale of Kedleston (Mary Irene Curzon), who was also a hereditary peer in her own right, but like Lady Rhondda unable to sit in that capacity. Hereditary women peers were finally allowed to sit in the House of Lords under the Peerages Act 1963, the first being Baroness Strange of Knokin, who had held her title since 1921. Full Parliamentary equality was therefore finally achieved in principle in 1963, although the number of women peers remained very small for many years and they still make up less than a quarter of the House. Despite this, women have held many ministerial positions in the Lords, including Leader of the House and Chief Whip, and both the two Lord Speakers to date have been women.



'Baroness Hayman, the Lord Speaker'  
by Sergei Pavelenko, 2008  
*Parliamentary Art Collection WOA 6806*

## Exhibition catalogue

### **Women in Parliament: Works from the Parliamentary Art Collection**

*Portcullis House, House of Commons*

9 February – 31 July 2015

As well as displaying pictures of women in Parliament this exhibition also highlights the absences. The Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art have made progress over the last three Parliaments to increase the holdings relating to women and to commission, acquire or borrow portraits of women who have played particularly important roles in Parliament. Inevitably there are gaps, particularly in the early to mid-twentieth century when Parliament did not commission portraits and parliamentarians, particularly the increasing numbers from working and middle class backgrounds, were unlikely to sit for portraits because of changing social conditions. The search for missing figures goes on and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who knows of portraits which might be of interest to us [curator@parliament.uk](mailto:curator@parliament.uk).





01

## The Belle-Alliance or the Female Reformers of Blackburn!!!

By George Cruikshank

1819 | Print (engraving)

WOA 6795

After the Napoleonic Wars there was a strong popular movement in Britain to reform Parliament and the political system. This satirical print was inspired by a Reform meeting in Blackburn on 5 July 1819 that was attended by the Committee for the Female Reform Society. The women reformers asked the Chairman to read an address which called for resistance to oppressors, annual parliaments, universal suffrage and election by ballot. Cruikshank's image suggests he was not sympathetic to the women reformers as they were documented as "very neatly dressed for the occasion". They inspired the establishment of similar societies across North West England. The movement's campaign for reform ended with the Peterloo Massacre when reform campaigners were attacked by armed soldiers and yeomanry, resulting in many injuries and deaths. Nearly 25% of the casualties were women protestors. Four women are known to be among the fatalities which totalled at least 18 – Margaret Downes, Mary Heys, Sarah Jones, and Martha Partington.



02

**SPOUTING. Strike Home!  
and I will bless thee for the Blow!**

*By James Gillray*

*Pubd. May 14th 1792 by H. Humphrey, N. 18 Old Bond Street*

1792 | Print (engraving)

WOA 3849

This image shows Charles James Fox MP and his mistress, and later wife, Elizabeth Armstead (1750–1842), engaged in a lover's quarrel. Whilst Fox holds a knife this is a scene of sexual innuendo rather than violence. Armstead was a courtesan and actress and, prior to her relationship with Fox, the mistress of a number of senior Parliamentarians. She provided Fox with support throughout the ups and downs of his political career as well as hosting working dinners for her husband and his political colleagues.



03

**Wit's last stake or  
The Cobling Voters and Abject Canvassers**

*By Thomas Rowlandson*

1784 | Print on paper

WOA 6799

This satirical print shows Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire (1757-1806) helping prominent Whig politician Charles Fox canvassing for votes in the Westminster constituency election of 1784 (Fox represented the Westminster constituency 1780-1801). It was not unusual for women supporters to help political parties and candidates in this way, and their involvement was often crucial to the campaigning. Here the Duchess is shown sitting on Fox's knee whilst her shoe is being repaired by a cobbler, she is dropping money, ostensibly to pay for the repair, into the cobbler's wife's hand. The cobbler, as a property owner, would have been eligible to vote, and though his wife was not, she may have had influence on her husband's choice.

04

**Humours of Electioneering  
– The Ladies Committee and  
On the music hall stage – for  
this night only...**

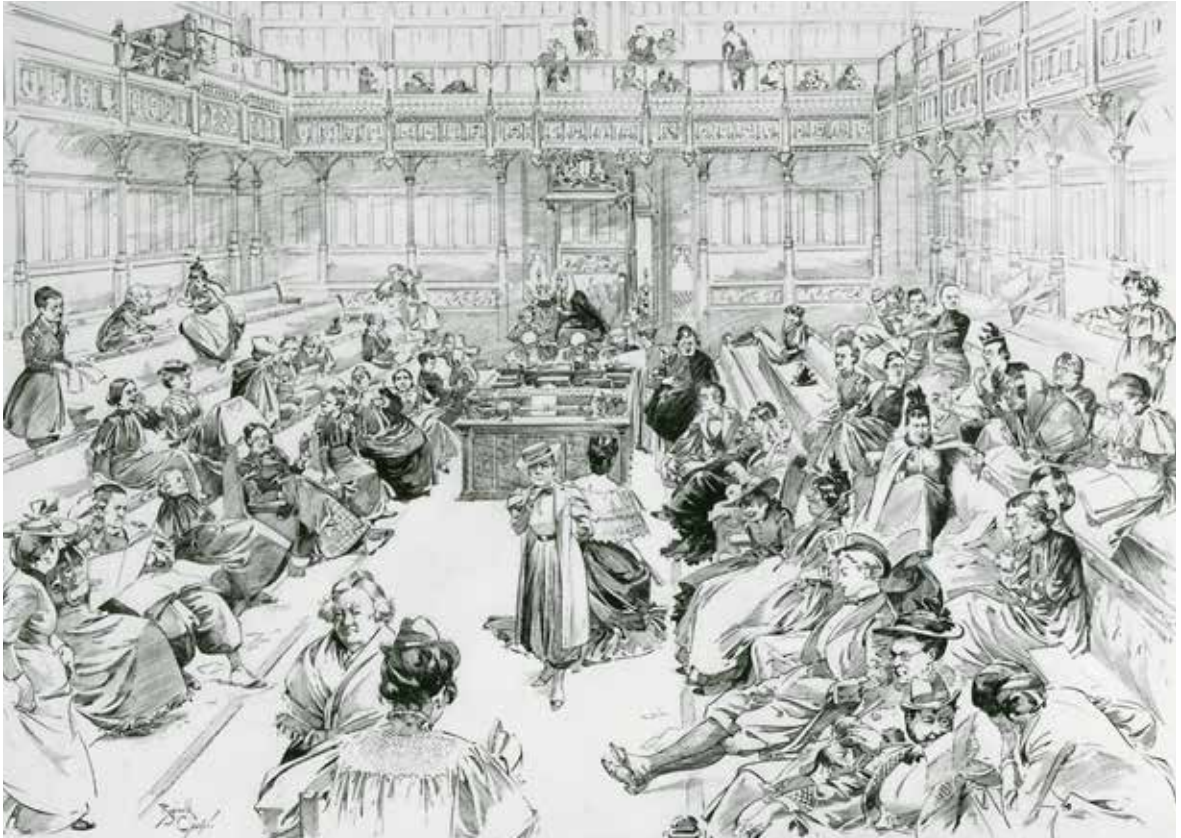
*By 'JF', after Harry Furniss*

*Published in the Illustrated London  
News November 21, 1885*

1885 | Print

WOA 4092 – (not illustrated)

In the 19th century women played an active role during elections. Here we see a Ladies Committee organising campaigning events and below a satirical drawing showing the candidate addressing an audience from the stage, women from the Ladies Committee sit on the platform supporting him.



05

### **House of Commons 1895, A Ladies Parliament**

*By Reginald Thomas Cleaver*

1895 | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 1590

This satirical view of the House of Commons Chamber showing women, all of whom are assuming very masculine poses, could reflect the growing concerns amongst those opposed to women's suffrage that support for votes for women was growing in strength and that women MPs were no longer an outlandish fiction. It also reflects the view that women who wanted to participate in traditionally male areas of activity were losing their 'feminine' qualities and becoming 'manly'. Between 1867 and 1895 6,340 petitions calling for women's suffrage had been received by the House of Commons with nearly 385,000 signatures.



06

**A Sketch at the Members Entrance –  
Tea Time**

*By Reginald Thomas Cleaver*

1893 | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5209



07

**Ladies in the Lobby –An Every-Day Scene in  
the House of Commons**

*By Reginald Thomas Cleaver*

*Published in The Graphic June 12 1897*

1987 | Print

WOA 5315

The social aspects of Parliamentary life brought middle and upper class women to the building in great numbers. Afternoon tea was a popular occasion both socially and to catch up on news of the debates in the Chamber, the number of carriages arriving causing queues at Member's Entrance. Women, as can be seen here were allowed into Member's Lobby to meet and talk to MPs.



08

**Mrs Herbert Asquith**

*By Philip Alexius de Laszlo*

1909 | Oil on canvas

WOA 7214

Margaret Tennant (1864-1945), married senior politician H H Asquith in 1894. He became Prime Minister in 1908. Margot Asquith was a consummate political hostess who socialised extensively in political circles and was frequently felt to influence her husband's ministry and government policy.



09

## **The Terrace, 1909**

*By Milly Childers*

1909 | Oil on canvas

WOA 3439

Milly Childers, though not a 'career' artist, has paintings in national collections. She is particularly known for her portraits. Her father was Hugh Culling Eardley Childers MP, former Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary. This family connection undoubtedly led to Childers being allowed to paint this group portrait of MPs and the Serjeant at Arms on the terrace of the House of Commons, an area not normally accessible to artists. A year before this painting was made a group of WSPU suffragettes hired a steam launch to lobby MPs taking tea on the Terrace. Suffragette Flora Drummond, equipped with a megaphone, invited the MPs to attend 'Women's Sunday', the first major demonstration organised by the WSPU on 21 June 1908 from the boat's cabin roof. One of the MPs shown in this painting is Keir Hardie MP (leaning on parapet), who actively supported the cause of votes for women, and frequently spoke on the subject in the House of Commons. Also in the painting are Norman Lamont (second from the right); Sir Benjamin Stone, and Sir David Erskine, Serjeant at Arms (identifiable by his sword).

## The House of Commons Ladies' Gallery



A corner in the Ladies' Gallery by Harry Furniss  
Parliamentary Archives HC/LB/1/112/248

Before 1834, there was no space in which women visitors could view House of Commons debates. A small number of well-connected women did watch proceedings by peering through a ventilation shaft in the ceiling, but this was restricted and uncomfortable. The Ladies' Gallery was first conceived by a select committee considering arrangements for women visiting the House of Commons in 1835. The Commons was then sitting in a temporary building, following the 1834 fire that burned down the Houses of Parliament. The committee resolved:

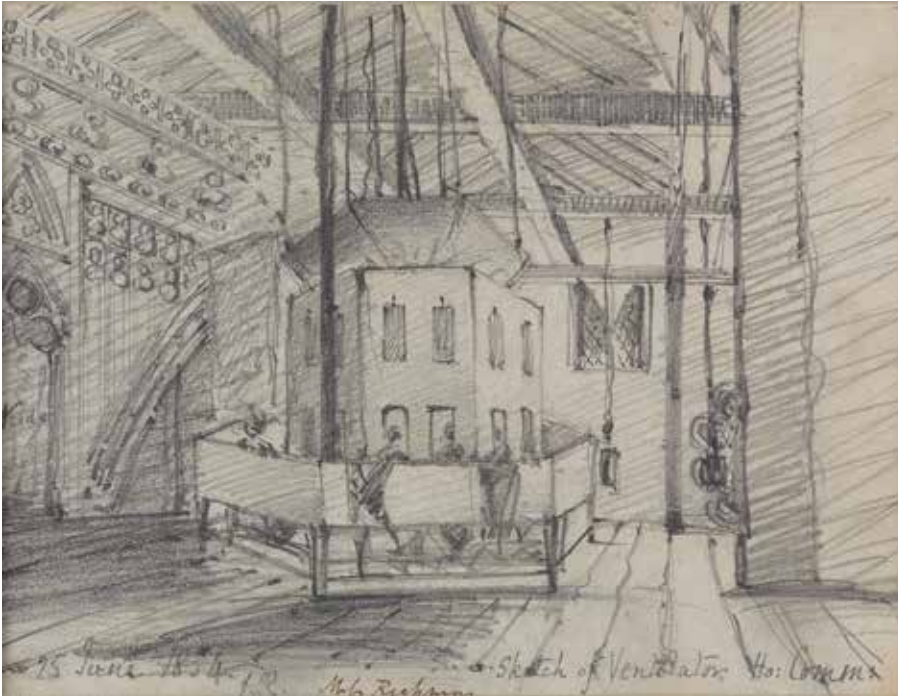
*“That a portion of the Stranger’s Gallery at the North end of the House, not exceeding a quarter of the whole, and capable of containing 24 ladies, be set apart for their accommodation, divided by a partition from the rest of the Gallery, and screened in front by an open trellis work. That in the new House of Commons, a Gallery should be constructed capable of accommodating not less than 40 Ladies.”*

Architect Charles Barry duly designed and built the Ladies' Gallery in the new Commons, complete with a stone screen fronted by a metal grille trellis. It was placed high above the Speaker's Chair, above the Reporter's Gallery. The height, together with the grille, made it very difficult for women to see and hear what was happening, and the space was stuffy and cramped. Suffrage leader Millicent Fawcett wrote:

*“One great discomfort of the grille was that the interstices of the heavy brasswork were not large enough to allow the victims who sat behind it to focus... it was like using a gigantic pair of spectacles which did not fit, and made the Ladies' Gallery a grand place for getting headaches.”*

The grilles became both a physical and metaphorical symbol of women's exclusion from Parliament, and later a target of suffragette agitation. Muriel Matters and Helen Fox, suffragettes from the Women's Freedom League, famously chained themselves to the grille in a protest in 1908. Following a petition by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, the grilles were removed in 1917 and the Stranger's Gallery was opened to women at the same time. The Ladies' Gallery continued in existence until the destruction of the House of Commons chamber by bombing during the Second World War.





10  
**Sketch of Ventilator, House of Commons**  
*By Frances Rickman*  
1834 | Pencil on paper  
WOA 26

This is a rare drawing by Frances Rickman, the daughter of John Rickman, House of Commons Clerk Assistant and Secretary to Speaker Abbot, who lived in her father's official residence in the Palace of Westminster complex. We are very fortunate to have this unique drawing of the ventilator grille in the roof of St Stephens, home to the House of Commons chamber. The figures of women standing around the grille looking down into the Chamber, are just visible. A few months after making this drawing Frances Rickman witnessed the Palace being destroyed by fire.

11  
**The Ladies' Gallery Cage – House of Commons**  
*Publ as part of a series Echos from the Clubs, Cartoon No 10 May 6, 1868*

*By unknown artist*  
1868 | Print  
*On loan courtesy of the Parliamentary Press Gallery – (not illustrated)*

12  
**The Ladies' Gallery, House of Commons**  
*By unknown artist*  
*Published in The Illustrated London News supplement Feb 12 1870*

1870 | Print  
WOA 6786 – (not illustrated)

13  
**The Ladies' Gallery**  
*By Harry Furniss*  
*Published in The Graphic, March 16, 1889*

1889 | Print  
WOA 6157 – (not illustrated)

14  
**Behind the Grille – The Ladies Gallery**  
*By Reginald Thomas Cleaver*

1895 | Pen and ink on paper  
WOA 4117 – (not illustrated)

## Votes for Women



15  
**Emmeline Pankhurst**  
*By John H F Bacon*  
c.1908 | Chalk on paper  
WOA 5438

16  
**Votes for Women, Wanted  
Everywhere**  
*After original by Hilda M Dallas*  
Originally published 1909  
Print  
WOA 4705 – (not illustrated)



Front

Back

17

**WSPU Hunger Strike Medal awarded to Caroline Lowder Downing**

1912 | Silver medal with silk ribbon  
WOA 5748

The reverse of the medal states 'Fed by Force 1/3/12 Caroline Lowder Downing'. It was awarded to Caroline Downing by the WSPU on her release from prison. Miss Downing was a trained nurse, she joined the WSPU in 1908. She was arrested a number of times for demonstrating outside the House of Commons. She took part in window breaking campaigns and was found guilty of breaking windows valued at £50 on 1 March 1912.

Refusing to pay the fine she was imprisoned in Winson Green Prison, Birmingham (Holloway was full) where she went on hunger strike and was forcibly fed.

19

**National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies badge**

Early 20th century  
Metal and enamel badge or lapel pin  
WOA 5750

The NUWSS principles and allegiance to no political party are stated on this badge 'Constitutional Non Party'.



18

**National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage badge**

Early 20th century  
Metal and enamel badge with pin  
WOA 5749

The League was formed in 1910, when the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League and the Men's League for Opposing Women's Suffrage amalgamated. The Men's League had money and a membership of parliamentarians, the Women's League lacked these but had good numbers of women supporters and active campaigners and administrators. By 1914 membership of the League was in excess of 42,000 – which compares, not unfavourably, with pro-suffrage organisations. The NUWSS had a membership of 50,000 by 1913. Even at its peak, the WSPU had a membership of less than 5000.



20

**This is the House...**

Published BB, London Series No 23  
Early 20th century  
Printed card  
Curator's reference collection



21

**This is the House...**

Published BB, London Series No 23  
Early 20th century  
Printed card  
Curator's reference collection



22

### **A Fancy Dress Ball**

*By Stranger Pritchard*

*Published in Truth Magazine (Christmas Number)*

25 December 25, 1913

Colour lithograph

WOA 6722

This crowded and colourful scene is making a point about the prominence in public affairs being gained by the suffrage movement. In the balcony boxes the King and government ministers are being bothered by suffragettes brandishing a 'Votes for Women' handbill. In turn the suffragettes are being monitored by the police. Below in the crowd a woman, in academic gown, wears a 'votes for women sash' and is chained to a man, who might be Asquith. Actress Ellen Terry, patron of the Actresses Franchise League (founded in 1908) carries a copy of her autobiography 'The Story of My Life'.

23

### **A Political Salome**

*By 'Rip' [Roland Hill]*

*Published in Truth Magazine (Christmas Number)*

25 December 25, 1905

Colour lithograph

WOA 6721 – (not illustrated)

1908 had seen much suffragette activity particularly by the WSPU, including a mass rally in Hyde Park and window smashing campaigns. In this satirical cartoon, Salome, representing the suffrage movement, presents anti-suffrage Prime Minister Herbert Asquith's head to John Bull, in the role of Herod and representing the British nation. Bull is surrounded by Tory establishment figures – robed peers, bishops and judges – who are equally pleased to see Liberal Asquith's demise.

24

### **Forcible Feeding**

*By Stranger Pritchard*

*Published in Truth Magazine (Christmas Number)*

25 December 25, 1913

Colour lithograph

WOA 6714 – (not illustrated)

1913 was a difficult year for the country, the women's suffrage campaign and forcible feeding of imprisoned suffragettes were amongst the challenging issues. The latter has been chosen by this cartoonist as the central motif in his summing up of the year. John Bull, representing the British nation, is restrained and being force fed all the country's problems by Lloyd George (Chancellor of the Exchequer) and Asquith (Prime Minister). Votes for women, delivered by a WSPU suffragette in a steaming kettle is obviously a hot topic.

