

Order! Order!

The Official Journal of the Association of Former Members of Parliament



SUMMER 2019

Airey asked me:

Have you thought about who we should get to replace Ted Heath, because it's not working?

I said: No

He said: Would I support a woman?

And I said: Absolutely



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NEWS FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OUTREACH TRUST

by John Austin, Chair, Parliamentary Outreach Trust



John Austin and Nicholas Bennett with students from Louisiana State University

OUR PARTNERSHIP with Speakers for Schools is progressing well. Several Association Members have already signed up to work with us on this programme and recently members have participated in a number of visits and talks. **Bridget Prentice** (Labour MP Lewisham East 1992–2010) has visited Rainham School for Girls, Gillingham; **Alan Lee Williams** (Labour MP Hornchurch 1966–70 & 1974–79) has spoken at Haberdashers' Aske's Academy, Crayford; and **Victoria Borwick** (Conservative MP Kensington 2015–17) has given a talk at Prendergast Vale School in Lewisham.

We are currently renewing our links with higher education colleges as several of our contacts have moved on. We have had a number of positive responses and are hoping to arrange events with the School of Politics and International Studies at Leeds University and its Centre for Democratic Engagement. We are also pursuing possible visits to Exeter University and Brunel University, London. If any members have contacts at universities and colleges which might be useful please let us know.

The Trust has a continuing link with Louisiana State University and recently participated in its European programme for their students visiting London in June. **Nicholas Bennett** (Conservative MP, Pembrokeshire 1987–1992) and I gave a brief presentation on the current status of the Brexit process and its political impact. The lively discussion and a question and

answer session which followed ranged over such topics as climate change, UK/US relations, the visit of President Trump, globalisation, industrial decline and regeneration, health and social care and local democracy.

The Trust is hoping to develop similar links with other US academic institutions that have study programmes in the UK. We are in discussions with the United States Association of Former Members of Congress, which has an active Congress to Campus programme in America. We are looking to see what we can learn from this. The US Association is clearly well funded and twice a year sends a bipartisan group of former Members of Congress to the UK to meet with British universities throughout the country in partnership with the British Library. The next former Members team will be in London in September. Hopefully the Trust will be able to meet with them to discuss possible opportunities for future collaboration.

Sir Hugh Bayley (Labour MP York 1992–2015) is continuing his involvement in the Westminster Foundation for Democracy programme in Myanmar under our working partnership with WFD. Hugh wrote about the programme in the last edition of *Order! Order!* and brings us up to date with a further article this month (see page 11).

Members can keep track of the Trust's activities on our website at www.parlyoutreach.org.uk

IS IT SPEAKERS FOR SCHOOLS... ...OR IS IT A GEOGRAPHY LESSON?

By Bridget Prentice

I HAD NO REAL IDEA of what to expect when John Austin persuaded me to sign up for Speakers for Schools at the beginning of the year but on the basis that a) I had been a teacher for 15 years and b) speaking to school students in my constituency was one of my favourite tasks during my 18 years as Member of Parliament, I thought it can't be that difficult. And it isn't – apart from the discovery that my knowledge of the geography of England is sadly lacking!

I completed the form and very soon Christabel from S4S was in touch asking me to go to Rainham Girls School to speak to 90 year 7 girls. I had said that generally I'd like schools in and around the London area as I'd be using public transport, so that was fine. I emailed the day before explaining when I'd arrive and checking the directions from the station. Fortunately, Ms Mehaffey was on the ball and explained in gentle terms that it appeared I was intending to travel to Rainham in Essex, while they would be waiting for me at Rainham in Kent. Oops. So back to the trainline and a change of destination.

Once there, I was warmly welcomed and the girls were fantastic. I spoke for about 25 minutes about my life and how I ended up being an MP and a Minister. Then I opened it up to questions – the best part in my opinion. They had been attentive throughout and had lots of great questions of which I think the best has to be 'what exactly is the Labour Party?' Some waited behind at the end to chat further and I left feeling elated and inspired by these lovely intelligent young people. They sent fabulous feedback rating it 5/5 and were wonderful to be with. I also offered to answer any follow up questions by email if they arose.

More recently I've been asked to speak to another girls' school, this time in Wilmington. I agreed but thought 'hmm, Cheshire is a bit of a hike'. You know where this is going now. Thankfully S4S put me right that Wilmington was in Dartford not Cheshire before I booked train tickets. Just down the road really.

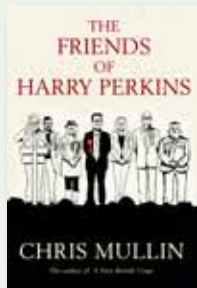
I'm looking forward to it and hope I get just as many engaging young people again. They really lift your spirits. I highly recommend giving the time to do this – and I've encouraged colleagues both from Parliament and other walks of life to join up too.

Meantime I might invest in an atlas!

Bridget Prentice was MP for Lewisham East, 1992–2010.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY**Tuesday 16th July**

We are delighted that **Chris Mullin** has agreed to be our guest speaker at our next All Member Meeting, taking place at 4.00pm on Tuesday the 16th July in House of Lords Committee Room 4.



Chris will be talking about his terrific new novel, *The Friends of Harry Perkins*, a human drama woven around a post-Brexit Britain, which sees a rise of English nationalism and a looming confrontation with China. It is a sequel to his enormously successful 1982 book *A Very British Coup*.

Please make every effort to attend what will be a fascinating and lively event to which partners, who are attending our Summer Reception, are also welcome.

If you have not already replied and wish to attend the Summer Reception please complete the form on page 15.

PARLIAMENTARY OUTREACH TRUST Notice of General Meeting & AGM 2019

Membership of the Parliamentary Outreach Trust is open to any member of the Association of Former Members of Parliament. The Trustees have called a special General Meeting of the Trust to consider amendments to the Constitution which, if approved, will take effect at the AGM which will follow immediately.

The special General Meeting will be held at 1.30pm Tuesday 16 July 2019 Committee Room 4, House of Lords.

The Annual General Meeting will follow immediately upon the conclusion of the special General Meeting.

Nominations for Chair, Secretary, Treasurer or Trustees/Committee Members or notice of resolution must be received by Tuesday 9 July. Nominations or resolutions should be sent to the Secretary keithbest@hotmail.com or by post to:

Keith Best, Secretary POT,
15 St Stephen's Terrace
London SW8 1DJ

Members of the Association wishing to attend the meetings who have not received the notice and agenda should contact the Secretary for full details.

JOHN CURTICE SPEAKS TO SCOTTISH BRANCH

By Gordon Banks



The Scottish Branch held its first ordinary Executive and All Members meetings on 31st of May.