25

### Countess Constance Markievicz

*Unknown photographer*

1922 | Photograph (copy, original held by Sligo county Library)

WOA 6553 – (not illustrated)

**Elected for Sinn Féin in Dublin St Patrick's on 14 December 1918. Did not take the parliamentary oath and did not take her seat. The creation of the Irish Free State in 1922 meant that southern Irish seats were no longer represented at Westminster.**

Constance Markievicz was a committed Irish republican who had taken part in the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, but she was also active in the Irish suffragette movement *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*. She was the only woman to be court-martialled for her role in the Rising; her sentence of death was commuted to penal servitude for life on account of her sex. She served 13 months in prison, in Ireland and in England, campaigning for a Dublin seat in the December 1918 general election from Holloway prison. In accordance with Sinn Féin policy, she did not take her seat at Westminster, but the fact of her election makes her the first woman MP. She was also the first female member of the Irish Dail which convened in 1919 and served as Minister of Labour (April 1919–21). As the then leader of the *Cumann na mBan* movement, she bitterly opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty (December 1921) which established the Irish Free State and supported the anti-Treaty forces in the civil war which followed. She died in 1927.

26 + 27

### The introduction of Lady Astor as the first woman Member of Parliament in 1919

*After a painting by Charles Sims*

No date | Photograph

WOA 1636 (illustrated on page 6)

This photograph of a painting by Charles Sims (1873–1928) is in the collection of Plymouth Art Gallery. It shows Lady Astor with her two sponsors, Prime Minister David Lloyd George (on her right) and former Prime Minister Arthur Balfour (on her left) as she is formerly introduced to the House of Commons on 1 December 1919.

### Nancy, Viscountess Astor, MP

*By Zsigmond Kisfaludi Strobl*

1933 | Plaster

WOA 5221 – (not illustrated)

**Elected for the Conservatives on 15 November 1919 for Plymouth, Sutton. Retired at the 1945 general election.**

Nancy Astor was an unlikely woman to have become the first woman MP to participate in the Commons, as an American-born socialite, with no record of suffragist beliefs. Her husband had to relinquish his Commons seat when his father died and he succeeded to the peerage as the second Viscount Astor. The local Conservative party accepted his suggestion that she fight the resultant by-election. Nancy Astor arrived to take her seat on 1 December 1919, met by a small band of veteran suffragettes on Paddington station. The next two women MPs to take their seats were also elected for seats previously held by their husbands (Margaret Wintringham September 1921 and Mabel Philipson, May 1923). Viscountess Astor introduced the first Private Member's Bill sponsored by a woman in 1923, the Intoxicating Liquor (Sales to Persons under Eighteen) Bill, which increased the legal age for drinking alcohol in a public house from 14 to 18, without parental consent. She did not look for promotion to Government benches. In the 1930s the Astors were associated with the policy of appeasement, and during the Second World War she became increasingly marginalised, retiring in 1945, after 25 years' service.

28

### So I Asked Myself, Why Shouldn't There Be a Woman in No. 10

*By Ian Nuttall*

1986 | Crayon on board

WOA 3234 – (not illustrated)

29

**Margaret Bondfield MP**

*(not illustrated)*

Elected for Labour in Northampton on 6th December 1923, but defeated in the 1924 general election. Elected for Wallsend in a by-election in July 1926, being defeated again in 1931. She was the first female Cabinet Minister and Privy Counsellor.

Margaret Bondfield was the eleventh child of a textile worker and left school at 13. Having begun work as a shop assistant, she rose through the trade union movement. She became known as Britain's leading expert on shop workers and gave evidence to the Select Committee on Shops (1902) and the Select Committee on the Truck System (1907). In 1910 the Liberal Government appointed her to the Advisory Committee on the Health Insurance Bill. Bondfield's efforts were rewarded when she persuaded the government to include maternity benefits. In the short-lived Labour Government of 1929, Miss Bondfield became the first woman Cabinet Minister, as Minister of Labour, and first woman Privy Counsellor, in the short-lived Labour Cabinet of 1929–1931. She had to deal with the effects of the Great Depression and the challenging task of finding the funds to pay unemployment relief. Her term of office ended with the creation of the National Government in 1931 and in the subsequent general election of October 1931 she lost her seat, failing to retake it in 1935.

30

**Susan Lawrence MP**

*(not illustrated)*

Elected for Labour on 6 December 1923 for East Ham North, lost seat in general election of 29 October 1924. Elected again at a by-election in East Ham North on 29 April 1926, but defeated in general election of 27 October 1931.

Susan Lawrence was first elected to the Commons in the December 1923 election as one of the first three women Labour MPs, and was a Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) in the minority Labour Government of 1924. She returned to the Commons in a by-election in 1926 and was chair of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party 1929–30, but lost her seat in the October 1931 election. She had worked previously to develop the Women's Trade Union League and was best known for her role as a councillor in the Poplar rate strike of 1921. The council refused to set a rate for cross-London bodies, in view of its expenditure to support the unemployed. Following a court hearing, the councillors were ordered to pay the deficit personally, or be imprisoned. Miss Lawrence was one of the five women councillors imprisoned in Holloway for 5 weeks, before the Government promoted legislation to equalise the poor law rate across boroughs. After a junior ministerial post in the Ministry of Health in Ramsay Macdonald's Government, her opposition to the formation of the National Government terminated her parliamentary career. She played a major role in piloting the Housing Bill 1929–30 through the Commons committee stage and was known for her command of detail in scrutiny.

31

**Katharine, Duchess of Atholl MP**

*(not illustrated)*

Elected as a Scottish Unionist, at Kinross and West Perthshire on 6 December 1923, until she resigned to contest seat as an Independent in November 1938 and was defeated.

Katharine had a distinguished career in Scottish public service before her election to the Commons in December 1923 as the first woman to be elected for a Scottish seat. Before the First World War she had been an anti-suffragist. Her war service led her to become one of the first Dames of the British Empire in 1918. On the collapse of the Labour administration in 1924, she became the first woman to serve in a Conservative Government, in a junior post in the Board of Education until 1929. She resigned in November 1938 and stood and lost in a by-election as an anti-appeaser, having been appalled by the effects of Luftwaffe bombing in a visit to observe the effects of the civil war in Spain in 1937 in the company of fellow MPs Ellen Wilkinson and Eleanor Rathbone. She published *Searchlight on Spain* in 1938 which sold 300,000 copies. Her activities earned her the nickname of the Red Duchess, but she also campaigned against the lack of freedom in the Soviet Union and its influence and later dominance in Eastern Europe. Another notable interest was to outlaw Female Genital Mutilation where she established a committee with Eleanor Rathbone MP. The Duchess introduced a Ten Minute Rule Bill, which became the *Illegitimate Children (Scotland) Act 1931* to modernise provision for such children in Scotland, speaking forcefully on the need for an appropriate contribution from the father.



32

### **'Fetters and Roses' Dinner**

*including former suffragettes, 9 January 1924*

*Unknown photographer*

1924 | Photograph

*Parliamentary Archives, HLIPO/RO/1/203*

Photograph of a dinner in Parliament nicknamed the 'Fetters and Roses' Dinner. The photograph is titled 'Ex-Prisoner Members of Parliament, Dinner at the House of Commons, 9th January 1924. J Scott Duckers, Esq., in the Chair.' On the back of the frame, also behind glass, are photocopies of other documents relating to the event including the invitation and menu.

This photograph belonged to Joseph Harrison (1856-1947), one of the people pictured in it. Joseph Harrison was imprisoned in Wandsworth gaol in 1889 for 14 days, for default of payment of fines for refusing to have his children vaccinated. He was a founder member of the Abinger, Shere and District Anti-Vaccination League and served on the Executive of the National Society for the Abolition of Vaccination.

The dinner guests include several former suffragettes who were imprisoned during the suffrage campaign, including Barbara Ayrton Gould, Dorothy Evans, Viscountess Rhondda, Helen Archdale, Evelyn Sharp, and Frederick and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, as well as early female Labour MP Susan Lawrence. It also includes a number of men imprisoned as conscientious objectors during the First World War. Despite the title, not everyone in the photograph was a Member of Parliament at the time. However two were to become MPs in future (Barbara Ayrton Gould and Eleanor Rathbone) and a number were unsuccessful Parliamentary candidates including Dorothy Evans, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, and Dora Russell.

33

**Ellen Wilkinson MP**

*(not illustrated)*

Elected for Labour in Middlesbrough East on 29 October 1924, but defeated in the general election of 27 October 1931, she was elected for Jarrow in the general election on 14 November 1935, a seat she held until her death in 1947.

Ellen Wilkinson was best known for her high profile work on behalf of her unemployed constituents in the North East town of Jarrow. Initially a teacher and a suffragist, Ellen Wilkinson became a trade union organiser and briefly a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain. She was elected in 1924 attracting immediate attention as the only new female Labour MP in that Parliament. She focused on feminist and socialist issues, being elected to the Labour Party's National Executive Committee in 1927. Made a Parliamentary Private Secretary to Susan Lawrence in the Labour Government of 1929 to 1931, she was a moving force behind the Mental Treatment Act 1930 which allowed for voluntary admission to psychiatric hospitals. Defeated in 1931, she turned to international work, until her return to Parliament in 1935. The Jarrow March of 1936 culminated in a petition, which Miss Wilkinson delivered personally to Parliament. She successfully introduced a Private Member's Bill, the Hire Purchase Act 1938, the first legislation to protect those who bought high-cost goods on credit. As Minister of Education in the 1945 Labour government, Wilkinson's main achievement was the implementation of the raising of the school leaving age from 14 to 15.

34

**Jennie Lee MP**

*By Jane Bown*

No date | Photograph  
WOA 6525 – *(not illustrated)*

Elected for Labour in a by-election in North Lanarkshire on 21 March 1929. Defeated in October 1931, she was elected again in Cannock on 5 July 1945 and sat until her defeat in 1970.

Jennie Lee won a scholarship to university from a Scottish mining background. Her father was blacklisted after the General Strike in 1926, further politicising his daughter. Miss Lee was first elected in a by-election in Lanarkshire in March 1929 aged 24, the youngest MP in the Commons at a point when she was below the voting age herself, as the new register under the Equal Franchise Act 1928 did not take effect until the general election in May 1929. In her maiden speech on the Conservative Budget she accused the Chancellor of the Exchequer Winston Churchill of 'cant, corruption, and incompetence.' She lost her seat in 1931 but was re-elected in 1945 for Cannock. Miss Lee was married to the Labour architect of the NHS, Aneurin Bevan, but they had their political differences, notably over unilateral nuclear disarmament, which Bevan opposed. A convinced left-winger, she was not promoted under Prime Minister Clement Attlee. She was appointed as Minister for the Arts in Harold Wilson's first administration in 1964 and best known for her role in helping to found the Open University in 1969, an achievement later described by Wilson as the greatest achievement of his premiership.

35

**Hugh Gaitskell MP, Anna Gaitskell, Aneurin Bevan MP and Janet [Jennie] Lee MP**

*By Jane Bown*

No date | Photograph  
WOA 6573 – *(not illustrated)*

Although not a MP (Anna) Dora Gaitskell (1901-1989) had an active interest in politics. At 16 she joined the Labour party and was politically active all her life. She was made a life peer, Baroness Gaitskell of Egremont in the County of Cumberland, in 1963 on the recommendation of Conservative Prime Minister Harold Macmillan. She went on to be a member of the UK delegation to the general assembly of the United Nations and was an active spokesperson on human rights, particularly in the third world.





36

**Women MPs celebrating Megan Lloyd George's 20th anniversary in Parliament,  
31 May 1949**

*By Gerald Pudsey*

1949 | Photograph

*Parliamentary Archives, PUD/15/2/1*

Elected as a Liberal for Anglesey on 30 May 1929 until her defeat in 1951 then won Carmarthen in a by-election on 28 February 1957 as a Labour MP until her death on 14 May 1966.

Megan was the daughter of the former Prime Minister David Lloyd George and by the mid-1920s was widely regarded as her father's likely political heir, being elected in 1929 as the first female MP for a Welsh constituency. She opposed the National Government after 1931 as the Liberal Party split. During the Second World War she became prominent in her own right, as a leading figure on the unofficial, non-party women's power committee, concerned with the wartime employment of women and with women's rights. All backbench women MPs met in February 1940 to demand that the Government do more to give women a responsible role in the war effort. She also campaigned hard for equal pay and equal compensation for war-time injuries suffered by civilians. Megan was a member of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform in 1944, which led to a system of permanent redistribution of parliamentary seats. She grew disillusioned with what she saw as the rightward drift of the Liberals and when returned in a by-election after the Suez debacle in 1957 she remained a backbencher. Always a sparkling debater, with interests in Welsh devolution and the BBC, she was the first woman member of the Welsh Church Commissioners in 1942, a church disestablished by her father.

Megan Lloyd George is seated middle with a spray of flowers in front of her and a book on her lap. This photograph was taken at an event for (mainly Labour) women MPs celebrating her 20th anniversary in Parliament as MP for Anglesey. Two former female MPs are also present, Thelma Cazalet-Keir and the first Liberal female MP, Margaret Wintringham.

Back row, left to right: Edith Wills, Lucy Middleton, Bessie Braddock, Jean Mann, Thelma Cazalet-Keir, Lady Grant of Monymusk (Priscilla Buchan, Baroness Tweedsmuir), Alice Bacon, Barbara Ayrton-Gould, Viscountess Davidson, Lucy Noel-Buxton, Leah Manning, Caroline Ganley, Grace Colman. Front row, left to right: Florence Paton, Margaret Herbison, Mabel Ridealgh, Megan Lloyd George, Edith Summerskill, Margaret Wintringham, Jennie Lee.



37

### **Eleanor Rathbone**

*By Julian Barrow after Sir James Gunn*

1998 | Oil on canvas

WOA 4391

Elected as an Independent for the Combined English Universities on 30 May 1929, a seat she held until her death in 1946.

Eleanor Rathbone was a social campaigner and suffragist, best known for her work on family allowances. In 1919, she took over as President from Millicent Fawcett of the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (the renamed National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies). She was elected as an Independent as one of two MPs for the Combined English Universities seat in 1929. Seats for newer universities were created in the Representation of the People Act 1918 and MPs for university seats were elected after 1918 using the single transferable vote, offering more opportunities for independents. University seats were abolished in 1950. Her background was as a suffragist and she used her position as an independent to campaign both for policies for women such as the Inheritance (Family Provision) Act 1938 and also for broader concerns such as human rights. Over the next few years Miss Rathbone campaigned against female circumcision in Africa, child marriage in India and forced marriage in Palestine, but also took a keen interest in opposing the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s. She was active during the second world war in arguing for real equality for women in the war effort, stating "I have always insisted that equal citizenship should bring with it equal responsibilities as citizens". She was quoted as saying that for a woman to be politically successful, she must combine the virtues of the Giant Sisyphus, King Bruce's spider, the Ancient Mariner and the Importunate Widow". Her major achievement is often seen as the Family Allowances Act 1945, a system of direct payments to mothers to improve the care of children.

In the absence of any available portrait of Eleanor Rathbone it was decided to commission a copy of the portrait by Gunn held in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery. The commission was generously funded by a donation from the Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust.



38

**Women MPs on the House of Commons Terrace,  
4 November 1931**

*Unknown photographer*

1931 | Photograph

*Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/RO/1/188*

The sitters are all the Conservative women MPs who were in Parliament in November 1931 except one (Marjorie Graves is absent).

Back row, left to right: Viscountess Astor, Helen Shaw, Mavis Tate, Thelma Cazalet, Sarah Ward, Ida Copeland, Florence Horsburgh.

Front row, left to right: Norah Runge, Gwendolyn Countess of Iveagh, Katherine Duchess of Atholl, Irene Ward, Mary Pickford.

39

**Dr Marion Phillips MP**

*(Not illustrated)*

Elected for the Labour Party on 30 May 1929 in Sunderland but lost her seat in the 1931 general election, dying in 1932.

Marion Phillips was born in Australia but came to study at the LSE in London in 1904 and became active in women's campaigns about the vote and improving wages and conditions. Her campaign to improve the lives of working class wives brought a quarter of a million housewives into the Labour movement. This led to the development of health clinics and school meals and other family policies. As a prominent trade union organiser she joined the War Emergency Workers' National Committee on the outbreak of World War One and she also served on the Women's Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction. She became the first Chief Women's Officer of the Labour Party in 1918, establishing the Women's Section as a vital aspect of the Party. In 1929 she was elected in a double member constituency in Sunderland. She was the first Jewish woman MP and the first Australian woman to win a seat in any national Parliament. After her defeat in 1931 she died of stomach cancer in early 1932.

40

### **Dame Irene Ward MP**

*(not illustrated)*

Elected as a Conservative on 27 October 1931 for Wallsend, defeating Margaret Bondfield but lost her seat in the 1945 election. Elected as a Conservative on 23 February 1950 for Tynemouth, again defeating a female MP, Grace Colman, retiring at the February 1974 election aged 79. She was made a life peer the following year.

Before Gwyneth Dunwoody, Irene Ward was the female MP with the longest total service at almost 38 years. She was a formidable and independent-minded backbencher, who secured the passage of a number of private members bills including the Rights of Entry (Gas and Electricity Boards) Act, 1954, introduced as a Ten Minute Rule Bill. The legislation required a warrant for entry into private premises, except for emergencies. She introduced the first measure of social welfare for the elderly in the form of the Poor Law (Amendment) Bill 1937-8 enabling the payment of pocket money for old people in Poor Law institutions. Irene Ward also promoted the Nurses (Amendment) Act, 1961, and the Penalties for Drunkenness Act, 1962. Dame Irene was an assiduous and formidable attender of standing and select committees. In particular, she was active on the National Expenditure Select Committee throughout the Second World War, carrying out valuable work on difficulties faced by women in war work and the inequity of awarding lower compensation rates for women wounded by air raids, compared to men.

41

### **House of Commons 1940**

*By John Worsley*

1947 | Oil on canvas

WOA 2936 – *(not illustrated)*

In 1940 there were 12 women MPs in Parliament though they are far from evident in this painting. Only two women are clearly visible on the Government benches (left-hand side). The woman on the right is undoubtedly Nancy Astor, the first woman to take her seat in Parliament, she is wearing her 'parliamentary uniform' of a black skirt suit and hat and cream/off-white blouse which she selected to look business-like, an important consideration for a member of the aristocracy who was having to overcome many assumptions about her personally, and about women generally.

The other women MPs were:

Rt Hon Ellen Wilkinson (Labour)  
Rt Hon Miss Jennie Lee (Labour)  
Lady Megan Lloyd George (Liberal)  
Miss Eleanor Rathbone (Independent)  
Rt Hon Dame Florence Horsburgh (Conservative)  
Mrs Mavis Tate (Conservative)  
Dame Irene Ward, CH (Conservative)  
Frances, Viscountess Davidson (Conservative)  
Mrs Agnes Hardie (Labour)  
Mrs Jennie Adamson (Labour)  
Rt Hon Dr Edith Summerskill, CH (Labour)

Although there were only a small number of women MPs, this painting clearly shows the Ladies' Gallery, high above the Speaker's Chair, the faces of the women watching the debate, pressed close to the window grilles to hear what is being said, are clearly visible.



42–45

**Baroness Castle of Blackburn,  
formerly Barbara Castle MP**

*By Ian Walters*

2002 | Bronze

WOA 5518]

**Barbara Castle MP**

*By Jane Bown*

No date | Photograph

WOA 6505 – (not illustrated)

**The Lady with the Lamp**

*By Joseph Lee*

c.1976 | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5076 - (not illustrated)

**There's a good time coming...  
but it's a good time coming!**

*By Joseph Lee*

No date | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5143 – (not illustrated)

Elected for Labour in Blackburn on 5 July 1945, retiring in 1979. She was elected as an MEP in 1979, retiring in 1989 and becoming a life peer in 1990.