Events were scheduled to take place in the Scotland Office in Edinburgh but due to torrential rain over the previous 3 to 4 days the venue was ruled as unsafe on the night of the 30th. Scotland Office staff once again were tremendous with Lauren Gelling and Heather Allan securing a new location for us in the Scottish Government building at Victoria Quay.

Decisions relating to exploring opening our bank account with The Bank of Scotland were taken and Chair Gordon Banks and Treasurer Dame A McGuire will report back. Opening our account will allow the transfer of funds from the Association to take place and enable us to take further funding decisions.

Due to no-one volunteering to take on the role of Secretary, it was agreed that Gordon would continue to carry out these duties until alternative arrangements were forthcoming. Anyone wishing to assist the Branch and take on this role should contact him.

Having our meetings in locations where additional benefits such as tours/visits was considered as a positive way to stimulate further interest. Gordon will report back at next meeting.

Reports from the UK Association, the European Association of Former Members of Parliament, the Parliamentary Outreach Trust and the Members Fund were given and we were delighted to welcome Eric Martlew, Vice Chair of the UK Association and our representative on the Members Fund to our event.

Speakers for future meetings were discussed and a list of potential

speakers is now being drawn up and any other suggestions should be passed to Gordon. It was agreed that Gordon and John Corrie would speak to John Austin regarding how the Outreach Trust's work could be developed in Scotland.

Our guest speaker was Professor Sir John Curtice who spoke on the subjects of the European elections and Brexit. After a really informative and thoughtful contribution outlining the difficulties facing any new Prime Minister aiming for Brexit on 31st October and the challenges to all other parties, Sir John was happy to take upwards of a dozen questions stimulated by his contribution.

We were honoured to have Sir John address our gathering and are delighted that he has agreed in principle to address a UK Association All Members meeting in the future.

I look forward to seeing all Scottish Branch members at our October meeting. The date and location will be notified in due course.

Many thanks to all Executive Members, Vice Chair, John Corrie, Treasurer Dame Anne McGuire, Sir Robert Smith, Gavin Strang and Ian Davidson.

I am confident the next year will see our Branch well and truly established and hopefully able to grow our membership numbers.

Gordon Banks, former MP for Ochil and South Perthshire 2005–15, is Secretary of the Scottish branch of the Association of Former Members of Parliament.



MEMORIES OF MARGARET

By John Corrie

My first parliamentary committee, back in 1974, was Rates Reform (Scotland), which had a lady chairman, a certain Margaret Thatcher.

It was quite a surprise to me that I was there at all, as a newly elected Conservative MP, in a year when we lost to Labour. The previous year in 1973 I was invited to put my name forward to be the candidate for Bute and North Ayrshire, but when I arrived for the selection conference, I discovered that I was up against Nicholas Fairbairn, James Douglas-Hamilton, and a Mr Ian Kirkwood QC. I assumed I was just a fill-in, with those other distinguished candidates. But the big local issue was a proposal by Hunters Steel to build a new steel works. The other candidates said that they had to do it, though it would mess up the coast line; but, I said: "This is rubbish. It'll never happen", and I was chosen as the candidate.

Afterwards, I said to my constituency chairman: "Let's get started." He said: "No, no, old boy – this is a safe Unionist seat. Pop along in February and give a speech at the AGM."

Ted Heath called the election before I had visited a single branch, or met a single constituent. As we went into the election, the press were saying that this was the year of the SNP, and that we would lose Bute and North Ayrshire. The count did not start until the following day, so we had already had all the bad news the night before, with seats being lost, but when the result was announced, my majority was actually several hundred votes up on that of the previous incumbent, Sir

Margaret was just wonderful with the kids... This was a side of Margaret Thatcher that the public did not see.

Fitzroy Maclean. It just shows how little a candidate is worth in elections.

I came down to Westminster and settled in – and then something else happened, not quite as I would have expected. At one of our first committee meetings, on 20 May, a badge messenger came in, and quite clearly had no idea who John Corrie was, so he handed a note to Margaret, who was the Chairperson. Margaret read out that "You'll all be pleased to hear that John Corrie's wife has just had a daughter."

Immediately after that meeting, she popped round and said: "Come on, John, let's go and have lunch, and tell me about the family", which we did, and we became close friends. She came to the constituency several months later, and was fantastically helpful and supportive. And she never forgot the date, 20 May: every year, she would ask after the family. In the photograph, you can see her crouching to talk to our son, David, who is now about to turn 40, and has just been made a partner at Galbraiths, a leading independent property consultancy. Next to him is Claire: Margaret announced her birth in the House.



Photo: Trinity Mirror/Alamy

Margaret Thatcher with Airey Neave

My other daughter, Tanya, is not in this historic photograph as she was standing with my wife. Margaret was just wonderful with the kids, and never forgot Claire's birthday. This was a side of Margaret Thatcher that the public did not see.

Later in 1975, Airey Neave, whom I had got to know very well because we were both farmers, invited me down to his constituency to address his National Farmers' Union. On the way back he said: "John, have you ever thought about who we should get to replace Ted Heath, because it's not working, and we've got to have a change." I said no, I hadn't thought about it, and he said would I support a woman? And I said 'absolutely'.

Shortly after that I was invited to a very small meeting in the Houses of Parliament – Keith Joseph, myself, Peter Morrison, Michael Morris, and a couple of others whom I can't remember. This was after Keith Joseph's leadership campaign had fallen apart. He was always terribly highly strung, perspiring profusely, and just an awfully nice person. I was very privileged to be in that little group. I think Margaret had obviously said something that led to my being invited. We discussed whether we should we put Margaret forward for the leadership. We actually canvassed the entire parliamentary party, each from within our region, and when we sat down, we were five votes difference between the six of us who had done the canvass. We were about nine votes short, which was a very pleasant surprise.

Nigel Lawson, who was a new MP, like me, obviously did not know I was part of Margaret's team. He asked me if I would like to meet Edward Heath. I thought 'why not?'. A group of us were brought together over lunch in Nigel's flat. I could hear Ted asking: "Who's that you've just brought in?"

Nigel said: "John Corrie, from Scotland, one of the new boys, probably doesn't know much but worth having a chat to."

So, about three minutes later, Ted came up to me and said: "John, I've been watching your progress in Westminster. You know, you're doing a tremendous job as a new member, and we're really proud, and if there's anything we can do to help you."

I had a very nice lunch, and I hadn't the heart to tell them that I was helping run the other campaign.

A month after Margaret was made Leader of the Opposition, she called me in and asked if I would like to join the group who were being nominated to the European Assembly. This was in the time when the parliament in Europe was not directly elected, and parliamentarians would double up. The Labour Party refused to join us at that point, but we had a group from the Commons, and the House of Lords. It was an Assembly of 168 people at that time. We met in committee rooms just above Brussels main railway station.

We went out there about three days a week, when required. So we'd be up in the morning to get the 7am flight to Brussels, we would be in committee all day there, and then we would get the

She used the word 'Thatcherism' a lot. There were many occasions when we had long discussions about it.

plane back in the evening to vote at 10 o'clock, because it was a very tight House of Commons. The big moment came in 1976 with the Bill to nationalise ship building, and the whips, having done their count, knew that on that night we were actually going to beat the government by one, and then we would move to an election. Unfortunately, one of the Labour members went through the Lobby, having been paired with one of ours. It was 300-300, and the Speaker had to find for the status quo, and we did not get the election until 1979.

I was made a whip in 1976, but there was the moment when we had the vote on Scottish devolution and myself, and Alick Buchanan-Smith and Malcolm Rifkind and one or two others felt that we couldn't vote against it, so I had to resign from being a whip after a very short time, and she sent me back to Europe.

After 1979, I had a boundary change, and Margaret called me in and said "I know you would like to go back to Europe to stand in the first European Elections, but please would you stay and fight the seat, because I think if you do, you will hold it." So I stayed. We held the new seat, Cunninghame North, quite comfortably, and I was in there till 1987.

I was then made PPS to George Younger. As a PPS, you can only speak on subjects that your Minister does not cover, and of course the Secretary of State for Scotland covers everything but foreign affairs and defence, and in my very marginal seat people were tired of speeches on foreign affairs and defence, so I resigned from being a PPS.

But I kept in touch with Margaret. She was up to the constituency on about four occasions, and until about 1986, before I got the night sleeper to Scotland, she would call me in behind the Speaker's Chair, pour a very large whisky and talk. She used the word 'Thatcherism' a lot. There were many occasions when we had long discussions about it.

She would ask me about Scotland. We were struggling there. I think part of the problem was the Fairgrieve report that dissolved the separate Scottish Unionist party, and made us the Scottish Conservative Party, attached to Westminster. That gave us a London flavour, which I do not think did us any good, especially with the rise of nationalism. We had about one council in Scotland that was actually held by the Conservatives. All the rest were held by other parties, so we had no base to work from.

In 1986, she suddenly banged the table one night and said 'John, you MPs from Scotland have not made Thatcherism work there.' And that was the last time she asked me back. I noticed at that time that she was quite shaky, and I think that was the onset of her problems later on. So it was rather a sad end, but that was Margaret. She had made up her mind.

But love her or hate her, she probably was the person who reduced the power of the left wing trade unions, and along with Gorbachev rebuilt our contacts with Russia.

All in all, the years with her were amazing, and I loved every minute of it.

John Corrie was Conservative MP for Bute and North Ayrshire 1974–83, and Cunninghame North 1983–87



“ELINOR GOODMAN, CHANNEL FOUR NEWS – SOMEWHERE BEGINNING WITH B”

by Elinor Goodman

UNTIL 1980 I was a serious political journalist. I worked for the Financial Times, and was obsessed with scoops and the minutiae of politics. Then I was offered the job of Channel 4’s first political correspondent.

I asked Adam Raphael, who had already made the transition from newspapers to television for advice. The difference, he said, was that newspaper research meant talking to MPs right up until your deadline, and ploughing through dozens of cuttings. Television meant reading one cutting, or – if you were doing a piece of investigative journalism – three. Most of the time, he warned, was spent struggling with the logistics of getting a piece on air.

But partly because I was dyslexic, and was constantly being rebuked for my spelling mistakes on the FT, I ignored his advice. Unfortunately my dyslexia meant I could never read auto cue as the typos had been corrected.

In those days there was no Millbank studio complex, churning hours of political television. The two way, where correspondents are interviewed down the line about what is going on without the need for pictures, barely existed. Instead, we had to gather what facts we could, pile into a taxi and go back to ITN’s studios behind Oxford Circus to edit the piece, and then sit in the studio breathlessly reading the links between snatches of pre-recorded interviews, or – worse still – matching clips of sound

from the Commons to close ups of MPs taken from a huge cartoon of the commons.

On big occasions, like the budget, Channel Four would hire what we inaccurately, unfairly called the “tart’s bedroom,” above the Red Lion, in Whitehall, and we would lie on the barmaid’s unmade bed editing the piece, and eating crisps. When the Lords started a trial of televising their proceedings in 1983, portacabins were set up in the gardens. Six years later, the Commons finally allowed cameras in, but for several years we continued having to rush back to the ITN office to edit.

As a result, I was often in the wrong place. When the news of the Chancellor Nigel Lawson’s resignation came in, I was editing at ITN. My instinct was to rush back to Westminster, but there were no taxis so I threw myself onto a bus, telling bemused passengers, like some crazed White Rabbit, that I was in a terrible hurry because the Chancellor had gone. The bus got stuck in traffic so I jumped out and ran down Whitehall, and panted into the lobby to gather a few crumbs of additional information. I then ran to Norman Shaw North where ITN had opened a studio in the basement. I managed to squeeze a tiny scoop into my piece, and was quite pleased with myself. The next day, though, the editor of Channel Four news complained my hair had been untidy...

Even then television could be

...we would lie on the barmaid’s unmade bed editing the piece, and eating crisps

immensely satisfying. There is nothing like telling a story with good pictures. But I was very slow at learning the art of doing that, and in the early days of televising parliament, the political parties hadn’t yet learned how to manipulate the broadcasters by providing the right images. Because I am slightly dyslexic, I found recording pieces to camera to put on the end of my packages very difficult. On one occasion, at the end of the party conference season where we had gone from Brighton to Bournemouth to Blackpool, I finally got to the end of a piece to camera without fluffing only to sign off “Elinor Goodman, Channel Four news, somewhere beginning with B.”

I never got any better at dubbing without stumbling and always went to the very edge of my deadline, which is far less flexible in television than print. I was often the lead story and Jon Snow, the presenter, would have to read the intro very s-l-o-w-l-y. My producers would despair, but they all went on to have great careers, including my successor Gary Gibbon who began losing his hair working with me.

Elinor Goodman was political correspondent for Channel Four News 1982–88, and Political Editor 1988–2005

As it were

By Andy McSmith

A Johnson Tale

IT SEEMS THAT ALMOST EVERYBODY has a **Boris Johnson** story to tell. Mine dates from 4 October 2000, when the Shadow Home Secretary, **Ann Widdecombe**, announced that the next Tory government would introduce on-the-spot fines for anyone caught possessing cannabis. This did not go down well with seven of her shadow cabinet colleagues, the Stoned Seven, who owned up to indulging in the weed in their student days.

It also caused a stir at the *Daily Telegraph*, which does not often attack politicians for being too reactionary, but did on this occasion.