A former journalist, Barbara Castle was elected to Parliament in 1945, the youngest woman member, one of 24 female MPs. An outspoken left-winger, she attracted attention as a role model to encourage other women into politics. She went on to serve for nearly 34 years continuously as an MP.

Barbara Castle was one of the key figures in the Harold Wilson administrations of the 1960s and 1970s. She became the fourth woman to reach the rank of Cabinet Minister, in October 1964 as Minister for Overseas Development, and held Cabinet posts during Wilson's 1964–70 governments and 1974–76 administration. Mrs Castle was responsible for some major legislation on issues affecting women, including child benefit and pensions, and linking most social security benefits to earnings rather than prices. After Overseas Development, she became Minister of Transport (1965–68); Secretary of State for Employment and First Secretary of State (1968–70); and Secretary of State for Social Services (1974–76). Among her achievements were the introduction of the breathalyser, the requirement that new cars be fitted with seatbelts, and resolving the strike for equal pay at Ford's in Dagenham. She subsequently introduced the Equal Pay Act 1970. Her attempt to reform trade union law ended in defeat in 1969. Her policies in the Wilson government of 1974–76 included the introduction of Mobility Allowance and Invalid Care allowance. She left Government after James Callaghan became Prime Minister, publishing her diaries of her time in Cabinet. She remained politically active until her death in 2002, aged 91.

46

### **Bessie Braddock MP**

*(Not illustrated)*

Elected for Labour in Liverpool Exchange on 5 July 1945, a seat she held until her retirement in May 1970.

Daughter of an active suffragette, Bessie Braddock was a veteran of Liverpool politics, together with her husband Jack Braddock. He became leader of the Liverpool city council; she was a member of the city council from 1930 to 1961. Mrs Braddock was elected in 1945, the first woman MP for a Liverpool seat. She was a passionate campaigner for improving housing and education, not just in her city, but throughout the UK. Bessie Braddock became one of the notable personalities of the House of Commons, beginning from her forceful maiden speech in which she spoke of the ‘flea-ridden bug-ridden lousy hell-holes’ in which working people had to live. On 26 March 1952 she was the first woman MP to be named and suspended from a sitting for protesting about not being called. A Labour Party stalwart, she was influential in party politics through her membership of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party from 1947-48 and 1958-69. She served as vice-chairman of the Labour Party in 1968. Mrs Braddock had a deep interest in the treatment of the mentally ill and sat on the Royal Commission on the Law Relating to Mental Illness and Mental Deficiency, which resulted in the Mental Health Act 1959. This abolished the distinction between psychiatric and other hospitals and encouraged the development of community care. Her role in securing justice was exemplary. In May 1956 she was instrumental in securing a committee of inquiry after receiving representations from a prisoner in a Liverpool prison, and as a result some prison officers left their posts.

47

### **Betty Harvie Anderson MP**

*(Not illustrated)*

Elected as a Conservative for East Renfrewshire on 8 October 1959 until her retirement in 1979, when she was made a life peer, but died later in 1979. She was the first female Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means (Deputy Speaker) from 1970 to 1973.

Betty Harvie Anderson was an officer in the ATS during the Second World War commanding a Mixed Heavy Anti-aircraft Regiment. She saw action against German raids on the Forth. She began her career in Scottish local government in 1945, but took some years to find a parliamentary seat. Her interest in conservation led her in 1964 to introduce the Animals (Restriction of Importation) Act 1964. Her colleagues twice elected her to the executive of the 1922 Committee of Conservative back-benchers: from 1962 to 1970, and again from 1974 until 1979. She joined the Chairman's Panel in 1966, chairing a succession of standing committees, until her appointment as the first female Deputy Speaker in 1970. She had to decide on an appropriate costume, as male deputy speakers wore morning suits. Her firm grasp of parliamentary procedure helped her to chair the stormy debates over EEC membership and the Industrial Relations Act 1971. She was a member of the Royal Commission on Local Government (Scotland) from 1966 to 1969. Its recommendations led to a new system of regional and district councils in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. She was influential in ensuring separate councils for the three island groups in Scotland. Mrs Harvie Anderson resigned as Deputy Speaker in 1973 to argue against a Scottish assembly, and was prominent in anti-devolution campaigns thereafter until her death in 1979.



48

### British Labour Women MPs

*By Lord Snowden*

1964 | Photograph

WOA 7469

Not all the women in this important group photograph have yet been identified but those who have are:

Margaret McKay MP, Alice Bacon MP, Eirene White MP, Anne Kerr MP, Bessie Braddock MP, Judith Hart MP, Margaret Herbison MP, Barbara Castle MP, and Alice Cullen MP

49

### House of Commons 1965

*By Gerald Scarfe*

Oil on board

WOA L789 – (not illustrated)

This satirical view of the House of Commons is a rare painting by cartoonist Gerald Scarfe. In 1965 there were 29 women in the House of Commons, 18 Labour and 11 Conservative. Only one, woman, Shirley Summerskill MP, can be clearly seen on the Government benches (right-hand side), though it seems likely that Barbara Castle is present as she was Minister for Overseas Development at the time.



50–52

**Shirley Williams,  
Baroness Williams of  
Crosby**

*By Victoria Russell*

2007 | Oil on canvas

WOA 6590

**Shirley Williams MP**

*By Jane Bown*

1970 | Photograph

WOA 6540 – (not illustrated)

**Election zip-up**

*By Joseph Lee*

c.1974 | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5092 – (not illustrated)

Elected for Labour on 15 October 1964 in Hitchin and then on 28 February 1974 in Hertford and Stevenage, losing her seat in 1979. A prominent Labour Cabinet member in the 1970s, she founded the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in 1981 and won a by-election on 26 November 1981 in Crosby, Liverpool.

Shirley Williams was a journalist, and daughter of Vera Brittain, author of the First World War classic, *Testament of Youth*. She rapidly achieved junior ministerial office from 1964, becoming a Shadow Home Secretary in 1971. She was the fifth woman to hold office at Cabinet level, when appointed as Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection in March 1974. She became Secretary of State for Education in 1976, overseeing the expansion of the comprehensive schools programme. She was a popular and well-liked Labour Cabinet Minister. Mrs Williams was one of four senior Labour politicians to found the SDP in 1981 and the first to be elected for the new political party at a by-election that year in Crosby, Merseyside. She subsequently lost the seat in 1983 but remained prominent in the Liberal Democrat Party, formed as a merger between the Liberal Party and the SDP in 1988. She became a life peer in 1993 and served as Leader of the Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords from 2001–2004.



53

## Gwyneth Dunwoody MP

*By Jane Bown*

2002 | Photograph

WOA 6519 – (not illustrated)

Elected for the Labour Party in Exeter on 31 March 1966, until defeated in 1970 and elected in Crewe on 28 February 1974 until her death in April 2008. She holds the record for total length of service as a woman MP.

Mrs Dunwoody (nee Phillips) married a Labour MP, and was the daughter of the former Labour Party General Secretary, Morgan Phillips. Both her grandmothers were suffragettes. Her early career as a MP was as a backbencher. She was also a member of the European Parliament from 1975 to 1979, at a time when MPs were selected for the office. She held positions in the Shadow Cabinet in the 1980s, including Transport and was a member of the National Executive Committee from 1981 to 1988. However, she achieved prominence through her role of chair of the Transport Select Committee in its various manifestations from 1997 to her death in 2008. She survived an attempt by Labour whips to remove her from the chair in 2001. A tough, independent approach, combined with detailed knowledge of the subject area won her many plaudits in and outside Parliament, demonstrating an alternative career path for the backbencher of specialising in select committee work.

54

## Baroness Knight of Collingtree

*By Michael Waller-Bridge*

c.2012 | Photograph

WOA 7411 – (not illustrated)

Elected as a Conservative on 31 March 1966 for Birmingham Edgbaston until retirement in 1997. Edgbaston is one of very few constituencies which have been represented by successive women since 1953 when Dame Edith Pitt was elected at a by-election. The current MP is Gisela Stuart.

After some years trying to win nomination as a parliamentary candidate, she was chosen to contest the Birmingham Edgbaston in 1966 following Dame Edith Pitt's death. Once elected she held the seat until 1997. That year she stood down from Commons and was made a life peer. Jill Knight began her career in local government before being selected for a parliamentary seat. She was a well-known and long-serving backbencher who was a campaigner for capital punishment particularly for terrorists. She was also a joint sponsor, with David Wilshire, of the amendment which introduced Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which barred local authorities from promoting homosexuality. She was also an opponent of abortion. She served on a number of select committees, including the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration 1969-72, the Select Committee on Council of Europe 1977-79, and on one of the first departmental select committees, the Home Affairs Select Committee, from 1980 to 1983. Jill Knight piloted a Private Members Bill through to enactment, the Design Copyright Act 1968, a direct result of injustices suffered by a constituent whose work was being copied.

55

**Winifred Margaret 'Winnie' Ewing MP**

*(not illustrated)*

Elected for the Scottish National Party in Hamilton in a by-election on 2 November 1967 until defeated in 1970 and then for Moray and Nairn from 28 February 1974 until defeated in 1979.

Winnie Ewing was the first female SNP MP and the second MP to be elected for the SNP. An eloquent lawyer, her election heralded a major boost for the nationalist movement in Scotland and was a factor in persuading the Labour Government to focus on the process of devolution in the 1970s, which eventually came to fruition after 1997. After her defeat in 1979, Mrs Ewing served as an MEP for twenty years, before being elected to the newly established Scottish Parliament in 1999. As the oldest member it was her duty to preside over the opening of the first session of Scottish Parliament. She was the SNP Party President from 1987 to 2005.

56

**Bernadette Devlin MP**

*22nd April 1969: Independent Unity MP for Mid-Ulster and youngest MP in Britain Bernadette Devlin arrives in London to take her seat in the House of Commons.*

*Photo by Central Press/Getty Images  
(not illustrated)*

Elected as Independent Unity candidate for Mid Ulster aged 21 in a by-election on 17 April 1969. She was defeated in February 1974.

Bernadette Devlin caused a sensation when elected aged 21 in April 1969, at the beginning of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. She received a nine-month prison sentence while still an MP for public order offences in riots in Londonderry in August 1969. Denied an opportunity to speak in the statement on 31 January 1972 following the events of Bloody Sunday, although she had been present, Devlin attacked the Home Secretary, Reginald Maudling, physically and verbally in the Chamber, accusing him of lying. Ms Devlin married in 1973, taking the name McAliskey. She lost her seat in the February 1974 general election, but continued to be a controversial figure in Irish republican politics.

57

**Peggy Fenner MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

*WOA L318 – (not illustrated)*



58+59

**Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP**

*By Antony Williams*

2011 | Tempera painting on board

WOA 7203

**Margaret Beckett MP**

*By Nick Sinclair*

1994 | Photograph

WOA 3904 – (not illustrated)

Elected for the Labour Party for Lincoln on 10 October 1974, she subsequently lost her seat at the 1979 general election, being successful at Derby South on 9 June 1983. She held a wide variety of ministerial posts becoming the first female Foreign Secretary in 2006. She was also the first female deputy leader of the Labour Party.

Margaret Jackson was a metallurgist by training, gaining a seat in the second general election of 1974. Promotion was rapid in the Labour Government and she was appointed a junior minister in 1976. However she lost her seat in 1979, the year when she married and became Mrs Beckett. She did not return until 1983 for Derby South, again with a very narrow majority. She joined the Shadow Cabinet in 1989, becoming Shadow Leader of the House under John Smith. After his sudden death in 1994 she was temporary leader of the Labour party, stepping down when Tony Blair was elected. Mrs Beckett was appointed Secretary of State for the Department of Trade and Industry in 1997, moving to Leader of the House in 1998. As chair of the Modernisation Committee she oversaw the introduction of Westminster Hall debates, which are debates held in a small chamber near Westminster Hall on topics of interest to individual MPs, committee reports, and other matters that would not ordinarily be debated in the Commons chamber. She was Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in 2001, becoming the first female Foreign Secretary in 2006. She returned to the backbenches in 2007 when Gordon Brown became Prime Minister, but briefly took up the role of chair of the Intelligence and Security Committee in 2008. She remains an influential backbencher, leading the No to the Alternative Vote campaign in 2010.

60

**Lynda Chalker MP,  
Baroness Chalker of  
Wallasey**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board  
WOA L213 – (not illustrated)

Elected as a Conservative for Liverpool Wallasey on 28 February 1974 election and was defeated in 1992 by the Labour MP Angela Eagle. She became a life peer in the same year.

Lynda Chalker was a statistician by background. She rapidly proved herself an able addition to the Conservative ranks after her election in 1974. She became a junior opposition spokesperson in 1976 and served in government for the whole of the period 1979 to 1997 when the Conservatives were in power. She was junior minister at the Department of Health and Social Security, Department of Transport and the Foreign Office. After losing her Commons seat in 1992 and joining the Lords, she continued as Minister for Overseas Development until 1997. Following the creation of a Labour Government in 1997, Baroness Chalker has continued her interests in Africa, both charitable and in business development. She is non-executive Director of a number of major companies operating in Africa and a former adviser to the World Bank, as well as founding the Chalker Foundation for Africa in response to the need to develop and support medical knowledge and training on that continent.

61

**Jo Richardson MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board  
WOA L261 – (not illustrated)

62

**Margaret Ewing MP  
(1945-2006)**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board  
WOA L322 – (not illustrated)  
046 +047

63+64

**The Rt Hon Ann Taylor MP**

*By Victoria Carew Hunt*

1998 | Photograph  
WOA 5419 – (not illustrated)

**The Rt Hon Ann Taylor MP**

*By Nick Sinclair*

No date | Photograph  
WOA 5201 – (not illustrated)

Elected for the Labour Party on 10 October 1974 for Bolton West, losing her seat in 1983. She was subsequently elected for Dewsbury on 11 June 1987 and stood down in 2010. She became a peer in that year.

Ann Taylor was one of the whips responsible for keeping the Labour Party in power from 1976, as it struggled with a tiny majority, recently dramatised in James Graham's play *This House* in 2013. She joined the Shadow Cabinet in 1992 and was appointed the first female Leader of the House in 1997, establishing and chairing the Modernisation Committee, which introduced programming for bills. She was appointed as first female Chief Whip in 1998.

After the 2001 election she chaired the Intelligence and Security Committee which monitors MI5 and MI6 and held a series of junior ministerial positions until her retirement in 2010. Although most of her career was as a frontbencher, she introduced the *Succession to the Crown Bill 2004-05* which would have made succession to the throne gender neutral. The Coalition Government of 2010-2015 passed a similar measure, the *Succession to the Crown Act 2013*, which will ensure that males born after 28 October 2011 no longer precede their elder sisters in the line of succession to the throne.



65–73

**The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher OM, M.P. Prime Minister**

*By Henry Mee*

1992 | Oil on canvas

WOA 3634

**Last word from an old Tory**

*By Joseph Lee*

c.1975 | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5415 – (not illustrated)

**Natural Break, from politics of the day**

*By Joseph Lee*

No date | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5108 – (not illustrated)

**When architects disagree**

*By Joseph Lee*

Mid 1970s | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5113 – (not illustrated)

**Thank you, no! I abhor soft centres**

*By John Jenson*

*Published in House of Cards by Simon Hoggart, Robson Books*

1988 | Pen and ink on paper

WOA 5430 – (not illustrated)

**True Blue**

*By Ruskin Spear*

c.1974 | oil on canvas

WOA 4508 – (not illustrated)

**Margaret Thatcher MP**

*By Jane Bown*

1982 | Photograph

WOA 6531 – (not illustrated)

**Margaret Thatcher as Joan of Arc**

*By Gerald Scarfe*

Undated | Stone lithograph (edition 33/75)

WOA 7178 – (not illustrated)

**Baroness Thatcher**

*By Antony Dufort*

2007 | Bronze maquette

WOA 5692 – (not illustrated)

**Elected for the Conservatives in Finchley on 8 October 1959, retiring in 1992. The first female Prime Minister.**

After failing to be selected for a number of seats in the 1950s, Margaret Thatcher finally won a seat at Finchley in 1959. As a backbencher, she piloted the *Private Member's bill Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960* which gave a right of access to local authority meetings. Her first Cabinet post was Secretary of State for Education 1970–74. She won the leadership contest for the Conservative party in 1975, becoming the first female Leader of the Opposition. After sweeping to power in the 1979 general election Mrs Thatcher proved to be the longest serving Prime Minister of the twentieth century and the most influential since 1950. She took the country to war over the Falkland Isles in 1982, and became known as the Iron Lady in relation to her policies on international communism. A proponent of privatisation of nationalised utilities, a landmark policy was the Housing Act 1980 which gave council tenants a 'Right to Buy' their home at a discount based on length of occupation. The bitter coal strike of 1984–5 led to a defeat for organised trade union power and membership fell. The policy probably most associated with Mrs Thatcher was the ill-fated poll tax, introduced initially in Scotland in 1989 and then extended to the rest of Great Britain in 1990. This provoked serious disorder in London in March 1990 which was a factor in her withdrawal from the Conservative party leadership contest in November 1990 when she realised that she no longer commanded sufficient support. She was replaced as Prime Minister by John Major, retiring at the next election in 1992 and becoming a life peer.

74

**Harriet Harman**  
**(from 'Heads of Government' series)**

*By David Partner*

2004 | Photograph

WOA 6499 – (not illustrated)

Elected for Peckham in a by-election on 28 October 1982, retaining the seat following boundary changes since that date. As well as holding Cabinet positions, she has been a prominent Labour Party and feminist spokeswoman through a long career in Parliament.

As a lawyer, Ms Harman came to prominence with a landmark case on freedom of expression at the European Court of Human Rights. She was elected at a by-election in 1982, whilst 7 months pregnant. The Commons was overwhelmingly male and she was one of only 10 Labour women MPs at that time. Ms Harman campaigned for places to be reserved for women in the Shadow Cabinet. In 1989 3 places for women were added. She entered the Shadow Cabinet in 1992, and was the prime mover behind the decision in 1993 to introduce 'women-only shortlists' in 50% of all target seats for the Labour Party. This policy was a major factor in the election of 101 Labour women MPs in 1997. Appointed Secretary of State for Social Security in 1997, she introduced the New Deal for Lone Parents. She became the first female Solicitor General in 2001, helping to enact the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. She became Leader of the House in 2007, and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. She piloted the Equality Act 2010 through Parliament, consolidating and improving existing laws against discrimination. After the 2010 election she became a member of the Shadow Cabinet, and remains prominent in the Labour Party as Deputy Leader.

75

**Angela Rumbold MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L257 – (not illustrated)



76

**Rt Hon Clare Short MP**

*By Amit Lennon*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 7030

Elected for the Labour Party in Birmingham Ladywood on 9 June 1983, Clare Short was Secretary of State for International Development from 1997, leaving the Government in 2003 over the war in Iraq. She resigned the Labour whip, becoming Independent Labour in October 2006 and stood down in 2010.

Clare Short was a civil servant before deciding to enter politics as MP in Ladywood, the area where she was born and grew up. She attracted attention for her campaign against the Sun newspaper Page 3 campaign, enduring considerable abuse. Ms Short was known for her individual views, resigning in 1990 over the invasion of Iraq from a junior shadow post. Ms Short became Shadow Minister for Women in 1993 and joined the Cabinet in 1997 as Secretary of State for International Development. She resigned from the Cabinet in May 2003 over the decision by Tony Blair to join the United States in the Iraq conflict, and was prominent in her criticisms of the process by which the UK went to war, giving evidence to the subsequent Chilcot Inquiry. She faced disciplinary action by the Labour Party in 2006 after calling for a hung parliament at the next election, but resigned the whip. After standing down in 2010 she remains active in various organisations working on slum upgrading in the developing world, transparency in oil, gas and mining and African-led humanitarian action.