That evening, I was among a group of Telegraph journalists who dined with various eminent Tories, including **Nicholas Soames**, **Iain Duncan Smith**, **Owen Paterson**, plus **David Trimble**. Before food was served, the Editor, **Charles Moore** asked if anyone would like an aperitif.

Boris J replied, in a loud voice: "Got any spliffs, Charles?"

Room with a View

IF YOU WANT a stunning view of central London, one place to be at the top of City Hall, where the Association held its May reception. In the photo you can see (from left to right) **Gareth Bacon**, Leader of the Tory group on the London Assembly, and **Linda Perham**, **Victoria Borwick** and **David Lepper**, former MPs respectively for Ilford North, Kensington and Brighton Pavilion – and in the background, Tower Bridge.



A Thousand Coat Hangers

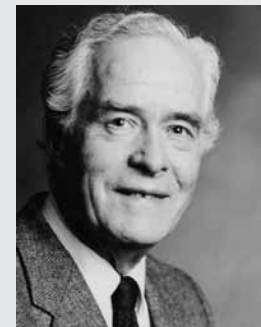
SOCIAL MEDIA AND BREXIT are blamed for the rise of nastiness in politics, with public figures being hounded and threatened in their homes by people who do not like what they say. Twitter and the current state of politics may have exacerbated this phenomenon, but it is not new. When **John Corrie** topped the ballot for private members' bills in 1979, he was asked to take pressure off the government by putting forward something controversial. He certainly did that. The Corrie Bill's main proposal was to lower the time limit for an abortion from 28 to 20 weeks – though Corrie later said he was prepared to settle for 24 weeks, where it now stands.

The opposition was ferocious, of course. The bill was seen as a frontal attack on a women's right to choose. There were suspicions that it was just a first step by those who wanted abortion banned outright. Demonstrators marched down Whitehall.

The upside, as John Corrie recalls it now, was how much it taught him about how Parliament works, and about the helpfulness of staff who are there to advise on procedure and the law. But there was a serious down side. "We had to change our home numbers numerous times," he told me. "I got dreadful, dreadful messages in Westminster that things would be done to my family. I think we had about a thousand coat hangers sent to Parliament, and we had faeces put through our letter box in our house in Scotland. It was horrendous for family life – but we ploughed on."

Against all odds, John Corrie came top in the ballot for private member's bills not once but twice. When it happened again, in 1983, he decided he had all the excitement he needed first time around, so he opted to put through a Disease of Fish bill.

Born half way through the Great War



RON ATKINS has set a new record. Born on 13 June 1916, he is the first British ex-MP to reach the age of 103. He was Labour MP

from 1974 to 1979 for Preston North, which he lost by just 29 votes to the confusingly similarly named, Robert Atkins. Previously, the longest lived ex-MP was a Liberal, Theodore Taylor, who died in 1952, aged 102 years and 67 days.

The Man who Tried too Hard

THE DEATH IN MAY of **Lord Moore of Lower Marsh**, a bartender's son who rose so high that he was once tipped to be Margaret Thatcher's successor, raises the old unanswered question: what made him so unpopular? **Alan Clark** posed it, in a diary entry dated 19 January 1988: "Why is everyone so beastly? John was literally golden... he has gold-kiss curls like a baby food ad. He is athletic, and 'trains'..." One rival minister in particular, **John Major**, whom Clark described as "outwardly the mildest of men" had reputedly sworn to 'get' the luckless Moore.

Michael Portillo told me at the time that John Moore was the sort who would begin a conversation by telling a colleague that he was up at six o'clock, working out, and at his desk soon afterwards. "If you were also up at six, you would wonder why you were talking about his day, and not yours – and you weren't, he made you feel guilty," Portillo said.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

We asked a selection of ex-colleagues to say what they have been doing since they stood down or lost their seats

GERRY SUTCLIFFE Bradford South 1994–2015



The only thing I miss is the people on all sides of the political spectrum and the many happy memories shared

MAY 2015 WAS THE RIGHT TIME for me to stand down, after 14 years as a councillor in Bradford, 14 years as a full time trades union officer in the printing industry, and a month short of 21 years in Parliament in opposition and in government, in the whips office and as a minister, thoroughly enjoying the good and the bad.

Having worked to make sure my successor Judith Cummins got elected –

which she did – it was time to take stock. The first few months felt a bit strange, adjusting to regular family life and having free time to do whatever I wanted. My grandchildren have a ready-made taxi service. I'm now part of a regular walking club with pals I have known since the age of 11.

As months went by that free time started to evaporate – but I could pick and choose to do what interested me!

Those that know me well know my love of all things sporty. I have been involved in conferences and debates in the UK and abroad to try to make sure that sports integrity is maintained and that betting and gambling policy is fair and transparent.

I own a share in a racehorse, and being Chairman of the board of trustees of the Northern Racing College in Doncaster enables me to go horse racing regularly. Our college, which trains people for the horse racing industry, has a tremendous success rate placing students into full time employment.

I am also heavily involved in disability sport as a patron of the Bradford Bumbles mixed ability rugby union club. I've seen the impact that sport can have on raising awareness and giving self-confidence not only to participants but to all involved. It was a real pleasure to be at the National Special Olympics games in Sheffield. Our mixed ability rugby club has just held a tenth anniversary dinner to celebrate being the first team of its type in the country.

My only involvement in politics has been to advance the case for Yorkshire devolution. With a population bigger than Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, we have cross party political agreement, and supported from industry, trades unions and churches for One Yorkshire.

Being able to step down at your own time of choosing was an important step. The only thing I miss is the people on all sides of the political spectrum and the many happy memories shared.

JACQUI LAIT Hastings & Rye 1992–1997, Beckenham 1997–2010



Retirement is a great time to catch up on all those things you give up for the political life

IS IT REALLY nine years since I stood down? Amazing! I went from one 24/7 job in Westminster to a 24/7 job as project manager building our own through life home – quite a way to ease down from public life!

I sub-contracted all the work and hired only local craftsmen. We found wonderful young architects who are still friends. We bought the site over Christmas 2010, planning permission in September 2011 and broke ground in May 2012. We moved in 27 months later.

I became chairman of Rye Academy Trust and opened the Rye Studio School for the Creative Industries: sadly now closed because the target student quota wasn't met. But our students had 100% passes in their A levels and went to their chosen academic institution. Now they are graduating and we attended the graduate show of the top student at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris who comes from a poor Rye family. His examiners told him it was the most exciting exhibition at the School in decades! What could have been achieved with greater understanding of vocational education and what motivates the non-academic is a matter for conjecture but also for great sadness at the closure.

I am currently completing my seventh year as a director of a local sheltered housing association which is full of challenges as small charities grapple with modern management requirements and the charitable impulse.