77

## Dinner in the Cholmondeley Room

*Unknown photographer*

1983 | Photograph

WOA 6773 – (not illustrated)

This photograph shows Conservative MPs and Peers at a dinner in Parliament. In the 1983 general election 13 Conservative women MPs were elected. The landslide Conservative victory was seen as a personal triumph for Margaret Thatcher who became Prime Minister for a second term.

*Back row (standing) left to right:*

Baroness Cox, Edwina Currie MP, Angela Rumbold MP, Marion Roe MP, Baroness Sharples, Baroness Gardner of Parkes, Elaine Kelllett-Bowman MP, Elizabeth Peacock MP, Baroness Macleod of Borve, Baroness Platt of Writtle, Janet Fookes MP, Anna McCurley MP, Baroness Carnegie of Lour, Baroness Pike, Sally Oppenheim MP, Baroness Airey of Abingdon, Ann Winterton MP, Baroness Vickers

*Front row (seated) left to right:*

Baroness Faithfull, Lynda Chalker MP, Baroness Hornsby-Smith, Margaret Thatcher MP, Baroness Elliot of Harwood, Jill Knight MP, Baroness Trumpington, Peggy Fenner MP, Baroness Lane-Fox

78

## Ann Clwyd MP

*(not illustrated)*

Elected for the Labour Party in Cynon Valley in a by-election on 3 May 1984, and retaining the seat since then. She was the first female MP elected for a Welsh valleys constituency.

Ann Clwyd began her career as a journalist. She was unsuccessful in obtaining a nomination in the 1970s but served as an MEP from 1979 to 1984. She was elected in May 1984 at a by-election and went on to hold various Shadow ministerial posts, being appointed as Shadow Secretary of State for Wales in 1992. Ms Clwyd is known for her independent approach to politics, resigning on a number of occasions when not in alignment with Labour policy. She served on the International Development select committee from 1997 to 2005 and was strongly associated with the Kurdish cause during conflict with Iraq, with a keen interest in human rights. In 1993 she introduced the Female Genital Mutilation Bill, designed to enable the prosecution of parents who take daughters out of the country to undergo circumcision. The question of FGM had first been raised in Parliament by the Duchess of Atholl and Eleanor Rathbone on 11 December 1929. Most recently she has campaigned on the need for a more caring approach to the dying in NHS hospitals.

79

## Virginia Bottomley MP

*(not illustrated)*

Elected as a Conservative for Surrey North West at a by-election on 3 May 1984. She held the seat until her retirement in 2005. She became a life peer in that year.

Virginia Bottomley is married to the Conservative MP Peter Bottomley and was born into a family well known in public life. She trained as a social worker and worked for the Child Poverty Action Group before being successful in a by-election and joining the Commons in 1984. She took on her first junior ministerial post in 1988, joining the Cabinet in 1992 as Secretary of State for Health and then in 1995 for National Heritage. After the 1997 election, she returned to the backbenches, pursuing a number of causes. She retired in 2005 and became a life peer in that year.

80

## Muriel Turner, The Baroness Turner of Camden

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L245 – (not illustrated)

81

## Baroness Seear (1913-1997) Leader of the Liberal Peers, 1984-1988

*By unknown artist*

20th century | Photograph

WOA 6023 – (not illustrated)

82

## Elizabeth Shields MP

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L256 – (not illustrated)



83

### **House of Commons 1986**

*By June Mendoza*

1987 | Oil on canvas

WOA 3232

In 1986 there were 27 women MPs, 17 are shown in this picture:

*Government side (left)*

Rt Hon Mrs Sally Oppenheim

Mrs Ann Winterton

Miss Janet Fookes

Dame Jill Knight

Mrs Anna McCurley

Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman

Mrs Peggy Fenner

Mrs Lynda Chalker

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher

*Opposition side (right)*

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody

Mrs Elizabeth Shields

Ms Jo Richardson

Mrs Renee Short

Miss Joan Maynard

Miss Betty Boothroyd

Rt Hon Dame Judith Hart

Mrs Ann Clwyd

*Six other women are shown in the galleries, they are press reporters:*

Miss Monica Sturrock

Miss Henrietta Hales

Mrs Stella Thomas

Ms Elinor Goodman

Miss Julia Langdon

Miss Jane Armstrong



84

### The Other Picture

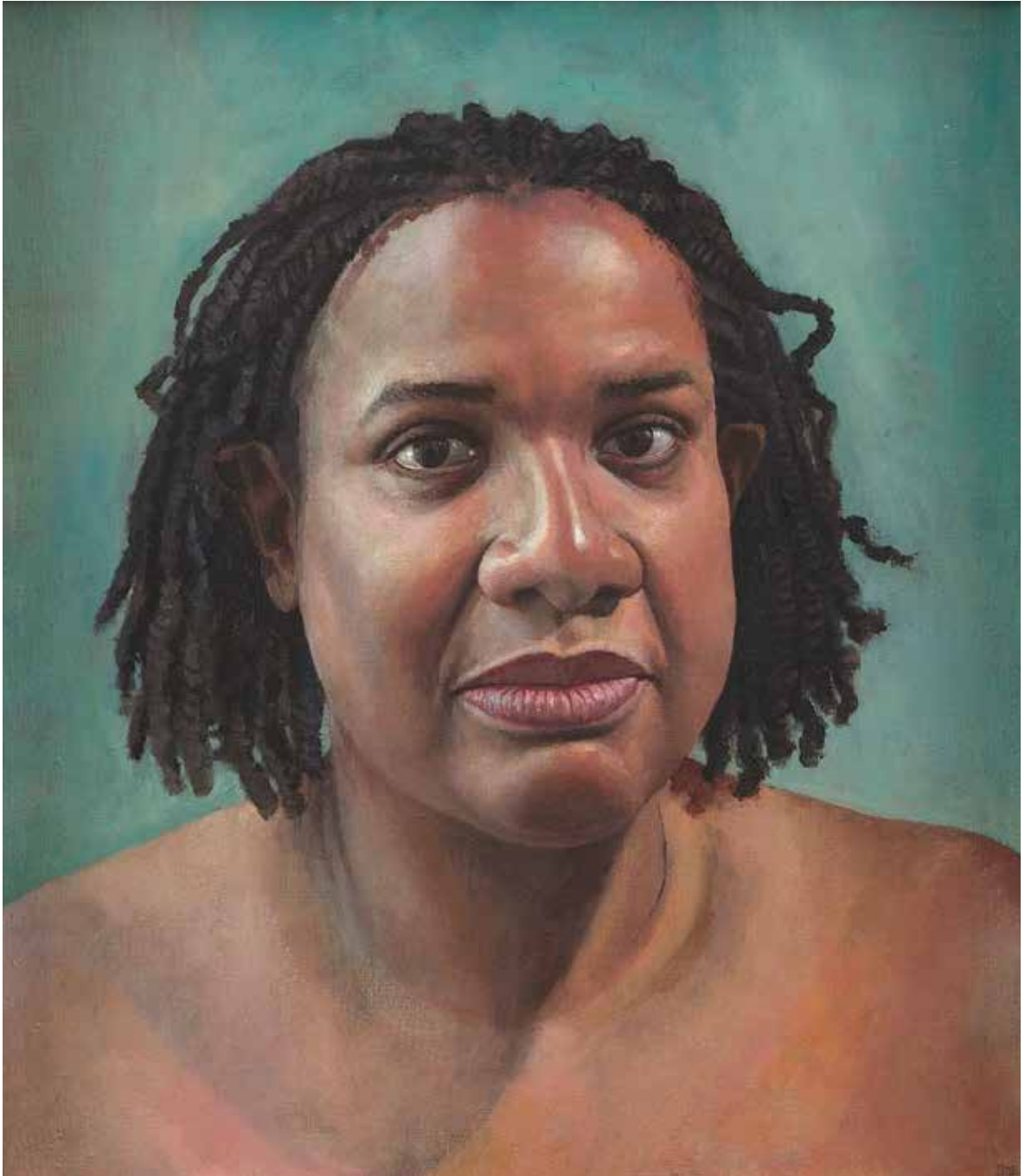
By *Andrew Festing*

1987 | Oil on canvas

WOA 3373

This group portrait, set in the rooms of the House of Commons Library and the (then) Smoking Room, shows 156 MPs who were not included in the official portrait of the House of Commons in 1986 by June Mendoza. Seven women are shown, including one member of staff:

Mrs Virginia Bottomley MP  
Mrs Edwina Currie MP  
Mrs Llin Golding MP  
Mrs Elizabeth Peacock MP  
Mrs Marion Roc MP  
Mrs Angela Rumbold MP  
Mrs Carole Andrews, Head of Reference Services,  
House of Commons Library



85

**Diane Abbott MP**

*By Stuart Pearson Wright*

2004 | Oil on canvas

WOA 6270

86

**Teresa Gorman MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L225 – (not illustrated)

87+ 88

**Rt Hon Dr Mo Mowlam MP (1949–2005)**

*By Victoria Carew Hunt*

1998 | Photograph

WOA 5420 – (not illustrated)

**Mo Mowlam MP**

*By Jane Bown*

1987 | Photograph

WOA 6533 – (not illustrated)

Elected for the Labour Party in Redcar on 11 June 1987, she retired in 2001 and died in 2005 following a long struggle with a brain tumour. She was the first woman Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and played a pivotal role in resolving the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

Mo Mowlam was an instantly recognisable figure when she joined the Commons in 1987, following a career in higher education. Warm and outspoken, she made friends easily. She joined the Shadow Cabinet in 1992 under John Smith as Shadow Heritage Secretary, and continued under Tony Blair as Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. The first woman to hold the Northern Ireland Secretary of State post in 1997, she played a pivotal role in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 which led to power sharing and a new Assembly. Breaking down barriers with her informal manner and engaging personality, she was remembered for having personally visited loyalist prisoners in the Maze prison in an attempt to secure agreement. Her deteriorating relationship with unionist parties was partly responsible for her transfer in 1999 to the Cabinet Office post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; later her battle with a brain tumour was made public. She announced her retirement in 2000 and stood down in 2001, dying in 2005, aged 55.

89

**Emma Nicholson MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L272 – (not illustrated)

90

**The Rt. Hon. Gillian Shepherd MP**

*By Victoria Carew Hunt*

1998 | Photograph

WOA 5421 – (not illustrated)

91

**Joan Ruddock MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L258 – (not illustrated)

92

**Kate Hoey MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and pencil on board

WOA L301 – (not illustrated)



93–95

**Ann Widdecombe**

*By Nick Ray*

2010 | Photograph

WOA 7161

**Ann Widdecombe  
to the Rescue**

*By Ken Pyne*

2005 | Pen and ink on

paper

WOA 7038 – (not illustrated)

**Ann Widdecombe  
MP**

*By Ian Nuttall*

1980s | Pen, ink and

pencil on board

WOA L238 – (not illustrated)

Elected as a Conservative on 11 June 1987 in Maidstone, a seat she retained until her retirement in 2010. She held a series of junior ministerial posts until 1997.

Miss Widdecombe was known as an outspoken minister and Opposition commentator. She had made unsuccessful attempts to be selected as a candidate for several years before 1987, and once in Parliament rapidly made a mark as a social conservative on abortion. She converted from the Church of England to the Roman Catholic Church following the Anglican decision on the ordination of women in 1998 and opposed liberalising laws on homosexuality. Her promotion to the front bench was rapid, from 1990 she undertook a series of posts involving the passage of legislation. Her most high-profile position was as Prisons Minister (1995–97) under Michael Howard as Home Secretary. Their relationship was stormy and her declaration in 1997 that there is ‘something about the night’ about his conduct in relation to the sacking of Derek Lewis as Director General of the Prison Service is widely seen to have damaged his reputation, although he succeeded in being chosen as Leader of the Opposition in 2003. Ms Widdecombe retired from politics in 2010.



96–98

**The Rt Hon Betty Boothroyd  
MP, Speaker**

*By Jane Bond*

1999 | Oil on canvas

WOA 5445

**The Rt Hon Betty Boothroyd  
MP, Speaker (sketch)**

*By Jane Bond*

1994 | Charcoal on paper

WOA 3841 and 3842 – (not illustrated)

**The Rt. Hon. Betty Boothroyd  
MP, Speaker**

*By Victoria Carew Hunt*

1998 | Photograph

WOA 5418 – (not illustrated)

Elected for Labour in a by-election on 24 May 1973 for West Bromwich, she held the seat of West Bromwich West from February 1974 until retiring in 2001, when she was made a life peer. The first woman Speaker of the House of Commons.

Born to textile workers, in the 1940s Betty Boothroyd worked as a dancer, as a member of the Tiller Girls. Although Miss Boothroyd was a member of the Labour National Consultative Committee by 1945, she struggled to be selected for a winnable seat. In 1973 Miss Boothroyd became MP for West Bromwich at a by-election. She became an assistant Government whip and a nominated Member of the European Parliament from 1975–77. She was a member of Labour's National Executive Committee from 1981–87 and became a Deputy Speaker in 1987. Betty Boothroyd was elected Speaker in 1992 in a contested election. The previous two elections for Speakers were not contested, and until then, the Speakership had tended to be awarded to ex-Ministers. She introduced her own personal warm style to the high office, designing a suitable outfit and dispensing with the traditional wig. She was seen as an outstanding Speaker, able to command the confidence of the House, at a time when the Major Government held only a tiny majority, while offering warm advice to new Members. Under Blair, she cautioned politicians in favour of family friendly hours against neglecting the formal scrutiny role offered by the Commons. In the Lords she is an active crossbencher.



99

**Baroness Amos**

*By Paul Benny*

2004 | Oil on canvas

WOA 6386

Valerie Amos, the Rt Hon Baroness Amos, was made a life Peer in 1997. She was the Leader of the House of Lords and the Lord President of the Council 2003-2007.





100

**Baroness Hayman, the Lord Speaker**

*By Sergei Pavlenko*

2008 | Oil on canvas

WOA 6806

Helene Hayman was MP for Welwyn and Hatfield 1974-79, aged 25 she was the youngest member of the House of Commons when elected and one of only 27 women MPs, a figure which was not exceeded until 1987. She was made a life peer in 1996. She served as a junior minister in the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions and the Department of Health. In 1999 she was appointed Minister of State at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and became a member of the Privy Council in 2001. In 2006 she was elected the first ever Lord Speaker.

101–104

**The Day the Carlton Club Accepted Women  
– 90 years after Women got the Vote (Liberal  
Democrat Women MPs)**

*By Kieran Doherty, Photographer and Boni Sones, Creative  
Director*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 6928 – (not illustrated)

**The Day the Carlton Club Accepted Women –  
90 years after Women got the Vote (Conserva-  
tive Women MPs)**

*By Kieran Doherty, Photographer and Boni Sones, Creative  
Director*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 6930 – (not illustrated)

**The Day the Carlton Club Accepted Women  
– 90 years after Women got the Vote (Labour  
Women MPs)**

*By Kieran Doherty, Photographer and Boni Sones, Creative  
Director*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 6929 – (not illustrated)

**The Day the Carlton Club Accepted Women  
– 90 years after Women got the Vote (Clare  
Short, Independent Labour)**

*By Kieran Doherty, Photographer and Boni Sones, Creative  
Director*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 6931 – (not illustrated)

In May 1997 photographer Kieran Doherty took a photograph of newly elected Prime Minister Tony Blair surrounded by Labour women MPs. This photo of 'Blair's Babes' became iconic of an election which resulted in 120 women MPs being elected, double the previous record. On 21 May 2008 Kieran Doherty was invited by Boni Sones, founder of Women's Parliamentary Radio, to take a new photograph of the women MPs at Westminster. Four new composite photographs were produced. The photographs were taken to mark the 90th anniversary of (some) women first getting the vote in 1918. When Caroline Spelman MP, Chairman of the Conservative Party, arrived for the photo call she announced that The Carlton Club had just voted to accept women, and this event is marked in the title of the series.



105

**Leaders of the House of Lords: Baroness Ashton of Upholland, Baroness Amos & Baroness Jay of Paddington**

*By Desiree Pfeiffer*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 6909

This photograph was one of a series commissioned to mark the 50th anniversary of the Life Peerages Act 1958. The Act allowed women to sit in the House of Lords for the first time.

Four of the first 14 life peers appointed were women (Mary) Irene Curzon, Baroness Ravensdale of Kedleston (1896-1966); Katharine Elliot, Baroness Elliot of Harwood (1903-1994); Stella Isaacs, Marchioness of Reading and Baroness Swanborough (1894-1971); Barbara Frances Wootton, Baroness Wootton of Abinger (1897-1988). Today there are 192 women peers, 23% of the total membership. Baroness Jay was the first woman peer to be appointed as Leader of the House of Lords in 2001, there have been four more women Leaders since then and three men.

This photograph was one of a series commissioned to mark the 50th anniversary of the Life Peerages Act 1958. In May 2000 a historic change was made to the way in which non-party-political members of the House of Lords were appointed. The public were allowed to nominate anyone of their choosing, or put themselves forward, for appointment to the House of Lords. The appointments – made on merit – require the nominees to have a record of significant achievement within their chosen way of life and the ability and time to make an effective and significant contribution to the work of the House of Lords. Nominations are considered by the House of Lords Appointments Commission. These nominated peers have come to be known in the media as the ‘People’s Peers’. The first appointments were announced in April 2001 and there have been 63 to date of which 23 are women, three of whom are shown in this photograph.



106

**People's Peers: Baroness Butler-Sloss, Lord Adebowale,  
Lord Patel of Bradford, Baroness Murphy, Baroness  
Finlay of Llandaff**

*By Desiree Pfeiffer*

2008 | Photograph

WOA 6914



107

## Women Secretaries of State

*By John Ferguson*

2010 | Photograph

WOA 7169

The Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art decided to commission this photograph to document the record number of sitting women MPs who had held the post of Secretary of State, they are (from left to right):

- Rt Hon Ruth Kelly MP, Secretary of State for Transport
- Rt Hon Clare Short MP, Secretary of State for International Development (standing)
- Rt Hon Dame Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
- Rt Hon Jacqui Smith MP, Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, (Home Secretary) (standing)
- Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
- Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP, Secretary of State for Health (standing)
- Rt Hon Harriet Harman MP, Secretary of State for Social Security and Minister for Women



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**Caroline Lucas, Green Party, Brighton, 24 March 2010,  
Brighton Pavilion constituency**

*By Simon Roberts, Official Election Artist, 2010*

2010 | Photograph

WOA 7134

Caroline Lucas was the first Green Party MP to enter the House of Commons. She was one of 861 women candidates to stand in the 2010 election, of whom 143 were elected. The Green Party had the highest percentage of women candidates (33%).

This is one of a set of 25 photographs produced by Simon Roberts during his term as election artist. His task was to provide an enduring and unique artistic response to the General Election.

Other women candidates photographed were:

Jacqui Smith, Labour, Redditch, 27 April 2010, Redditch constituency (WOA 7149)

Esther Rantzen, Independent Rantzen, Caddington, 1 May 2010, Luton South constituency (WOA 7151)

Hamira Khan, Conservative, Glasgow, 20 April 2010, Glasgow East constituency (WOA 7144)



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**Dawn Primarolo MP**

*By Richard Brazier*

2014 | Oil on canvas

WOA 7475

This is the most recent portrait commissioned by the Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art. Dawn Primarolo was first elected to Parliament in 1987 for Bristol South, and has continued to represent this constituency until stepping down at the 2015 election. She has held a number of government and shadow government posts including Paymaster General (1999-2007) and Minister of State (Children, Young People and Families) (2009-10). In 2010 she became Deputy Speaker in the House of Commons (Second Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means).

## Researching women's history

*I'm interested in researching women in Parliament – where do I start?*

The Women and Parliament web portal includes links to a number of online documents with information about women in Parliament. The House of Commons Library Standard Notes on 'Women Members of Parliament' and 'Women in the House of Commons' list all female MPs and give statistics and a brief history. The House of Lords Library Note on 'Women in the Lords' does the same for the Lords.

*What kind of books on women MPs are available?*

You can find a bibliography of books about women and Parliament elsewhere in this publication. For the period 1832-1979 brief biographical entries on all MPs, including constituency and party affiliation can be found in M. Stenton and S. Lees, 'Who's Who of British Members of Parliament', available in reference libraries. For the period 1979-2010, see 'Members of Parliament 1979 - 2010' (House of Commons Library research paper, online). Some prominent dead politicians will have an entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography available online by subscription (check your local library).

*How do I find out what someone did or said in the House of Commons or House of Lords?*

For the period 1803-2005, Historic Hansard online is the best place to look. Historic Hansard online includes almost all Parliamentary debates in this period, you can search for names and browse their contributions from there which will give you a good idea of their Parliamentary career. From 2005 onwards, Hansard is found on the main Parliament website. If you find any gaps in online Hansard, the original hard copy books are publications available in large reference libraries, or in the Parliamentary Archives.

*What about their contribution to committees?*

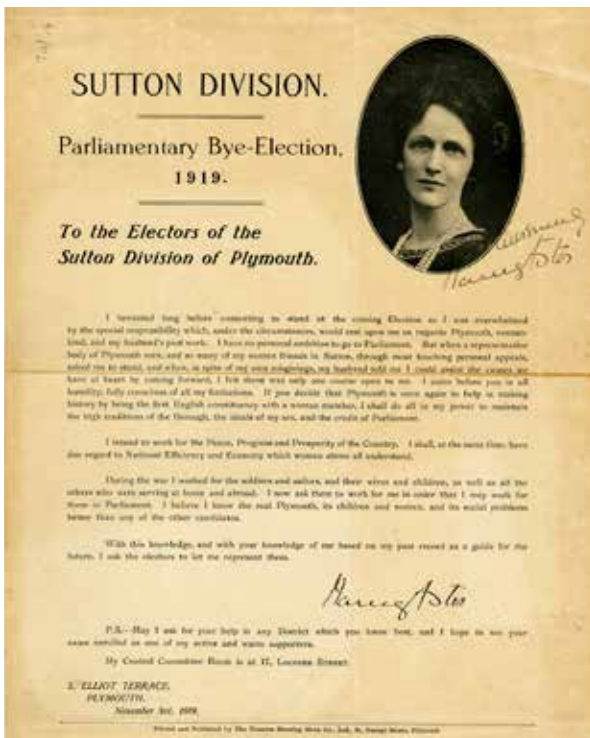
Recent committee debates, reports and minute of evidence (c1997 onwards) will be available on the Parliament website, but historic ones aren't. Debates in Standing Committees (which consider bills in detail) are published and available in large reference libraries, or in the Parliamentary Archives. Proceedings of and minutes of evidence taken by Select Committees (which scrutinise Government or look into particular subjects) are published as Parliamentary Papers.



Women Members of Parliament with Mabel Howard, New Zealand's first female Cabinet Minister, 28 July 1959

*Parliamentary Archives, PUD/8/31*





Nancy, Viscountess Astor's election leaflet, 1919  
Parliamentary Archives BRO/1

*What are Parliamentary Papers and where do I find them?*

House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, also known as Sessional Papers or 'Blue Books', include a wide variety of useful documents including Select Committee reports and minutes of evidence, bills, Command Papers (government papers printed 'by command' of Parliament, including White and Green papers), accounts and other papers. They are available via a subscription website which you can access via the British Library, The National Archives, reference libraries such as university libraries, or in the Parliamentary Archives. House of Lords Parliamentary Papers are unfortunately not digitised, and have to be accessed in hard copy via large research libraries or the Parliamentary Archives.

*Is there anything else online that might be useful?*

Before 1832, the History of Parliament website will contain everything you might want to know about members, their constituencies, and Parliament at that time. Their 'History of Parliament' oral history project covers more recent Parliamentary history and includes interviews with female Parliamentarians. Also, British History Online contains a collection of sources relating to proceedings and legislation in Parliament before 1832.

*How about Acts of Parliament/laws/legislation, surely those are online?*

Most, but not all. All Acts currently in force, plus a small number which are not, are on the government's legislation website. Otherwise, printed public and local Acts can be found in large reference libraries or in the Parliamentary Archives. The Parliamentary Archives also hold the small number of private Acts which were never printed, such as naturalisation Acts, as original handwritten parchment rolls.

*Right, I've looked at all of the published Parliamentary material but need to continue my research with unpublished documents, where are those?*

The Parliamentary Archives hold the historic records of the House of Commons and House of Lords - more than 3 million records dating back to 1497. This includes Acts of Parliament, Journals (the minutes of proceedings in both Houses), Appeal Cases, committee evidence, laid papers (papers such as reports and accounts laid before Parliament but not printed), and plans relating to roads, railways, canals and other public works which were deposited in relation to private bills. However please note almost all Commons records before 1834 were destroyed in a fire that burned down the Houses of Parliament. The Parliamentary Archives also holds other records relating to Parliament such as architectural material, and a few collections of personal papers.

*You mentioned personal papers - I want a particular MP's papers, where do I look?*

Politicians may or may not have kept their papers, if they did, they can deposit them anywhere they want. The Parliamentary Archives holds a few collections of personal political papers (including David Lloyd George) but most are elsewhere. First place to look is Discovery, the catalogue of The National Archives, which includes descriptions of records from archives all over the country - personal papers and papers of organisations and localities. Search for the name of your MP there.

*How about party political records?*

Conservative party records are at the Bodleian Library, Oxford: Labour at the People's History Museum, Manchester: Liberal at the London School of Economics. Local branches of parties may also have deposited their records at local archives. Search Discovery for others.

*What about suffragette archives?*

The main sources for women's suffrage material are the Women's Library at the London School of Economics, and the Museum of London, who hold the archives of the NUWSS, WSPU, and many others. The Parliamentary angle can also be researched using published legislative records, committee reports, debates in Hansard and so on, as described above. The Parliamentary Archives and the Parliamentary Art Collection also hold some original material about women's suffrage, and you can find highlights from these collections online on Parliament's Living Heritage website as well as in this publication. In particular, the Parliamentary Archives holds a set of police reports to the Serjeant at Arms on suffragette activity in the building. Some material may require some detailed research in the Archives to identify; for example presentation of suffrage petitions from particular people or areas can be traced through House of Commons reports on petitions and through the House of Lords Journal (although with few exceptions, the petitions themselves were not kept).

*How do I visit the Parliamentary Archives?*

The Parliamentary Archives runs a public searchroom open to everyone for research purposes. Look the website first, to search descriptions on the online catalogue and find the references of documents you wish to see, then email [archives@parliament.uk](mailto:archives@parliament.uk) to order them up and make an appointment to visit. You can also email the Parliamentary Archives with enquiries about the history and records of Parliament, we cannot do detailed research for people but may be able to advise further on sources you might look at and places you might go. Up-to-date visitor information, including opening hours and access arrangements, are on the website [www.parliament.uk/archives](http://www.parliament.uk/archives)

**Useful websites:**

Historic Hansard online: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com>  
Women and Parliament web portal:  
[www.parliament.uk/women](http://www.parliament.uk/women)  
Parliament's home page: [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)  
Parliamentary Archives: [www.parliament.uk/archives](http://www.parliament.uk/archives)  
Parliamentary Art Collection: [www.parliament.uk/art](http://www.parliament.uk/art)  
Living Heritage: [www.parliament.uk/livingheritage](http://www.parliament.uk/livingheritage)  
House of Commons Parliamentary Papers (subscription):  
<http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk>  
History of Parliament: [www.historyofparliamentonline.org](http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org)  
Discovery, The National Archives catalogue:  
<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk>  
British History Online: [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk)  
Government's legislation website: [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

# Appendices

Extracts from *Women in Parliament: Making a difference since 1918*,  
House of Commons Library, November 2013

## Women MPs making laws

This section has a dual focus. It looks at some of the ways in which women used their opportunity to bring forward legislation in Parliament and then uses some examples to show how legislation affects women in their daily lives.

### History

After women MPs entered Parliament, legislative changes in part attributable to their presence led to more equal treatment of women in law and greater attention to the health and welfare of women and children. The range and focus of such legislation in the decade following the introduction of women MPs is striking. Much of this legislative activity began with Private Members' Bills. Private Members' Bills often dealt with major social and constitutional questions as a matter of course. For example, the Women's Emancipation Bill 1919 prompted the Government to bring forward its own Sex Disqualification (Removal) Bill, outlawing discrimination in appointments to professions such as law or accountancy or in the public sector. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 1922 raised the age that consent was no defence to a charge of indecent assault from 13 to 16 years and in 1929 the law was changed so that the minimum age for marriage was equalised to 16 for both sexes. Previously it had been 14 for men and 12 for women. The Law of Property Act 1926 enabled married and single women to hold and dispose of their property and pensions for widows and orphans were introduced in 1924. The Bastardy Act 1923 enabled illegitimate children to be recognised as legitimate on the subsequent marriage of their parents.

Women also spoke on the major issues of the day, such as foreign policy and the Great Depression of the 1930s. After the Second World War, the growth of the welfare state meant that the Government took the lead in many social and economic issues affecting women. However, women MPs continued to shape legislation in the last decades of the 20th century, whether as individual Members or as part of the Government.

### Private Members' Bills

Women MPs have used the opportunity of Private Members' Bills to change the law, both to directly affect the lives of women and on broader issues.

*The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960* was introduced by the future Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, during her maiden speech on 11 February 1960. The Bill was altered at committee stage to give members of the public a right of admission to selected public meetings. The legislation remains in force, although considerably extended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985. The Bill was an important first step in improving transparency in local government.

*Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985*. The Conservative MP, Marion Roe, sponsored a Private Members' Bill banning female genital mutilation (FGM) in 1985, arising from her interest in child protection. She was following in the footsteps of an early woman MP, the Duchess of Atholl, who spoke against the practice in the Commons on 11 December 1929, having formed an all party campaign group to outlaw FGM in Africa. More recently, Ann Clwyd promoted a further Private Members' Bill in 2003 which became the Female Genital Mutilation Act, replacing the 1985 legislation.

*Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act 1976*. For many years, much of the violence which took place within the context of a relationship was considered to be a private matter rather than a crime. The Labour MP Jo Richardson piloted this Private Member's Bill to give women who suffered from domestic violence the right to apply for an injunction. The legislation was supported by Harold Wilson's Government. Although superseded by more comprehensive legislation, this was the first major law to recognise domestic violence as a crime.

### Government Bills Introduced by Women

Women ministers have also created broader changes through legislation which have made an impact on daily life.

*Road Safety Act 1967.* In the late 1960s the Minister of Transport, Barbara Castle promoted the Road Traffic Act 1967. Castle's most enduring transport legacy was in the area of road safety where she introduced a 'scientific' approach to tackling accident and fatality rates. She oversaw the introduction of compulsory wearing of seatbelts and the drink drive limit (of 80mg/100ml of blood), to be enforced at the roadside using a breathalyser. In the first year following the introduction of the new drink drive laws road deaths fell by 1,200, six times the forecast.

*Social Security Pensions Act 1975.* As Secretary of State for Social Services in 1974, Castle entered into what she described as "two years of the most important social reforms since the Beveridge report", her task being to "bring our concept of social security up to date". An important part of this was to help women build up pension entitlement in their own right. Castle spoke of the need to recognise the changed status of women in society: "We must get away from Beveridge's reliance on the dependency principle and provide that when women go out to work they shall share equal responsibilities and enjoy equal rights."

The option to pay reduced-rate contributions, relying on their husband's contributions for a state pension, was abolished. Home Responsibilities Protection was introduced to protect the state pension entitlements of people with caring responsibilities.

In addition, a State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS) was introduced to address the failure of the existing combination of a flat-rate state pension, and occupational pensions of sharply varying quality and limited coverage, to prevent many pensioners from having to rely on means-tested benefits. Castle's intention was to provide every worker, whether in or outside the state scheme, a guaranteed minimum pension on retirement. The earnings-related nature of the scheme meant that higher earnings would be reflected in higher entitlements. However, aspects of it were designed to protect people with periods of low or no earnings, including women with caring responsibilities. Entitlement would be based on earnings between set limits and only the best 20 years' earnings taken into account. Membership of the scheme could continue without the requirement to pay contributions during

periods at home caring for children or disabled people.

The consensus around SERPS did not last. Reforms introduced in the mid-1980s to reduce its generosity – with the aim

of reducing costs and encouraging the development of private alternatives – included removing the 'best 20 years rule'. The changes rendered SERPS, in Castle's words, "a parody of our original scheme". Recent governments have followed Castle's lead in attempting to reform the state pension system to better reflect women's working lives. Reforms in the Pensions Act 2007 further improved coverage for carers, such that by 2025, 90% of women would be expected to reach State Pension age entitled to a full basic State Pension, the same proportion as men.

The introduction of the single-tier pension in 2016 is expected to mean more State Pension in the short to medium term for many people with significant periods of low earnings or gaps in employment, particularly women and carers. However, future pensioners will need to save for any additional pension. The extent to which they are able to do so will inevitably reflect earnings over working life, which tend to be lower for women.

*Northern Ireland Act 1998.* Mo Mowlam, as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, played a major role in the ending of direct rule in Northern Ireland, restoring a legislative Assembly and introducing a power-sharing executive there. Candidates for a new party, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, stood in the Assembly elections in 1998, gaining two seats. Although the number of women in the Assembly remains low in international terms, the end of the Troubles has enabled women to contribute to legislation affecting their daily lives.

*Equality Act 2010.* Harriet Harman, as Minister for Women and Equality introduced this legislation in April 2009 which was designed to harmonise existing law into a more coherent whole, as well as to extend the law in a number of areas. To aid understanding of the proposed legislation, the pages were interleaved with the explanatory notes facing the text of the relevant clause. The Government Equalities Office continues to develop equality policy.

## Parliament: Making laws affecting women

From the 19th century onwards, legislation affecting women became more prominent. Until Parliament took action, the rights of women to act independently of their husbands was limited.

### Rights and responsibilities of wives

In 1870 and 1882 Parliament passed legislation to enable wives to own property in their own name. The legislation followed calls for reform from high earning women and others, and the publication in 1869 of John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women*. Before these Acts, a wife could not own property. A husband became entitled not only to the property his wife owned before the marriage (although wealthy families often set up trusts to mitigate the effects of this rule), but also to her earnings and savings made after the marriage ceremony. In return, the husband had a duty to maintain his wife.

Other Acts of Parliament have continued to amend the rights and responsibilities of husbands and wives. For example, statute now imposes mutual obligations of support on spouses, and, following a legal judgment in 1991, Parliament legislated in 1994 to make rape within a marriage a crime.

### Divorce

In 1923, Parliament passed an Act to allow women, like men, to petition for divorce on the ground of adultery alone. This followed pressure for reform from the feminist movement, and a commitment to achieve equal status for men and women by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. A previous Act of Parliament passed in 1857 had treated men and women differently: a wife (but not a husband) had to prove "aggravated adultery" meaning that she also had to prove an additional factor such as cruelty, two years' desertion or incest. Since then, of course, there have been further Acts of Parliament which have widened the grounds for divorce for both men and women. Two-thirds of divorces are now triggered by an application from the wife.

### Married women and taxation

For most of the 20th century the tax system continued to treat a married woman's income and capital gains as part of her husband's, and taxed as such. Although this state of affairs came in for increasing criticism by the 1970s, it was not until

1985 that the then Conservative Chancellor, Nigel Lawson, brought forward proposals for taxing each person as a separate individual.

Lawson's plans were delayed by public and parliamentary reaction, which led to the revision of the original proposals. It was not until March 1988 that he could announce that in future married couples would be taxed separately. Alongside a new single personal allowance for all taxpayers, husbands would be entitled to claim an extra 'married couples allowance'. Provision for this major reform was passed by Parliament that year, and the new system took effect from the 1990/91 tax year. Subsequently Parliament agreed certain changes to the married couples allowance – for example, allowing couples to share it or for a wife to claim it all – before the allowance was generally withdrawn from April 2000. It seems likely that independent taxation will remain a key feature of the UK's tax system. That said, there has been interest in having some type of tax allowance for married couples. In September 2013 the Prime Minister announced proposals to allow couples and civil partners to transfer part of their personal allowances in certain circumstances in 2015.

### Nationality law for women

Between 1870 and 1949, successive pieces of British nationality law did not allow British-born married women to have a nationality status independent of their husband's. The general principle, first established by the Naturalization Act 1870, was that upon marrying an 'alien', British women automatically lost their British subject status and also became aliens. Changes to nationality laws in 1914, 1918 and 1933 introduced some limited concessions, which enabled some women to retain or resume their British nationality in certain circumstances. However none of these had automatic effect. The British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act 1914 enabled wives of men who ceased to be British subjects during the marriage to retain their British nationality by declaration. It also allowed British-born widows or divorcees who had lost their nationality through marriage to naturalize as a British citizen without meeting the full residency requirement. A 1918 amendment allowed British-born wives of enemy aliens to resume their British subject status at the Home Secretary's discretion. Lastly, the British Nationality and

Status of Aliens Act 1933 introduced retrospective provisions to ensure that women only automatically lost their British subject status upon marriage if they acquired their husband's nationality under that country's nationality laws, in order to ensure that they did not become stateless.

However, it was only after the British Nationality Act 1948 came into force on 1 January 1949 that the principle that marital status should affect a woman's nationality status was abandoned. This change had retrospective effect, thereby ensuring that married women benefited regardless of whether they were born before or after the Act came into force.

### Sex Discrimination

The first equal opportunities statute enacted by Parliament was the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919. The Act made it illegal for women to be denied access to a range of professions on the basis of their sex or marriage, including the legal profession and parts of the civil service.

The most significant period in the history of sex discrimination law was the 1970s, during which Parliament enacted the Equal Pay Act 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, which formed the foundations of modern gender equality law. The post-war period had seen an increase in female participation in the labour market, and organised action by female sewing- machinists at the Ford factory in Dagenham during the late 1960s led to industrial action that put pressure on Parliament to prohibit gender pay discrimination. Additionally, it was expected at the time that the UK would soon accede to the European Economic Community, which would have required it, per Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome 1957, to "maintain the principle that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work".

The Equal Pay Act 1970 came into force on 29 December 1975. It gave employees the right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment. It achieved this via section 1 of the Act which inserted into contracts of employment an 'equality clause'. This provided that, where a woman is "employed on like work with a man in the same employment", their terms would be equalised. The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 went considerably further. It prohibited sex discrimination against both women and men in the areas of employment, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services and in the disposal or management of premises. The Act, for the first time,

provided a right to claim compensation for unlawful sex discrimination. It also established the Equal Opportunities Commission – the forerunner to the current Equality and Human Rights Commission – which had a duty to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

The Equality Act 2010 largely adopted the model in the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts for prohibiting discrimination extending its reach beyond gender.