Last year, I joined the Appeal Board for a Discovery Centre at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve to raise £4.4m. We have broken ground already and are still fundraising. Anyone who cares about one of the south-east's best nature reserves for birds, rare coastal plants and even bugs, check out Sussex Wildlife Trust.

Retirement is a great time to catch up on all those things you give up for the political life so we are going to concerts, the theatre and cinema and enjoying our friends.

We are also moving to Malta as we find that the body creaks caused by the advancing years are eased by warm weather. However, we do need to sell our through life and much loved house first.

CLAIRE WARD Watford 1997–2010



...being Justice Minister and a senior whip were often hard for others to translate into their world

WHEN THE VOTERS of Watford brought an end to 13 years as an MP, I knew I didn't wish to return to my previous career as a solicitor but I was not sure what I wanted to do.

The experience gained from running a small business unit (my office), employing staff, being Justice Minister and a senior whip were often hard for others to translate into their world.

I soon realised that if I wanted to have the flexibility

of seeing my young children (in 2010 – 2 and 4 years old) then I needed a portfolio career. With the support of Watford company, I became the part time chief executive of a small trade association (IPF) supporting independent community pharmacists. From 2011 to 2015 I enjoyed the engagement with those members and understanding their issues. In 2015 the organisation merged with another trade association and I was appointed as Non Executive Chair of Pharmacy Voice – the umbrella trade body representing all community pharmacy associations.

I had already moved in 2012 to Nottinghamshire and was appointed in 2013 to be a Non Executive Director of Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust, a position I still hold and now as Vice Chair.

I served as Chair of Pharmacy Voice until April 2017 when it was wound up as the sector moved to a different model. By then I was firmly established as a figure in community pharmacy, chairing conferences and speaking at events. So I moved to the other side of the table and joined the Pharmacists Defence Association – the trade union for pharmacists and locums. For the last 2 years, I have provided public affairs advice and more in a Director capacity on a part time basis. I have greatly enjoyed championing the employees.

With time to fill in my portfolio, I became Chief Executive of the Institute for Collaborative Working in January 2019. Originally set up in 1990 by the DTI and CBI it is a non-profit, self financing membership body in the private and public sector to promote collaboration. It commissions research, provides training, development and networking – many of the members are large defence, construction and infrastructure companies. Collaboration helps to build better business relationships.

So pharmacy, NED, collaboration, a school governor and University of Hertfordshire governor are keeping me busy, with little time for party politics. Juggling different interests and responsibilities, combined with an ability to be fairly flexible with my time fits a very similar model to being an MP. Only now I don't have to run when the bell rings!

MARK HUNTER Cheadle 2005–2015



After ten good years in Parliament, I still loved the debate and camaraderie of politics

MY LIFE IN POLITICS began much earlier than 2005 when I was elected to Parliament and, after being forcibly retired by public demand in the great coalition wipe-out of 2015, I still felt the drive to represent my community.

Like many MPs, I started out in local politics. After initially becoming a councillor at just 22 (literally cutting and pasting my own leaflets) in 1989 in Tameside, Greater Manchester, in 1996 I was elected to neighbouring Stockport MBC. By 1999, the Lib Dems had overall control (just!) and, in 2002, I became the first full-time Council Leader – a job I was still enjoying hugely three years later, when friend and Cheadle MP Patsy Calton sadly passed away and I had the opportunity to stand in the by-election.

After ten good years in Parliament, I still loved the debate and camaraderie of politics. Therefore in 2016 I was delighted to be re-elected to Stockport Council and am now leader of our group again.

Although I remained close to local councillors in my constituency during my time as an MP, for me, and I am sure others from across the House who have been re-elected, it has been eye opening to take on the challenges of today's local government, particularly the budget constraints.

It is also still hugely rewarding. With my colleagues, I am pleased to be bringing through the next generation of local, and hopefully national, politicians. While not quite cutting and pasting their own leaflets, they are still certainly delivering them and show tireless commitment to engaging (despite tough Brexit doorstep heckling) and improving their communities. This year's new councillors include my son Rob who, with the odd bit of advice from Dad, worked hard to secure the first Lib Dem seats in 12 years on his local council, Bromsgrove.

As most of us would admit – and my wife would attest (we managed to fit in getting married in 2017) – life in politics leaves little free time. But, on losing my seat in 2015, I did identify one silver-lining. Over the past four years, the luxury of free Saturday afternoons and week nights at home have enabled me to embrace another life-long passion. If you look hard enough during Match of the Day, you might just spot me enjoying the camaraderie of 50,000 Manchester City fans for yet another record home win.

There is life after Westminster!



EDWARD TIMPSON

Crewe and Nantwich 2008–2017



I miss Westminster and would like to return one day (although most former colleagues tell me now is a great time not to be there!)

LIKE ALL GOOD ACTORS MY arrival onto and departure from the political stage was pretty dramatic. A momentum shifting by-election win in Crewe & Nantwich in 2008, the first for the Conservatives over Labour for 30 years, was book ended by a re-re-count loss by just 48 votes 9 years and 3 elections later. My time in between was characterised by a dream role in government as Children's Minister for five years, together with a constant, exhausting, exhilarating and ultimately unsustainable battle to hold a super marginal seat. Having poured my heart and soul into my constituency and having experienced and accomplished more than I ever imagined down in Westminster, I somewhat abruptly found myself aged 43 back where I started.

Initially the greatest sensation was one of relief. Since the 2015 election the atmosphere in and around politics had shifted markedly and like many MPs (and their staff) I was on the receiving end of a fairly continuous stream of vile and often intimidating behaviour, culminating with 'protestors' climbing onto my roof at home and forcing me, my wife and children to leave for three days during the last election campaign. It took close to a year of decompressing before I began to make decisions about the future.

I miss Westminster and would like to return one day (although most former colleagues tell me now is a great time not to be there!), but what I realised I missed most was working with and for vulnerable children which has been the golden thread through much of my life.

Growing up in a family who fostered had a profound impact on me, leading to a career as a family law barrister and then as Children's Minister. It seemed an obvious next step to find opportunities that would help reignite that passion. To that end I'm now chairing the new National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and Cafcass (the Child and Family Court Advisory and Support Service), both key bodies in helping improve outcomes for vulnerable children. I'm also on the Children's Commissioner's advisory board and recently published the Timpson Review of School Exclusion for the Secretary of State for Education. I also believe it's important to stretch and test yourself outside your comfort zone, something I've been able to do through my role on the Board of Trade.

The best part of the last few years however has been the chance to be a full time father to my four children and soak up those precious moments together. I've also struck lucky with being able to go and watch more Manchester City games than ever before at a time when they're actually winning something! So no regrets and plenty to look forward to – whatever stage that may be on.