### Child Benefit

By 1974 both Labour and the Conservatives were committed to introducing a new benefit for families with children but the task fell to Barbara Castle, as the new Secretary of State for Social Services, to push through the necessary legislation for what was to become Child Benefit. The Child Benefit Bill was introduced on 28 April 1975, but only after Castle had agreed postponement of the start date for the new scheme to April 1977. At Second Reading, she explained that it achieved "a long overdue merger between child tax allowances and family allowances into a new universal, non-means tested, tax-free cash benefit for all children, including the first, payable to the mother." The Bill received Royal Assent in August 1975, but the Child Benefit scheme itself was to have a more difficult birth.

Barbara Castle returned to the backbenches in April 1976, following her dismissal by the new Prime Minister Jim Callaghan, believing that the only main issue still to be resolved was a rate for the new benefit. However, almost immediately, forces within the Cabinet moved to undermine the plans, and on 25 May the Government announced that the introduction of Child Benefit would be postponed indefinitely, on the grounds that the "wallet to purse" transfer as a result of the abolition of child tax allowances would have put "excessive strain" on the Government's pay policies. Castle and others questioned the extent of trade union opposition to the new scheme, but it could have been abandoned altogether were it not for the publication of an article in *New Society* on 17 June giving details of leaked Cabinet minutes on the meetings which had led up to the decision. The minutes – which have been described as revealing "some rather dirty dealing" within the Cabinet – gave new impetus to those campaigning to save the Child Benefit scheme. In the furore that followed the Government was forced into retreat, and by September had agreed a compromise plan whereby Child Benefit would be fully phased in by 1979. While the campaign to

force the Government to fulfil its commitment to introduce Child Benefit involved many different actors, Barbara Castle played a pivotal role, using her influence as a member of the TUC/Labour Party Liaison Committee, the NEC, and as a focus for backbench support.

Child Benefit became, and remains, a totemic part of the welfare state. As successive governments including the present one have discovered, attempts to reform Child Benefit, or to question the principles upon which it was based, can provoke strong reactions.

## Female chairs of select committees in the House of Commons 1979 to Jan 2015

There have been select committees in the House of Commons for centuries, but it was only in 1979 that a system of departmental select committees began to operate, designed to offer continuing scrutiny of individual government departments and agencies. Chairs of these committees have built a public and parliamentary profile through their use of scrutiny. From the 2010 Parliament these chairs were elected by their fellow MPs.

Female chairs of these committees from 1979 onwards are set out below, together with the long-established Public Accounts Committee and the Committee of Selection, and including the Backbench Business Committee set up in 2010. Information is taken from the House of Commons Members' Database.

(1) Departmental and similar (i.e. those with elected chairs)

Member	Committee	Dates as chair
Renee Short	Social Service/Social Security	1979-87
Dame Marion Roe	Health Administration	1992-97 1997-2005
Gwyneth Dunwoody	Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs – Transport Sub- Committee	1997-2001
	Transport, Local Government and the Regions (joint chair)	2001-02
	Transport	2002-2008
Irene Adams	Scottish Affairs	2001-05
Jean Corston	Joint Committee on Human Rights	2001-05
Phyllis Starkey	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/ Communities and Local Government*	2005-10
Rosemary McKenna	Selection	2005-10
Louise Ellman	Transport	2008-
Anne Begg	Work and Pensions	2010-
Margaret Hodge	Education and Employment: Education Sub-Committee	1997-98
	Public Accounts	2010-
Anne McIntosh	Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	2010-
Joan Walley	Environmental Audit	2010-
Natascha Engel	Backbench Business	2010-
Dr Sarah Wollaston	Health	2014 -



(2) Modernisation Committee

The Modernisation Committee was appointed in each of the three Parliaments from 1997, 2001 and 2005. Unlike the majority of select committees, it was chaired by the Leader of the House of Commons, a Cabinet Minister.

Member	Committee	Dates as chair
Ann Taylor	Modernisation	1997-98
Margaret Beckett	Modernisation	1998-2001
Harriet Harman	Modernisation	2007-10

(3) Regional Select Committees

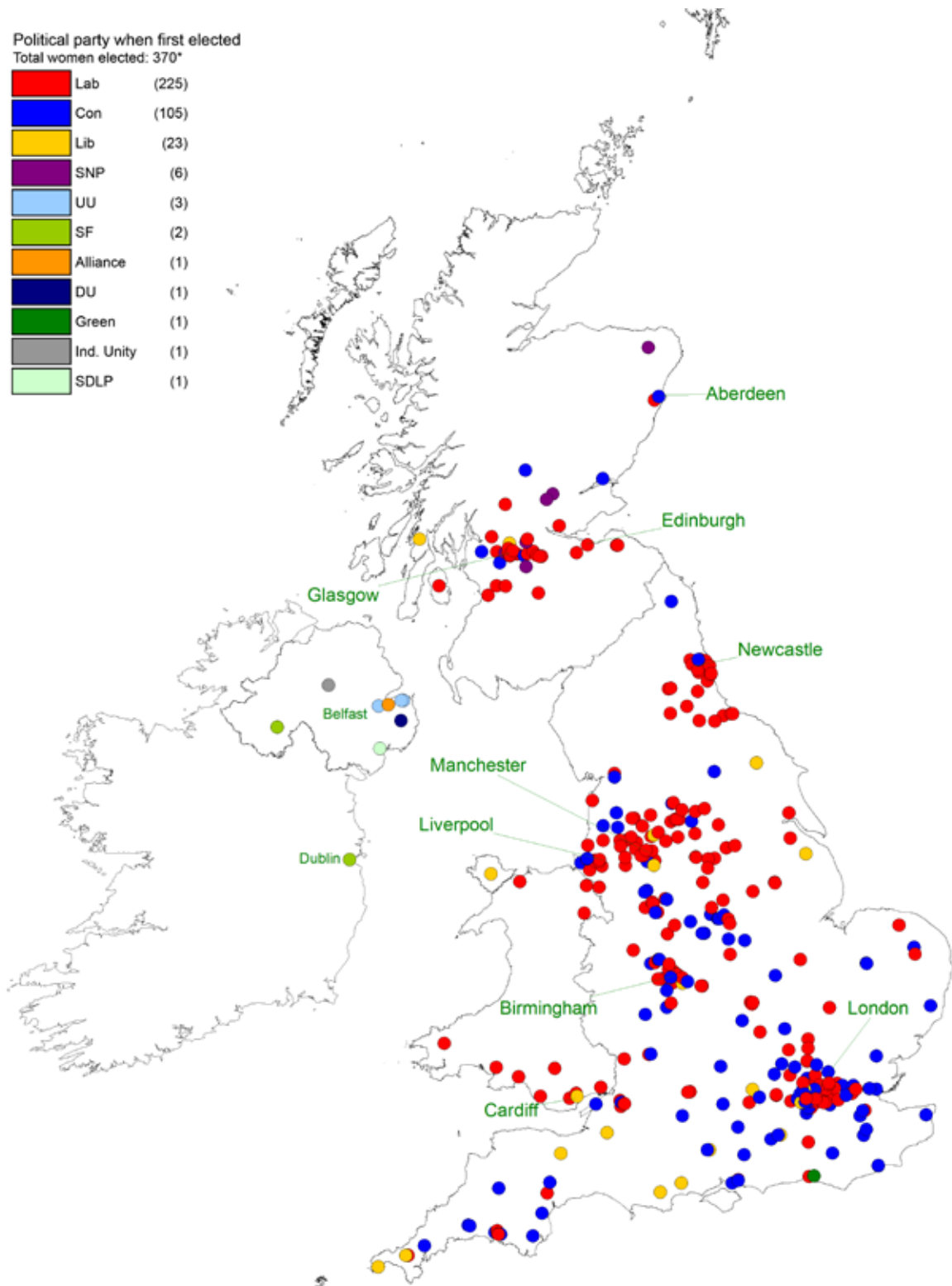
Regional Select Committees existed from 1 January 2009 to the end of that Parliament in 2010.

Member	Committee	Dates as chair
Margaret Moran	East of England	2009-10
Dari Taylor	North East	2009-10
Karen Buck	London	2009-10



'Liaison Committee' by John Ferguson, 2010, including Dr Phyllis Starkey MP and Louise Ellman MP  
 Parliamentary Art Collection WOA 7167

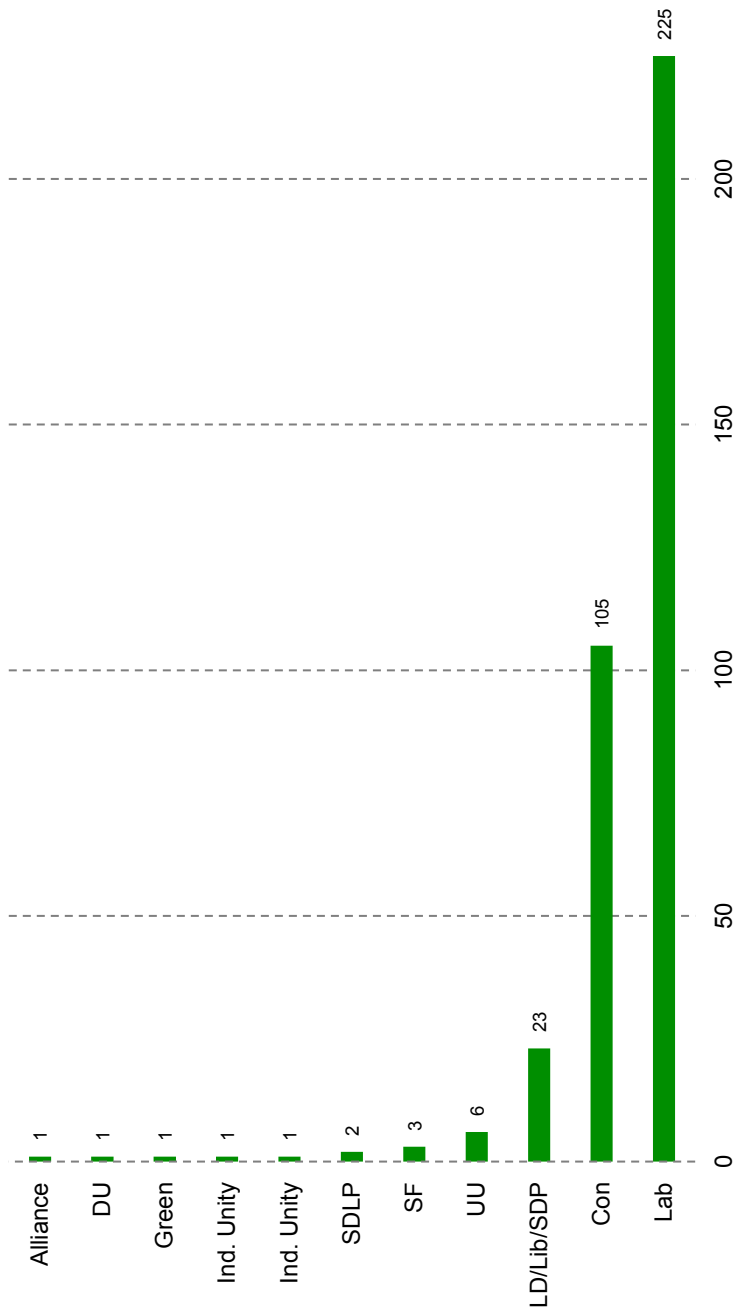
### Women elected to the House of Commons, by party of first election, 1918–2014



\* Includes Eleanor Rathbone (independent) elected for the Combined English Universities in 1929

Women MPs by party of first election,  
1918–December 2014

Party	No.
Lab	225
Con	105
LD/Lib/SDP	23
UU	6
SF	3
SDLP	2
Ind. Unity	1
Ind. Unity	1
Green	1
DU	1
Alliance	1



## Women Members of Parliament: House of Commons Background Paper

Standard Note: SN/PC/6652

Last updated: 14 October 2014

Author: Richard Kelly

Section Parliament and Constitution Centre

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This background paper provides a list of all the women who have ever been elected to the House of Commons. One of the earliest women MPs, Susan Lawrence (first elected in December 1923), “objected to being called ‘a woman MP’. ‘Why don’t you call Churchill a man MP?’ she was apt to demand”.\*

However, in total, since 1918, there have been fewer women MPs – 370 – than there are men who currently sit in the House of Commons. There are currently 148 women MPs among the 650 members of the House.\*\*

This list provides the names of the women MPs in order of first election, the party they were first elected for, the constituency or constituencies they represented and their dates as MPs.

\* Pamela Brookes, *Women at Westminster*, 1967, p51

\*\* There is currently one vacant seat, which was previously held by a male MP

This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. It should not be relied upon as being up to date; the law or policies may have changed since it was last updated; and it should not be relied upon as legal or professional advice or as a substitute for it. A suitably qualified professional should be consulted if specific advice or information is required.

This information is provided subject to [our general terms and conditions](#) which are available online or may be provided on request in hard copy. Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing with Members and their staff, but not with the general public.

## Women MPs by date of first election

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Constance, Countess MARKIEVICZ (Did not take seat)	14 Dec 1918	SF	Dublin, St Patrick's	1918-22
Nancy, Viscountess ASTOR, CH	15 Nov 1919	Con	Plymouth, Sutton	1919*-45;
Mrs Margaret WINTRINGHAM	22 Sept 1921	Lib	Lincolnshire, Louth	1921*-24
Mrs Mabel PHILIPSON	31 May 1923	Con	Berwick-upon-Tweed	1923*-29
Katharine, Duchess of ATHOLL, DBE	6 Dec 1923	Con	Perth & Kinross, Kinross & Western	1923-38
Rt Hon Margaret BONDFIELD, CH (First woman Cabinet Minister)	6 Dec 1923	Lab	Northampton; Wallsend (1926-31)	1923-24; 1926*-31
Miss Dorothea JEWSON	6 Dec 1923	Lab	Norwich	1923-24
Miss Arabella Susan LAWRENCE	6 Dec 1923	Lab	East Ham, North	1923-24; 1926*-31
Lady Vera TERRINGTON	6 Dec 1923	Lib	Buckinghamshire, Wycombe	1923-24
Rt Hon Ellen WILKINSON	29 Oct 1924	Lab	Middlesbrough, East; Jarrow (1935-47)	1924-31; 1935-47
Gwendolen, Countess of IVEAGH, CBE	19 Nov 1927	Con	Southend-on-Sea	1927*-35
Hilda RUNCIMAN (later Viscountess)	6 Mar 1928	Lib	Cornwall, St Ives	1928*-29
Mrs Florence DALTON	7 Feb 1929	Lab	Durham, Bishop Auckland	1929*
Rt Hon Miss Jennie LEE (Mrs A Bevan)	21 Mar 1929	Lab	Lanarkshire, Northern; Staffordshire, Cannock (1945-70)	1929*-31; 1945-70
Dr Ethel BENTHAM	30 May 1929	Lab	Islington, East	1929-31
Mrs Mary HAMILTON,	30 May 1929	Lab	Blackburn	1929-31
Lady Megan LLOYD GEORGE	30 May 1929	Lib	Anglesey; Carmarthen (1957-66)	1929-51; 1957*-66
Lady Cynthia MOSLEY	30 May 1929	Lab	Stoke-on-Trent, Stoke	1929-31
Dr Marion PHILLIPS	30 May 1929	Lab	Sunderland	1929-31
Miss Edith PICTON-TURBERVILL, OBE	30 May 1929	Lab	Shropshire, The Wrekin	1929-31
Miss Eleanor RATHBONE	30 May 1929	Ind	Combined English Universities	1929-46
Lady Lucy NOEL-BUXTON	9 Jul 1930	Lab	Norfolk, North; Norwich (1945-1950)	1930*-31; 1945-50
Mrs Leah MANNING	19 Feb 1931	Lab	Islington, East; Essex, Epping (1945-50)	1931*-1945-50
Mrs Thelma CAZALET-KEIR, CBE	27 Oct 1931	Con	Islington, East	1931-45
Mrs Ida COPELAND	27 Oct 1931	Con	Stoke-on-Trent, Stoke	1931-35
Miss Marjorie GRAVES	27 Oct 1931	Con	Hackney, South	1931-35
Rt Hon Dame Florence HORSBURGH (First woman to move the Address in reply to the King's speech)	27 Oct 1931	Con	Dundee; Manchester, Moss-Side (1950-59)	1931-45; 1950-59

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
The Hon Mary PICKFORD, CBE	27 Oct 1931	Con	Hammersmith, North	1931-34
Mrs Norah RUNGE, OBE	27 Oct 1931	Con	Bermondsey, Rotherhithe	1931-35
Mrs Helen SHAW, MBE	27 Oct 1931	Con	Lanarkshire, Bothwell	1931-35
Mrs Mavis TATE	27 Oct 1931	Con	Willesden, West; Somerset, Frome (1935-45)	1931-45
Dame Irene WARD, CH	27 Oct 1931	Con	Wallsend; Tynemouth (1950-74)	1931-45; 1950- Feb 74
Mrs Sarah WARD	27 Oct 1931	Con	Staffordshire, Cannock	1931-35
Frances, Viscountess DAVIDSON	22 Jun 1937	Con	Hertfordshire, Hemel Hempstead	1937*-59
Mrs Agnes HARDIE	7 Sep 1937	Lab	Glasgow, Springburn	1937*-45
Rt Hon Dr Edith SUMMERSKILL, CH	6 Apr 1938	Lab	Fulham; Warrington (1955-61)	1938*-61
Mrs Jennie ADAMSON	7 Nov 1938	Lab	Dartford; Bexley (1945-46)	1938*-46
Mrs Beatrice WRIGHT	11 Mar 1941	Con	Cornwall, Bodmin	1941*-45
Lady Violet APSLEY,	18 Feb 1943	Con	Bristol, Central	1943*-45
Rt Hon Alice BACON, CBE	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Leeds, North East; Leeds, South East (1955-70)	1945-70
Mrs Bessie BRADDOCK	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Liverpool, Exchange	1945-70
Rt Hon Barbara CASTLE	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Blackburn; Blackburn East (1950-55); Blackburn (1955-79)	1945-79
Miss Grace COLMAN	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Tynemouth	1945-50
Mrs Freda CORBET	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Camberwell, North-West; Camberwell, Peckham (1950-74)	1945- Feb 74
Mrs Caroline GANLEY	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Battersea, South	1945-51
Mrs Barbara GOULD	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Hendon, North	1945-50
Rt Hon Miss Margaret HERBISON	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Lanarkshire, North	1945-70
Mrs Jean MANN	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Lanarkshire, Coatbridge; Coatbridge and Airdire (1950-59)	1945-59
Mrs Lucy MIDDLETON	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Plymouth, Sutton	1945-51
Mrs Muriel NICHOL	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Bradford, North	1945-50
Mrs Florence PATON	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe	1945-50
Mrs Mabel RIDEALGH	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Ilford, North	1945-50
Mrs Clarice SHAW	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Ayrshire & Bute, Kilmarnock	1945-46
Mrs Edith WILLS	5 Jul 1945	Lab	Birmingham, Duddeston	1945-50
Priscilla, Lady TWEEDSMUIR (as Lady Grant of Monymusk to 1948)	26 Nov 1946	Con	Aberdeen, South	1946*-66
Mrs Alice CULLEN	30 Sep 1948	Lab	Glasgow, Gorbals	1948*-69
Miss Elaine BURTON	23 Feb 1950	Lab	Coventry, South	1950-59
Mrs Eveline HILL	23 Feb 1950	Con	Manchester, Wythenshawe	1950-64
Rt Hon Dame Patricia HORNSBY-SMITH, DBE	23 Feb 1950	Con	Kent, Chislehurst	1950-66; 1970- Feb 74
Mrs Dorothy REES	23 Feb 1950	Lab	Glamorgan, Barry	1950-51
Mrs Eirene WHITE	23 Feb 1950	Lab	Flintshire, East	1950-70