FLICK DRUMMOND

Portsmouth South 2015–2017



It was devastating as it had taken me nearly 11 years to get to Parliament in the first place

I KNEW AS SOON as the Prime Minister announced the 2017 election I would be in trouble as I represented the university city of Portsmouth and nearly all the students live in Portsmouth South. In 2010, students poured out to vote for the Lib Dems who offered them free tuition fees, in 2015 they did not turn out to vote as a group so I was elected. Sadly, the Labour party offered free tuition fees and the number of votes Labour got was almost exactly the same as the Lib Dems got in 2010. My vote went up but I needed more than two years to consolidate my position. It was devastating as it had taken me nearly 11 years to get to Parliament in the first place. But we all know the risks of a political life.

After a brief stint as the Hampshire deputy police and crime commissioner, I applied for three public appointment jobs and managed to get onto two boards, I am Chair of the SE regions for the Veterans Advisory and Pension Committee and on the new Royal Charter board of the National Citizens Service, both unpaid but very interesting as I can use some political skills and influence to help the Boards develop.

In 2018 I was elected as the voluntary director of the Conservative Policy Forum, an organisation that seeks to engage members and non-members to contribute to Conservative policy – after our last manifesto this is an essential role if we are to reflect public opinion and that of Conservative members. It was the No. 2 recommendation on Eric Pickles' review of the 2017 election so it is an interesting role to have. We have been working closely with the No. 10 policy unit who I am assured is collating all our papers and thoughts to feed into the next manifesto.

I decided in 2018 not to stand in Portsmouth South again. It was a tough decision after 11 years of campaigning in the city but I think it is the right one and I am now looking to apply for the role of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police and Crime Commissioner that has recently become vacant. I absolutely loved being a Member of Parliament and will definitely be applying for a more secure seat if I don't get selected as the PCC.



Local agriculture produce on sale at Bagan market.

THE WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRACY IN MYANMAR

In the spring edition of *Order! Order!* Sir Hugh Bayley set out why he believes it is worthwhile for British parliamentarians to visit their opposite numbers in Myanmar, despite that country's dreadful record on human rights. Here he gives an account of what they do.

MYANMAR'S NERVOUS NEW PARLIAMENT requires its committees to seek the Speaker's approval before inviting stakeholders to meet them. Most representations by committees to Ministers need to be sent in draft to the Speaker for him to sign and forward, which slows things down. There are similar problem when it comes to legislation. Each subject committee is tasked by the plenary to consider a number of Bills. They submit comments to a Bill committee, which in turn puts proposals to the Attorney General for comment before further consideration. Surprise, surprise there is a log-jam at the Attorney's office.

The committees have staff, but their administrative and research skills, after the country's years of isolation, are generally poor. The House of Commons seconds a clerk, full-time, to train the staff, who says their educational attainment is often similar to a UK school student starting GCSE's. They need to be trained how to use the internet, how to discriminate between trustworthy and untrustworthy sites, how to weigh competing points of view and how to write an objective brief. A very senior Commons Clerk, Liam Laurence-Smyth, is helping the Parliament to re-write its procedures for legislative scrutiny.

The Myanmar constitution stipulates that the military will appoint a quarter of the members of Parliament. They attend in uniform, and vote as instructed by their commanders. Unlike civilian MPs they do not have incumbency, and are replaced frequently by their Chiefs of Staff – to make sure that they do not get too close to elected members, or drawn into supporting reform. And there is no Parliamentary oversight of the armed forces.

Their question time is a cross-between our oral questions and an adjournment debate. The MP has two or three minutes to put their point, and the Minister has a similar time to reply. Most members raise constituency issues, calling for the Transport Minister, say, to build a new road or repair a bridge. They are able to illustrate the problem with pictures – a bridge swept away by a flood, a map of the forty mile road diversion – on a huge screen in the plenary chamber. Is it time for the Commons to experiment in Westminster Hall? We visit Myanmar every three months, and keep in touch in between by email and Skype. I have visited twice so far, to work with the health and agriculture committees.

The lower house, or Pyithu, health committee is examining problems with the distribution of antibiotics, particularly to rural clinics. The patchy supply results in people buying illegally imported antibiotics from China and Thailand, and since they are not prescribed by a doctor they often fail to

The committees have staff, but their administrative and research skills, after the country's years of isolation, are generally poor

take a full course, which creates anti-microbial resistance.

The committee took some time narrowing down their topic to manageable proportions. They will begin with a seminar to which they will invite experts, health workers and citizen stakeholders, which the Westminster Foundation for Democracy will manage. Afterwards the committee will decide either to make immediate proposals to the Minister, or continue their study in a more formal sense, more like a UK select committee.

Cancer rates are increasing fast in Myanmar, which prompted the Amyotha, or Upper House, Health Committee to examine the problem. Lung and oral cancers are the most common cancers for men, caused by smoking and betel chewing, and breast and cervical cancers for women. Late diagnosis and the scarcity of high tech treatments like chemo- and radiotherapy mean that most cancers are fatal, so a practical and affordable response may be to persuade the government to invest more in health promotion about smoking, diet and exercise, and breast and cervical cancer screening for women. WFD is helping the committee to organise a round table for the committee, Ministers and health department officials to meet the Myanmar Oncology Society, carers and patients' groups to discuss what to do.

One of the Education Committees which Neil Carmichael is mentoring is in the middle of a select committee-style inquiry into the primary education syllabus. The upper House Agriculture Committee which, with capacity-building help from UNDP and WFD, is doing an inquiry into pesticides and other agricultural chemicals.

I don't think a long inquiry is always necessary. The important thing is to build the committees' confidence and their understanding that Parliamentarians have the right, and responsibility, to question government policy, and make proposals for change. So I have been looking for simpler, light touch, ways to scrutinise the government.

For example, the Amyotha Agriculture Committee came to the conclusion that Myanmar needs more research and education about fisheries and marine conservation, and proposed, in a motion to the plenary, the creation of a fisheries university. The government responded by establishing, and funding, a fisheries department at Yangon University, and the committee were invited to welcome the first intake of students.

ONCE AN MP NOW A COUNCILLOR

by Nicholas Bennett

Dozens of former colleagues who lost or quit their seats have started new political careers as police and crime commissioners, members of the Scottish Parliament, assembly members in Wales or Northern Ireland, or on their local councils.

In former times, the Commons was seen as the natural end to a political career. Afterwards – the House of Lords, retirement, or obscurity. But we are going through an age of greater electoral volatility, with younger MPs falling to a big swing in their parties, as in 1999, 2010, or in Scotland in 2015. For a very large number, ejection from Westminster is not the end of a political career, but the opportunity to start again at another level.