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Mrs Harriet SLATER (First woman Whip)	31 Mar 1953	Lab	Stoke-on-Trent, North	1953*-66
Mrs Patricia FORD	15 April 1953	UU	Down, North	1953*-55
Dame Edith PITT, DBE	2 Jul 1953	Con	Birmingham, Edgbaston	1953*-66
Mrs Lena JEGER	19 Nov 1953	Lab	Holborn & St Pancras, South	1953*-59; 1964-79
Mrs Joyce BUTLER	26 May 1955	Lab	Wood Green	1955-79
The Hon Mrs Evelyn EMMET	26 May 1955	Con	East Sussex, East Grinstead	1955-64
Mrs Patricia McLAUGHLIN	26 May 1955	UU	Belfast, West	1955-64
Dame Joan VICKERS, DBE	26 May 1955	Con	Plymouth, Devonport	1955- Feb 74
Miss Mervyn PIKE	19 Dec 1956	Con	Leicestershire, Melton	1956*- Feb 74
Lady Muriel GAMMANS	30 May 1957	Con	Hornsey	1957*-66
Mrs Mary McALISTER	13 Mar 1958	Lab	Glasgow, Kelvingrove	1958*-59
Rt Hon Betty HARVIE ANDERSON OBE, TD (Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)	8 Oct 1959	Con	Renfrewshire, East	1959-79
Rt Hon Dame Judith HART, DBE	8 Oct 1959	Lab	Lanark; Clydesdale (1983-87)	1959-87
Rt Hon Margaret THATCHER (First woman Prime Minister)	8 Oct 1959	Con	Finchley	1959-92
Miss Joan QUENNELL MBE	16 Nov 1960	Con	Petersfield	1960*- Oct 74
Mrs Anne KERR	15 Oct 1964	Lab	Rochester & Chatham	1964-70
Mrs Margaret McKAY	15 Oct 1964	Lab	Wandsworth, Clapham	1964-70
Mrs Renee SHORT	15 Oct 1964	Lab	Wolverhampton, North-East	1964-87
Dr the Hon Shirley SUMMERSKILL	15 Oct 1964	Lab	Halifax	1964-83
Rt Hon Shirley WILLIAMS	15 Oct 1964	Lab	Hertfordshire, Hitchin; Hertford & Stevenage (Feb 1974-79); Crosby (1981-83)	1964-79 1981*-83
Mrs Gwyneth DUNWOODY	31 Mar 1966	Lab	Exeter; Crewe (Feb 1974-83); Crewe & Nantwich (1983-2008)	1966-70; 1974-2008
Dame Jill KNIGHT, DBE	31 Mar 1966	Con	Birmingham, Edgbaston	1966-97
Miss Joan LESTOR	31 Mar 1966	Lab	Eton & Slough; Eccles (1987-97)	1966-83; 1987-97
Mrs Winifred EWING	2 Nov 1967	SNP	Lanarkshire, Hamilton; Moray & Nairn (Feb 1974-79)	1967*-70; 1974-79
Miss Bernadette DEVLIN (Youngest woman MP at 21 yrs) (later Mrs Bernadette McALISKEY)	17 Apr 1969	Ind. Unity	Mid-Ulster	1969*- Feb 74
Dame Peggy FENNER, DBE	18 Jun 1970	Con	Rochester & Chatham; Medway (1983-97)	1970- Oct 74; 1979-97

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Mrs Doris FISHER	18 Jun 1970	Lab	Birmingham, Ladywood	1970- Feb 74
Dame Janet FOOKES, DBE (Second Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)	18 Jun 1970	Con	Merton & Morden; Plymouth, Drake (Feb 1974-97)	1970-97
Miss Joan HALL	18 Jun 1970	Con	Keighley	1970- Feb 74
Miss Mary HOLT	18 Jun 1970	Con	Preston, North	1970- Feb 74
Dame Elaine KELLETT-BOWMAN, DBE	18 Jun 1970	Con	Lancaster	1970-97
Mrs Constance MONKS OBE	18 Jun 1970	Con	Chorley	1970- Feb 74
Rt Hon Sally OPPENHEIM	18 Jun 1970	Con	Gloucester	1970-87
Rt Hon Betty BOOTHROYD (First woman Speaker)	24 May 1973	Lab	West Bromwich; West Bromwich, West (Feb 1974-2000)	1973*-2000
Mrs Margo MACDONALD	8 Nov 1973	SNP	Glasgow, Govan	1973*-Feb 74
Rt Hon Lynda CHALKER	28 Feb 1974	Con	Wallasey	Feb 1974-92
Mrs Maureen COLQUHOUN	28 Feb 1974	Lab	Northampton, North	Feb 1974-79
Jo RICHARDSON	28 Feb 1974	Lab	Barking	Feb 1974-94
Audrey WISE	28 Feb 1974	Lab	Coventry, South-West; Preston (1987-2000)	Feb 1974-79; 1987-2000
Mrs Margaret BAIN (later Mrs EWING)	10 Oct 1974	SNP	East Dunbartonshire; Moray (1987-2001)	Oct 1974-79; 1987-2001
Mrs Helene HAYMAN	10 Oct 1974	Lab	Welwyn & Hatfield	Oct 1974-79
Miss Margaret JACKSON (later Mrs BECKETT, then Rt Hon Dame Margaret BECKETT)	10 Oct 1974	Lab	Lincoln; Derby, South (1983-)	Oct 1974-79; 1983-
Miss Joan MAYNARD	10 Oct 1974	Lab	Sheffield, Brightside	Oct 1974-87
Mrs Millie MILLER	10 Oct 1974	Lab	Ilford North	Oct 1974-77
Rt Hon Ann TAYLOR (First woman Chief Whip)	10 Oct 1974	Lab	Bolton, West; Dewsbury (1987-)	Oct 1974-83; 1987-2005
Dr Oonagh McDONALD	15 Jul 1976	Lab	Thurrock	1976*-87
Mrs Sheila FAITH	3 May 1979	Con	Belper	1979-83
Miss Sheila WRIGHT	3 May 1979	Lab	Birmingham, Handsworth	1979-83
Dame Angela RUMBOLD, DBE	3 Jun 1982	Con	Merton, Mitcham and Morden; Mitcham and Morden (1983-97)	1982*-97
Rt Hon Harriet HARMAN	28 Oct 1982	Lab	Peckham; Camberwell & Peckham (1997-)	1982*-
Mrs Helen McELHONE	2 Dec 1982	Lab	Glasgow, Queen's Park	1982*-83
Mrs Edwina CURRIE	9 Jun 1983	Con	South Derbyshire	1983-97
Mrs Anna McCURLEY	9 Jun 1983	Con	Renfrew West & Inverclyde	1983-87
Mrs Elizabeth PEACOCK	9 Jun 1983	Con	Batley & Spen	1983-97
Mrs Marion ROE	9 Jun 1983	Con	Broxbourne	1983-2005
Rt Hon Clare SHORT	9 Jun 1983	Lab	Birmingham, Ladywood	1983-2010
Mrs Ann WINTERTON	9 Jun 1983	Con	Congleton	1983-2010



Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Rt Hon Virginia BOTTOMLEY	3 May 1984	Con	South West Surrey	1984*-2005
Rt Hon Ann CLWYD	3 May 1984	Lab	Cynon Valley	1984*-
Mrs Elizabeth SHIELDS	8 May 1986	Lib	Ryedale	1986*-87
Mrs Llin GOLDING	17 Jul 1986	Lab	Newcastle-under-Lyme	1986*-2001
Mrs Rosie BARNES	26 Feb 1987	SDP	Greenwich	1987*-92
Miss Diane ABBOTT	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Hackney North & Stoke Newington	1987-
Rt Hon Hilary ARMSTRONG	11 Jun 1987	Lab	North West Durham	1987-2010
Mrs Maria FYFE	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Glasgow, Maryhill	1987-2001
Mrs Mildred GORDON	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Bow & Poplar	1987-97
Mrs Teresa GORMAN	11 Jun 1987	Con	Billericay	1987-2001
Mrs Maureen HICKS	11 Jun 1987	Con	Wolverhampton, North East	1987-92
Mrs Alice MAHON	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Halifax	1987-2005
Mrs Ray MICHIE	11 Jun 1987	LD	Argyll & Bute	1987-2001
Rt Hon Marjorie MOWLAM	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Redcar	1987-2001
Emma NICHOLSON	11 Jun 1987	Con	Devon, West & Torridge	1987-97
Rt Hon Dame Dawn PRIMAROLO (Second Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Bristol South	1987-
Rt Hon Joyce QUIN	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Gateshead, East; Gateshead East and Washington West (1997-2005)	1987-2005
Rt Hon Dame Joan RUDDOCK	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Lewisham, Deptford	1987-
Rt Hon Gillian SHEPHARD	11 Jun 1987	Con	South West Norfolk	1987-2005
Ms Joan WALLEY	11 Jun 1987	Lab	Stoke-on-Trent North	1987-
Rt Hon Ann WIDDECOMBE	11 Jun 1987	Con	Maidstone; Maidstone and the Weald (1997-2010)	1987-2010
Miss Kate HOEY	15 Jun 1989	Lab	Vauxhall	1989*-
Mrs Sylvia HEAL (Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means)	22 Mar 1990	Lab	Mid-Staffordshire; Halesowen and Rowley Regis (1997-2010)	1990*-92; 1997-2010
Irene ADAMS	29 Nov 1990	Lab	Paisley North	1990*-2005
Janet ANDERSON	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Rosendale & Darwen	1992-2010
Mrs Angela BROWNING	9 Apr 1992	Con	Tiverton; Tiverton & Honiton (1997-2010)	1992-2010
Mrs Anne CAMPBELL	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Cambridge	1992-2005
Mrs Judith CHAPLIN	9 Apr 1992	Con	Newbury	1992-93
Ms Ann COFFEY	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Stockport	1992-
Rt Hon Jean CORSTON	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Bristol East	1992-2005
Angela EAGLE	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Wallasey	1992-
Rt Hon Cheryl GILLAN	9 Apr 1992	Con	Chesham & Amersham	1992-
Ms Glenda JACKSON	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Hampstead & Highgate; Hampstead and Kilburn (2010-)	1992-
Helen JACKSON	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Sheffield, Hillsborough	1992-2005
Dr Lynne JONES	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Birmingham, Selly Oak	1992-2010

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Rt Hon Dame Tessa JOWELL	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Dulwich; Dulwich & West Norwood (1997-)	1992-
Rt Hon Jane KENNEDY	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Liverpool, Broad Green; Liverpool Wavertree (1997-2010)	1992-2010
Mrs Angela KNIGHT	9 Apr 1992	Con	Erewash	1992-97
Mrs Jacqui LAIT	9 Apr 1992	Con	Hastings & Rye; Beckenham (1997*-2010)	1992-97; 1997*- 2010
Ms Liz LYNNE	9 Apr 1992	LD	Rochdale	1992-97
Lady Olga MAITLAND	9 Apr 1992	Con	Sutton & Cheam	1992-97
Rt Hon Estelle MORRIS	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Birmingham, Yardley	1992-2005
Ms Bridget PRENTICE	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Lewisham East	1992-2010
Mrs Barbara ROCHE	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Hornsey & Wood Green	1992-2005
Ms Rachel SQUIRE	9 Apr 1992	Lab	Dunfermline West; Dunfermline and West Fife (2005-06)	1992-2006
Mrs Diana MADDOCK	29 Jul 1993	LD	Christchurch	1993*-97
Ms Judith CHURCH	9 Jun 1994	Lab	Dagenham	1994*-2001
Rt Hon Margaret HODGE	9 Jun 1994	Lab	Barking	1994*-
Rt Hon Helen LIDDELL	30 Jun 1994	Lab	Monklands East; Airdrie and Shotts (1997-)	1994*-1997 1997-2005
Ms Roseanna CUNNINGHAM	25 Jun 1995	SNP	Perth & Kinross; Perth (1997-2001)	1995*-2001
Ms Candy ATHERTON	1 May 1997	Lab	Falmouth and Camborne	1997-2005
Ms Charlotte ATKINS	1 May 1997	Lab	Staffordshire Moorlands	1997-2010
Mrs Jackie BALLARD	1 May 1997	LD	Taunton	1997-2001
Dame Anne BEGG	1 May 1997	Lab	Aberdeen South	1997-
Mrs Liz BLACKMAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Erewash	1997-2010
Rt Hon Hazel BLEARS	1 May 1997	Lab	Salford; Salford and Eccles (2010-)	1997-
Mrs Helen BRINTON (Later Mrs Helen Clark)	1 May 1997	Lab	Peterborough	1997-2005
Ms Karen BUCK	1 May 1997	Lab	Regent's Park and Kensington North; Westminster North (2010-)	1997-
Mrs Christine BUTLER	1 May 1997	Lab	Castle Point	1997-2001
Dr Lynda CLARK, QC	1 May 1997	Lab	Edinburgh, Pentlands	1997-2005
Rt Hon Yvette COOPER	1 May 1997	Lab	Pontefract and Castleford; Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford (2010-)	1997-
Mrs Ann CRYER	1 May 1997	Lab	Keighley	1997-2010
Ms Claire CURTIS-THOMAS	1 May 1997	Lab	Crosby	1997-2010
Valerie DAVEY	1 May 1997	Lab	Bristol West	1997-2005
Mrs Janet DEAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Burton	1997-2010
Julia DROWN	1 May 1997	Lab	South Swindon	1997-2005
Maria EAGLE	1 May 1997	Lab	Liverpool, Garston; Garston and Halewood (2010-)	1997-

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Mrs Louise ELLMAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Liverpool, Riverside	1997-
Ms Lorna FITZSIMONS	1 May 1997	Lab	Rochdale	1997-2005
Rt Hon Caroline FLINT	1 May 1997	Lab	Don Valley	1997-
Ms Barbara FOLLETT	1 May 1997	Lab	Stevenage	1997-2010
Mrs Linda GILROY	1 May 1997	Lab	Plymouth, Sutton	1997-2010
Eileen GORDON	1 May 1997	Lab	Romford	1997-2001
Jane GRIFFITHS	1 May 1997	Lab	Reading East	1997-2005
Rt Hon Patricia HEWITT	1 May 1997	Lab	Leicester West	1997-2010
Rt Hon Beverley HUGHES	1 May 1997	Lab	Stretford and Urmston	1997-2010
Mrs Joan HUMBLE	1 May 1997	Lab	Blackpool North and Fleetwood	1997-2010
Miss Melanie JOHNSON	1 May 1997	Lab	Welwyn Hatfield	1997-2005
Mrs Fiona JONES	1 May 1997	Lab	Newark	1997-2001
Helen JONES	1 May 1997	Lab	Warrington North	1997-
Ms Jenny JONES	1 May 1997	Lab	Wolverhampton South West	1997-2001
Ms Sally KEEBLE	1 May 1997	Lab	Northampton North	1997-2010
Ann KEEN	1 May 1997	Lab	Brentford and Isleworth	1997-2010
Rt Hon Ruth KELLY	1 May 1997	Lab	Bolton West	1997-2010
Ms Oona KING	1 May 1997	Lab	Bethnal Green and Bow	1997-2005
Ms Tess KINGHAM	1 May 1997	Lab	Gloucester	1997-2001
Miss Julie KIRKBRIDE	1 May 1997	Con	Bromsgrove	1997-2010
Mrs Eleanor LAING	1 May 1997	Con	Epping Forest	1997-
Ms Jackie LAWRENCE	1 May 1997	Lab	Preseli Pembrokeshire	1997-2005
Fiona MACTAGGART	1 May 1997	Lab	Slough	1997-
Judy MALLABER	1 May 1997	Lab	Amber Valley	1997-2010
Rt Hon Theresa MAY	1 May 1997	Con	Maidenhead	1997-
Ms Chris McCAFFERTY	1 May 1997	Lab	Calder Valley	1997-2010
Ms Siobhain McDONAGH	1 May 1997	Lab	Mitcham and Morden	1997-
Rt Hon Anne McGUIRE	1 May 1997	Lab	Stirling	1997-
Anne McINTOSH	1 May 1997	Con	Vale of York; Thirsk And Malton (2010-)	1997-
Shona McISAAC	1 May 1997	Lab	Cleethorpes	1997-2010
Mrs Rosemary McKENNA, CBE	1 May 1997	Lab	Cumbernauld and Kilsyth; Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East (2005-10)	1997-2010
Ms Gillian MERRON	1 May 1997	Lab	Lincoln	1997-2010
Laura MOFFATT	1 May 1997	Lab	Crawley	1997-2010
Ms Margaret MORAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Luton South	1997-2010
Ms Julie MORGAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Cardiff North	1997-2010
Ms Kali MOUNTFORD	1 May 1997	Lab	Colne Valley	1997-2010
Mrs Diana ORGAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Forest of Dean	1997-2005
Ms Sandra OSBORNE	1 May 1997	Lab	Ayr; Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock (2005-)	1997-
Ms Linda PERHAM	1 May 1997	Lab	Ilford North	1997-2005

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Christine RUSSELL	1 May 1997	Lab	Chester, City of	1997-2010
Joan RYAN	1 May 1997	Lab	Enfield North	1997-2010
Ms Debra SHIPLEY	1 May 1997	Lab	Stourbridge	1997-2005
Rt Hon Angela E SMITH	1 May 1997	Lab	Basildon	1997-2010
Miss Geraldine SMITH	1 May 1997	Lab	Morecambe and Lunesdale	1997-2010
Rt Hon Jacqui SMITH	1 May 1997	Lab	Redditch	1997-2010
Ms Helen SOUTHWORTH	1 May 1997	Lab	Warrington South	1997-2010
Rt Hon Caroline SPELMAN	1 May 1997	Con	Meriden	1997-
Dr Phyllis STARKEY	1 May 1997	Lab	Milton Keynes South West	1997-2010
Ms Gisela STUART	1 May 1997	Lab	Birmingham, Edgbaston	1997-
Ms Dari TAYLOR	1 May 1997	Lab	Stockton South	1997-2010
Dr Jenny TONGE	1 May 1997	LD	Richmond Park	1997-2005
Ms Claire WARD	1 May 1997	Lab	Watford	1997-2010
Mrs Betty WILLIAMS	1 May 1997	Lab	Conwy	1997-2010
Rt Hon Rosie WINTERTON	1 May 1997	Lab	Doncaster Central	1997-
Sandra GIDLEY	4 May 2000	LD	Romsey	2000*-10
Vera BAIRD	7 Jun 2001	Lab	Redcar	2001-10
Annette BROOKE	7 Jun 2001	LD	Mid Dorset & North Poole	2001-
Patsy CALTON	7 Jun 2001	LD	Cheadle	2001-05
Sue DOUGHTY	7 Jun 2001	LD	Guildford	2001-05
Annabelle EWING	7 Jun 2001	SNP	Perth	2001-05
Michelle GILDERNEW (Did not take seat)	7 Jun 2001	SF	Fermanagh & South Tyrone	2001-
Lady Sylvia HERMON	7 Jun 2001	UU	North Down	2001-
Ann McKECHIN	7 Jun 2001	Lab	Glasgow Maryhill; Glasgow North (2005-)	2001-
Meg MUNN	7 Jun 2001	Lab	Sheffield, Heeley	2001-
Anne PICKING (2005 = Moffat)	7 Jun 2001	Lab	East Lothian	2001-10
Iris ROBINSON	7 Jun 2001	DU	Strangford	2001-10
Angela WATKINSON	7 Jun 2001	Con	Upminster; Hornchurch and Upminster (2010-)	2001-
Sarah TEATHER	18 Sep 2003	LD	Brent East; Brent Central (2010-)	2003*-
Celia BARLOW	5 May 2005	Lab	Hove	2005-10
Roberta BLACKMAN-WOODS	5 May 2005	Lab	Durham, City of	2005-
Lyn BROWN	5 May 2005	Lab	West Ham	2005-
Lorely BURT	5 May 2005	LD	Solihull	2005-
Katy CLARK	5 May 2005	Lab	North Ayrshire and Arran	2005-
Rosie COOPER	5 May 2005	Lab	West Lancashire	2005-
Mary CREAGH	5 May 2005	Lab	Wakefield	2005-
Nadine DORRIES	5 May 2005	Con	Mid Bedfordshire	2005-
Natascha ENGEL	5 May 2005	Lab	North East Derbyshire	2005-
Lynne FEATHERSTONE	5 May 2005	LD	Hornsey and Wood Green	2005-
Julia GOLDSWORTHY	5 May 2005	LD	Falmouth & Camborne	2005-10