According to the House of Commons Library in January 2019 there were 804 living former MPs who are not members of the House of Lords. Their list is not quite correct. It includes a number of colleagues who had died, one as long ago as 2015, and another who is not on the list but very much alive! Analysing the amended list shows that out of a total of 799 former MPs, no fewer than 126 have been subsequently elected to other public offices.

In Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland the devolved assemblies and parliament are a natural home for those who have advocated their establishment. Whilst only one Conservative has become an MSP – and that as a Liberal Democrat – seven former Labour MPs have either deliberately transferred to Edinburgh or have done so after defeat. Nine SNP MPs have become MSPs after their Westminster service.

The picture in Northern Ireland is more obscure as many of the Westminster MPs had a dual mandate in the Assembly. The Welsh Assembly has of course been the natural home for Plaid Cymru. At various times four of their former Westminster MPs have been elected to the Assembly. When the Assembly was created various senior Labour MPs transferred from Westminster to Cardiff. **Ron Davies**, **Alun Michael** and **Rhodri Morgan** were in turn Labour Leaders. In all five ex MPs have sat at Cardiff. The only two former Conservative MPs, **Neil Hamilton** and **Mark Reckless** did so as UKIP members.

In England the creation of elected Mayors with powerful executive responsibilities have attracted MPs. In one case the Mayor (Sheffield City Region) has retained his membership of the House whilst the Mayors of London, Greater Manchester, Liverpool and Leicester have decided the running of a large city is not compatible with being an MP, although Boris



Johnson, having given an assurance he wouldn't do both jobs did so in his last year in office in London.

After 'double hatting' as an MEP and MP was outlawed in 2009 for many years the route was from Europe to Westminster.

James Scott-Hopkins chose to give up his Westminster seat of West Derbyshire to concentrate on being an MEP, but his was an exception to a general rule.

Les Huckfield was elected an MEP in 1984 having lost his seat at Nuneaton the previous year. Since 1997 ten former Conservative MPs have gone to Brussels, one of them as a Brexit MEP. Surprisingly, only three former Labour MPs have gone

in that direction equalling the number of Lib Dems who have gone on to be MEPs. One UUP member in Northern Ireland made the transition and in 2019 a former Alliance MP has been elected to the European Parliament.

Tony Lloyd (Lab Stretford 1983–97 and Manchester Central 1997–2012) having been Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and interim Mayor for Greater Manchester has returned to the Commons as MP for Rochdale. Six other members are or have been PCCs including **Sir Graham Bright**, this Association's former Chairman.

Dame Vera Baird QC (Redcar Lab 2001–10) is relinquishing her role as PCC for Northumbria to become Victims Commissioner for England and Wales. **Paddy Tipping** (Lab Sherwood 1992–2010) retired from the House because of serious ill health in his family. A year afterwards the issue was resolved. "It's been something of a shock attending Select Committees to answer rather than ask questions!" he said.

Richard Tracey (Con Surbiton 1983–97) and **Andrew Dismore** (Lab Hendon 1997–2010) have both been members of the London Assembly. Richard Tracey says: "There was quite a lot of logic in my standing for the City Hall seat as a former MP and minister. I never received any sarcastic remarks or criticism from colleagues or opposition. Quite the opposite actually, as I always received respect as a former MP with some useful knowledge and experience to pass on. In fact when I retired in 2016, with several colleagues, Labour members particularly were kind enough to compliment us on what a strong Conservative Group performance they had seen from 2008–16."

Andrew Dismore says: “Once I had worked Boris Johnson out, it was not hard to get under his skin at Mayor’s Questions and show him for what he is. And once a politician always a politician – it’s in the DNA. Colleagues on the Assembly were pleased to have me, opponents were not so sure, especially as I had beaten a long standing member from the Conservative group!”

By far the greatest number of colleagues who have sought public office have done so as County or District Councillors and in London, borough councillors. Twenty one Conservatives, twenty seven Labour members and seven Liberal Democrats have taken this route.

Ivan Henderson (Lab Harwich 1997–2005) is a triple councillor for Town, District and County in part of his former seat. He becomes Mayor in 2020 on the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower sailing, captained by Harwich resident Christopher Jones. **Mark Hunter** (LD Cheadle 2005–15) is once again a Stockport councillor representing part of his former constituency and is Leader of the 26 LD Group in the NOC council. “I was Leader of the Council in 2003–05 – a position I hope to return to in 2020!” Another Association member **Tony Wright** (Lab Great Yarmouth 1997–2010) is back on Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

A Conservative MP who went on to represent part of his former constituency is **John Watson** (Con Skipton 1979–83 and Skipton and Ripon 1983–87). In John’s case having stood down as an MP and returned to business, there was an eighteen year gap before he re-entered public office in 2005 as a North Yorkshire county councillor for Boroughbridge. He said: “The fact that I’d once been their MP did not seem to be known by most Boroughbridge residents – though one farmer thanked me for getting milk quotas introduced and another thanked me for saving the Settle to Carlisle railway,” he said.

Bill Olner (Lab Nuneaton 1992–2010) serves on Warwickshire County Council representing part of his former constituency. “My colleagues and opponents reaction was that they were glad to see me back”.

Jim Sheridan (Lab Renfrewshire West 2001–05 and Paisley and Renfrewshire North 2005–15) is another former member who felt he had more to offer. “Having spent most of my adult life representing people, be it at the workplace as a trade union rep. or constituents in the community dealing with and articulating their views in parliament, and having served as a local councillor prior to entering parliament I had a fair idea of what was required of me. Local concerns are for many more important and relevant to their lives than national and international matters.”

Most former MPs reported that they were welcomed back as local councillors however one member said “Although acknowledged as the best speaker in the council and with a wealth of experience both professionally and in politics I was never invited to serve in the cabinet and I felt that I was being put in my place. One opposition member who tried to stir it by referring to me as a ‘has been’ received a retort from me that it was better to be a ‘has been’ than a ‘never was’.”

Jim Sheridan recalls; “On my return to local politics there were as expected the usual jibes from opposition members, such as ‘yesterday’s’ man, ‘reject’ etc. However I was warmly welcomed back by fellow colleagues old and new who valued my experience, advice and commitment.”

Local concerns are for many more important and relevant to their lives than national and international matters

Frank White (Lab Bury & Radcliffe 1974–83) after contesting Bolton NE in 1987 and short listing for various seats in the North West became a member of Bolton Metropolitan Council and served with one four year gap continuously from 1986 until 2012 and was Mayor in 2005–06. At the time of his retirement from the Magistrates Bench in 2009 after 41 years service he was the longest serving JP in England.

David Ward (LD Bradford East 2010–15) represents Bolton and Undercliffe on Bradford City Council. John Leech (LD Manchester Withington 2005–15) broke the Labour 100% control of Manchester City Council and is the Leader of the three strong opposition on the Council. Gordon Birtwhistle (LD Burnley 2010–15) remained a local councillor throughout his parliamentary service and is still a member of the council.