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Helen GOODMAN	5 May 2005	Lab	Bishop Auckland	2005-
Rt Hon Justine GREENING	5 May 2005	Con	Putney	2005-
Nia GRIFFITH	5 May 2005	Lab	Llanelli	2005-
Meg HILLIER	5 May 2005	Lab	Hackney South and Shoreditch	2005-
Sharon HODGSON	5 May 2005	Lab	Gateshead East & Washington West; Washington and Sunderland West (2010-)	2005-
Sian C JAMES	5 May 2005	Lab	Swansea East	2005-
Diana R JOHNSON	5 May 2005	Lab	Kingston upon Hull North	2005-
Barbara KEELEY	5 May 2005	Lab	Worsley; Worsley and Eccles South (2010-)	2005-
Susan KRAMER	5 May 2005	LD	Richmond Park	2005-10
Kerry McCARTHY	5 May 2005	Lab	Bristol East	2005-
Sarah McCARTHY-FRY	5 May 2005	Lab	Portsmouth North	2005-10
Anne MAIN	5 May 2005	Con	St Albans	2005-
Rt Hon Maria MILLER	5 May 2005	Con	Basingstoke	2005-
Anne MILTON	5 May 2005	Con	Guildford	2005-
Madeleine MOON	5 May 2005	Lab	Bridgend	2005-
Jessica MORDEN	5 May 2005	Lab	Newport East	2005-
Linda RIORDAN	5 May 2005	Lab	Halifax	2005-
Alison SEABECK	5 May 2005	Lab	Plymouth, Devonport; Plymouth, Moor View (2010-)	2005-
Angela C SMITH	5 May 2005	Lab	Sheffield, Hillsborough; Penistone and Stocksbridge (2010-)	2005-
Anne SNELGROVE	5 May 2005	Lab	South Swindon	2005-10
Jo SWINSON	5 May 2005	LD	East Dunbartonshire	2005-
Emily THORNBERRY	5 May 2005	Lab	Islington South & Finsbury	2005-
Kitty USSHER	5 May 2005	Lab	Burnley	2005-10
Rt Hon Theresa VILLIERS	5 May 2005	Con	Chipping Barnet	2005-
Lynda WALTHO	5 May 2005	Lab	Stourbridge	2005-10
Jenny WILLOTT	5 May 2005	LD	Cardiff Central	2005-
Chloe SMITH	23 July 2009	Con	Norwich North	2009*-
Heidi ALEXANDER	6 May 2010	Lab	Lewisham East	2010-
Rushanara ALI	6 May 2010	Lab	Bethnal Green and Bow	2010-
Ms Louise BAGSHAWE (later Mrs Louise MENSCH)	6 May 2010	Con	Corby	2010-12
Harriett BALDWIN	6 May 2010	Con	West Worcestershire	2010-
Luciana BERGER	6 May 2010	Lab	Liverpool, Wavertree	2010-
Nicola BLACKWOOD	6 May 2010	Con	Oxford West and Abingdon	2010-
Karen BRADLEY	6 May 2010	Con	Staffordshire Moorlands	2010-
Angie BRAY	6 May 2010	Con	Ealing Central and Acton	2010-
Fiona BRUCE	6 May 2010	Con	Congleton	2010-
Mrs Jenny CHAPMAN	6 May 2010	Lab	Darlington	2010-

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Dr Thérèse COFFEY	6 May 2010	Con	Suffolk Coastal	2010-
Stella CREASY	6 May 2010	Lab	Walthamstow	2010-
Tracey CROUCH	6 May 2010	Con	Chatham and Aylesford	2010-
Margaret CURRAN	6 May 2010	Lab	Glasgow East	2010-
Gloria DE PIERO	6 May 2010	Lab	Ashfield	2010-
Caroline DINEAGE	6 May 2010	Con	Gosport	2010-
Gemma DOYLE	6 May 2010	Lab	West Dunbartonshire	2010-
Jackie DOYLE-PRICE	6 May 2010	Con	Thurrock	2010-
Julie ELLIOTT	6 May 2010	Lab	Sunderland Central	2010-
Jane ELLISON	6 May 2010	Con	Battersea	2010-
Yvonne FOVARGUE	6 May 2010	Lab	Makerfield	2010-
Lorraine FULLBROOK	6 May 2010	Con	South Ribble	2010-
Sheila GILMORE	6 May 2010	Lab	Edinburgh East	2010-
Pat GLASS	6 May 2010	Lab	North West Durham	2010-
Mrs Mary GLINDON	6 May 2010	Lab	North Tyneside	2010-
Mrs Helen GRANT	6 May 2010	Con	Maidstone and The Weald	2010-
Kate GREEN	6 May 2010	Lab	Stretford and Urmston	2010-
Lilian GREENWOOD	6 May 2010	Lab	Nottingham South	2010-
Rebecca HARRIS	6 May 2010	Con	Castle Point	2010-
Julie HILLING	6 May 2010	Lab	Bolton West	2010-
Margot JAMES	6 May 2010	Con	Stourbridge	2010-
Cathy JAMIESON	6 May 2010	Lab	Kilmarnock and Loudoun	2010-
Susan Elan JONES	6 May 2010	Lab	Clwyd South	2010-
Liz KENDALL	6 May 2010	Lab	Leicester West	2010-
Pauline LATHAM	6 May 2010	Con	Mid Derbyshire	2010-
Andrea LEADSOM	6 May 2010	Con	South Northamptonshire	2010-
Jessica LEE	6 May 2010	Con	Erewash	2010-
Charlotte LESLIE	6 May 2010	Con	Bristol North West	2010-
Naomi LONG	6 May 2010	Alliance	Belfast East	2010-
Caroline LUCAS	6 May 2010	Green	Brighton, Pavilion	2010-
Karen LUMLEY	6 May 2010	Con	Redditch	2010-
Mary MACLEOD	6 May 2010	Con	Brentford and Isleworth	2010-
Shabana MAHMOOD	6 May 2010	Lab	Birmingham, Ladywood	2010-
Alison MCGOVERN	6 May 2010	Lab	Wirral South	2010-
Catherine MCKINNELL	6 May 2010	Lab	Newcastle upon Tyne North	2010-
Rt Hon Esther MCVEY	6 May 2010	Con	Wirral West	2010-
Penny MORDAUNT	6 May 2010	Con	Portsmouth North	2010-
Rt Hon Nicky MORGAN	6 May 2010	Con	Loughborough	2010-
Anne Marie MORRIS	6 May 2010	Con	Newton Abbot	2010-
Tessa MUNT	6 May 2010	LD	Wells	2010-
Sheryll MURRAY	6 May 2010	Con	South East Cornwall	2010-
Lisa NANDY	6 May 2010	Lab	Wigan	2010-
Pamela NASH	6 May 2010	Lab	Airdrie and Shotts	2010-

Name	Date first elected	Party (a)	Constituency	Dates as MP (b)
Sarah NEWTON	6 May 2010	Con	Truro and Falmouth	2010-
Caroline NOKES	6 May 2010	Con	Romsey and Southampton North	2010-
Fiona O'DONNELL	6 May 2010	Lab	East Lothian	2010-
Chi ONWURAH	6 May 2010	Lab	Newcastle upon Tyne Central	2010-
Priti PATEL	6 May 2010	Con	Witham	2010-
Teresa PEARCE	6 May 2010	Lab	Erith and Thamesmead	2010-
Claire PERRY	6 May 2010	Con	Devizes	2010-
Bridget PHILLIPSON	6 May 2010	Lab	Houghton and Sunderland South	2010-
Yasmin QURESHI	6 May 2010	Lab	Bolton South East	2010-
Rachel REEVES	6 May 2010	Lab	Leeds West	2010-
Emma REYNOLDS	6 May 2010	Lab	Wolverhampton North East	2010-
Ms Margaret RITCHIE	6 May 2010	SDLP	South Down	2010-
Amber RUDD	6 May 2010	Con	Hastings and Rye	2010-
Laura SANDYS	6 May 2010	Con	South Thanet	2010-
Anna SOUBRY	6 May 2010	Con	Broxtowe	2010-
Rt Hon Elizabeth TRUSS	6 May 2010	Con	South West Norfolk	2010-
Valerie VAZ	6 May 2010	Lab	Walsall South	2010-
Heather WHEELER	6 May 2010	Con	South Derbyshire	2010-
Dr Eilidh WHITEFORD	6 May 2010	SNP	Banff and Buchan	2010-
Dr Sarah WOLLASTON	6 May 2010	Con	Totnes	2010-
Debbie ABRAHAMS	13 Jan 2011	Lab	Oldham East and Saddleworth	2011*-
Seema MALHOTRA	15 Dec 2011	Lab	Feltham and Heston	2011*-
Lucy POWELL	15 Nov 2012	Lab	Manchester Central	2012*-
Sarah CHAMPION	29 Nov 2012	Lab	Rotherham	2012*-
Emma LEWELL-BUCK	2 May 2013	Lab	South Shields	2013*-
Liz MCINNES	9 Oct 2014	Lab	Heywood and Middleton	2014*-

Notes: (a) Party when first elected. (b) Asterisk indicates by-election

Con -	Con	DU -	Democrat Unionist
Lab -	Lab	Lib -	Liberal
LD -	Liberal Democrat	SF -	Sinn Fein
SDP -	Social Democratic Party	SNP -	Scottish National Party
UU -	Ulster Unionist	SDLP -	Social Democratic Labour Party

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## Glossary of Terms

### *Alternative vote (AV)*

Under AV, voters rank candidates in order of preference by marking 1, 2, 3 and so on next to names of candidates on a ballot paper. A voter can rank as many or as few candidates as they like or just vote for one candidate.

Ballot papers are then counted by using the first preference votes (i.e. those with a number 1 marked next to their name). If a candidate receives more than 50 per cent of the first preference votes then they are elected. If no candidate reaches this 50 per cent threshold, then the candidate with the fewest first preference votes is eliminated. Their second preference votes are then reallocated to the remaining candidates. If after this stage one candidate has more votes than the other remaining candidates put together, that candidate is elected.

If not, the process of elimination and reallocation of preference votes is repeated until one candidate has more votes than the other remaining candidates put together, and is then elected.

### *By-election*

A by-election occurs when a seat in the House of Commons becomes vacant during the lifetime of a Parliament (ie between general elections), because the sitting MP dies, resigns (by applying for the Chiltern Hundreds or the Manor of Northstead), is elevated to the peerage or becomes ineligible to sit for some other reason.

### *Command Papers*

Command Papers are the collective name given to different types of papers prepared by the Government and presented to Parliament with the words “presented to Parliament by command of His/Her Majesty”. The following documents are all types of Command Paper: Treaties, some White papers, some Green Papers, some Government replies to Select Committee reports, reports of Royal Commissions, reports of some major committees of inquiry, annual reports and statistics of certain bodies (judicial, penal, immigration).

### *Divisions*

The House of Commons and the House of Lords register their votes on specific motions within debates or in committee by dividing. The results of the vote are referred to as divisions and are recorded in the Official Report (Hansard). In the House of Commons the Speaker calls for a vote by announcing ‘Clear the Lobbies’. Division bells ring throughout the building and the police direct anyone who is not

a Member to leave the vicinity of the lobbies. They also walk through the public rooms of the House shouting “division”. MPs have eight minutes to get to the division lobby before the doors are closed. The division list records how the Members have voted in the Aye and No Lobbies. Tellers count the votes of the division so that they can be printed in Hansard and they are generally available the following day. Party affiliations are not recorded in the division lists. In the House of Lords the process is the same except that the lobbies are called the Contents Lobby and the Not Contents Lobby and the announcement ‘Clear the Bar’ is called.

### *Hansard*

Hansard is the official report of the proceedings of Parliament. It is published daily when Parliament is sitting and records everything that is said and done in both the House of Commons and House of Lords, for which separate reports are issued. In the House of Commons the Hansard reporters sit in a gallery above the Speaker and take down every word that is said in the Chamber. In the Westminster Hall Chamber they sit next to the Chairman. The Hansard reporters in the House of Lords sit below the Bar of the House, facing the Lord Speaker. The name Hansard was officially adopted in 1943 after Luke Hansard (1752 - 1828) who was the printer of the House of Commons Journal from 1774. The first detailed official reports were published in 1803 in William Cobbett’s Political Register by the political journalist of the same name.

### *Hereditary Peers*

Hereditary Peers inherit their title and consists of five ranks: Duke, Marquess, Earl, Viscount and Baron. Peerages may become extinct or fall into abeyance, but so long as there is an heir the title will continue. The House of Lords Act 1999 removed the entitlement of most of the hereditary Peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords and of the 92 hereditary Peers who retain their seat in the Lords, 75 were elected by their fellow hereditary Peers.

### *Hung Parliament*

The term used to describe the situation where no single political party has a majority of MPs in the House of Commons. If this happens, two or more parties may decide that they have enough in common to form a coalition Government. Alternatively another general election may be held in the hope that it delivers a more decisive result.

*Law Lords*

Highly qualified, full-time judges, the Law Lords carried out the judicial work of the House of Lords until 30 July 2009. The final appeal hearings and judgments of the House of Lords took place on 30 July 2009. The judicial role of the House of Lords as the highest appeal court in the UK has ended. From 1 October 2009, the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom assumed jurisdiction on points of law for all civil law cases in the UK and all criminal cases in England and Wales and Northern Ireland. As of 30 July 2009, the 12 Lords of Appeal in Ordinary (the Law Lords) were appointed the first justices of the 12-member Supreme Court and were disqualified from sitting or voting in the House of Lords. When they retire from the Supreme Court they can return to the House of Lords as full Members but newly-appointed Justices of the Supreme Court will not have seats in the House of Lords.

*Life Peers*

The Life Peerages Act 1958 altered the composition of the House of Lords because it introduced more people from different professions, and more women. Before the Act, the House of Lords had been made up exclusively of hereditary Peers. A life Peer differs from a hereditary Peer in that the receiver cannot pass the title on to his or her children. Although life Peers are appointed by the Queen, it is the Prime Minister who nominates them. By convention the Leader of the Opposition and other party leaders can propose a certain number.

*Parliamentary Private Secretary*

A Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) is appointed by a minister to be his or her assistant. He or she is selected from backbench MPs as the 'eyes and ears' of the minister in the House of Commons. It is an unpaid job but it is useful for an MP to become a PPS to gain experience of working in government.

*Private Member's Bills*

Private Members' Bills are Public Bills introduced by MPs and Lords who are not government ministers. As with other Public Bills their purpose is to change the law as it applies to the general population. A minority of Private Members' Bills become law but, by creating publicity around an issue, they may affect legislation indirectly.

*Resolutions*

In the House of Lords resolutions are a type of motion that may be laid by a Member who wishes

the House to make a decision on a subject. This may mean that they have a vote on the subject. If a resolution is passed it constitutes the formal opinion or decision of the House on a matter. Resolutions begin with the words "To move to resolve" or "To move that this House" in order to incorporate statements of opinion or the demonstration of a point of view.

*Select Committees*

Select committees are committees set up by either House, usually for a whole Parliament, to look at particular subjects. In the House of Commons the select committees examine the expenditure, administration and policy of each of the main government departments and associated public bodies. Select committees have the power to take evidence and issue reports. In the House of Lords, select committees do not mirror government departments but cover broader issues such as science and technology, the economy, the constitution and the European Union.

*Single Transferable Vote (STV)*

Under STV, voters rank candidates in order of preference by marking 1, 2, 3 and so on next to the names of candidates on a ballot paper. A voter can rank as many or as few candidates as they like or just vote for one candidate. Each candidate needs a minimum number of votes to be elected. This number is calculated according to the number of seats and votes cast and is called a quota. The first preference votes for each candidate are added up and any candidate who has achieved this quota is elected. If a candidate has more votes than are needed to fill the quota, that candidate's surplus votes are transferred to the remaining candidates. Votes that would have gone to the winner instead go to the second preference listed on those ballot papers. If candidates do not meet the quota, the candidate with the fewest first preference votes is eliminated and the second preference votes are transferred to other candidates. These processes are repeated until all the seats are filled.

*Sinn Fein*

Sinn Fein means "ourselves alone" in the Irish language and campaigns for Irish Nationalism. The party was founded in 1905 by Arthur Griffith. A number of Sinn Fein MPs have been elected to the House of Commons but have not taken their seats in the British Parliament.

*Standing Committees*

In 2006 Standing Committees were renamed Public Bill Committees. They are committees set up by the House of Commons to consider the details of a particular Bill. All Bills, other than Money Bills, are automatically sent to a Public Bill Committee following their second reading unless they are committed to a committee of the Whole House. Public Bill Committees only last for the duration of the Bill concerned. The composition of the committees must match the size of the parties in the House. If a party has 60% of the seats in the Commons then the party will have 60% of the membership of the Public Bill Committee. Public Bill Committees can, like a Select Committee, take oral evidence as part of its scrutiny of the Bill

*Stranger's Gallery*

The former name of the Visitors' gallery.

*Ten Minute Rule Bill*

In the House of Commons, Bills introduced under the ten-minute rule are one of the ways in which backbench MPs (private Members) can introduce legislation. However, the process is used more as a means of making a point on the need to change the law on a particular subject as there is little parliamentary time available. They mainly provide the opportunity for MPs to test Parliament's opinion on a particular subject.

The ten minute rule allows a brief introductory speech of no more than ten minutes and one of the same length opposing the motion to be made in the House of Commons after question time on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when the House is likely to be full. Not all Ten Minute Rule Bills are printed.

*Viscount*

The British Peerage has five ranks within it. Viscount is the fourth of the ranks or grades. The title was first given to Viscount Beaumont in 1440.

*Ways and Means*

Ways and Means comes from a committee of the House of Commons which used to sit to consider the 'ways and means' or taxation needed to raise revenue for the Government.

The Chairman of Ways and Means is the principal Deputy Speaker. In addition he or she is always chairman of any Committee of the whole House, and has general oversight of matters connected with private bills. The Chairman of Ways and Means usually occupies the chair when budget statements are made or finance bills discussed.

*Whips*

Whips are MPs or Members of the Lords appointed by each party to maintain party discipline. Part of their role is to encourage members of their party to vote in the way that their party would like in important divisions. Whips also manage the pairing system and often act as tellers during divisions.