Apart from the author, other former Conservative members who are elected members on London Boroughs include **John Marshall** (Con Hendon South 1987–92 Finchley 1992–97). John remarked, “I had previously served on Aberdeen and Ealing Councils so the move to stand for Barnet Council, was in some ways natural. The electorate seemed happy. I secured a very large personal vote in 1998. I was Mayor in 2008/09 and enjoyed a number of other roles. The reaction from colleagues was fine although some were unhappy when I challenged successfully for the chairmanship of the group. Some Labour members tried to generate bad blood between the leader and me. They failed.”

Adrian Flook (Con Taunton 2001–05) was elected to Wandsworth Council in 2018. **Iain Coleman** (Lab Hammersmith and Fulham 1997–2005) a former Leader of the Council, returned to being a councillor on the authority in 2010 but has now retired. **Keith Darvill** (Lab Upminster 1997–2001) is Leader of the Labour Group on Havering Council.

Finally three former members have made the transition to elected office in other countries. **Gerry Adams** (SF Belfast West 1997–2011) is a TD in the Irish Parliament representing Louth. **Mohammad Sarwar** (Lab Glasgow Govan 1997–2005, Glasgow Central 2005–10) is Governor of Punjab and an elected member of the Pakistan Senate.

Dr John Marek (Lab Wrexham 1983–2001) was also a member of the Welsh Assembly from 1999–2007 and now lives in the Czech Republic where he stood for the local council “but only to fill up the form with candidates”. Subsequently he was nominated to be a member of the audit committee of Klimkovic Town Council, a small authority with around three to five thousand electors but the powers not far short of an English District Council.

Nicholas Bennett JP was MP for Pembroke 1987–92, and is the current Mayor of the London Borough of Bromley. He is Membership Secretary of the Association of Former MPs.

A GOOD READ



TERRORISM BEGINS IN THE HOME

Vera Baird

Joan Smith, *Home Grown: How Domestic Violence turns men into terrorists.*

Published by riverrun

JOAN SMITH HAS written a powerful book, immensely well researched. It makes the point that many known terrorist killers first use violence at home against a female partner. Take more notice of domestic abuse, her message goes, you

may see mass murderers in the making. And be better able to stop them in their tracks.

Novelist, feminist columnist and the Chair of the London Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls Board, Joan Smith works daily with people deeply committed to ending domestic violence. They will suffer frustration, as all of us in that field do, at the continued marginalising, by the law enforcement and criminal justice agencies, of what is now more frequently called domestic abuse in recognition of the impact of sexual, psychological and emotional abuse as well as beatings.

Recently I wrote with women's organisations to the Attorney General to ask that the crime of coercive control should be put into the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme. This would allow anyone to ask the AG to challenge wrongly lenient sentences for domestic abuse. Currently, company fraud is subject to the scheme but years of virtual enslaving a partner through coercive control is not.

Recent court observations by the North of England Soroptimists saw sentencing guidelines being disregarded and men being fined or given community penalties for behaviour which outside the home would result in imprisonment.

Although improvements have been made especially in police practices, specialist domestic abuse courts are closing. Expertise is being lost from the magistracy as police and CPS cuts prevent their input into training. Women's Aid say that 60% of referrals for refuge accommodation had to be declined in 2017 because of lack of space – each one of those means a victim impeded from escaping abuse.

Of course the issue is international and the author has investigated almost every terrorist atrocity in recent memory. They include the appalling murderous attacks carried out by Islamist and linked organisations, killings by white supremacists and mass shootings in the US which have no apparent ideological motive. She finds that many of these ultimate perpetrators of death are already criminals. They victimise anyone who crosses their paths, bullying and fighting, taking advantage, abusing for profit or out of temper.

In the UK only 15% of victims ever seek police help and they typically suffer up to 35 incidents before doing so

And almost everyone she has investigated has a background of domestic violence and abuse.

She cites the extensive report into the three UK attacks in 2017, at Westminster Bridge, the Manchester Arena and London Bridge. The report by the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation Lord David Anderson offered significant insights into the attackers, a comparison of those and 269 individuals responsible for terrorist-related offences in the UK between 1998 and 2015. For instance 93% of them were male, three quarters were British with 40% living in London. 38% of them were already known to the police and almost half had come to the notice of MI5.

What Joan Smith's book discloses and what is NOT featured in the report is that four of the five 2017 attackers had a history of domestic abuse which she describes as 'amounting to a catalogue of verbal and physical attacks on female relatives'. The Manchester bomber Salman Abedi had also carried out an additional brutal misogynistic assault on a young woman in his college class.

The author's point is that these acts of domestic violence were known to the police. In the UK only 15% of victims ever seek police help and they typically suffer up to 35 incidents before doing so. Abuse escalates in gravity over time and any attempt to escape means that the perpetrator tightens his grip. So the cases that result in a 999 call seem likely to be characterised by long term abuse and increasing violence, where the imminent threat is so scary that it drives fears of later retaliation into the background.

In addition, a particular cohort of men simply moves onto another victim if their current one gets away. Police get repeated calls about these serial abusers. In Northumbria, the force I know best, almost half of the 32,000 calls about domestic abuse each year relate to fewer than 5,000 perpetrating men.

Police should appreciate that domestic abuse which comes to their attention sends a signal that the perpetrator is a persistent violent criminal. The abuse needs to be tackled for itself but the case is well argued, in this book that the potential links to other kinds of hatred and persecution need urgently to be made.

Dame Vera Baird took up office in June as the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales

TRIBUTES



SIR MICHAEL SPICER

22 January 1943 – 29 May 2019

Conservative MP for South Worcestershire 1974–1997
and West Worcestershire 1997–2010

Remembered by Sir Gerald Howarth

Michael Spicer was well known as the leader of the Maastricht rebels, the founder of the European Research Group and as Chairman

of the 1922 Committee, but there was so much more to him. He held a wide range of political posts, having been Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party, PPS to Margaret Thatcher, and a minister in the departments of Transport, Energy and the Environment.

He also had a rich 'hinterland'. He wrote novels, was a keen tennis player and he was an artist of no mean ability.

Michael had travelled across the Tory spectrum, having founded the pressure group PEST (Pressure for Economic & Social Toryism) about which I was not enthusiastic when I encountered it at university in the late 60s. But he soon saw the error of his ways! I came to know him through the Conservative Parliamentary Aviation Committee when he was Aviation Minister determined to apply market competition to air travel. We hit it off, he appointed me his PPS following his move to Energy in 1987, and so began a friendship which endured to the end. Michael drove the policy which led to the abundance of cheap air travel our constituents enjoy today.

At Energy under Cecil Parkinson, Michael was responsible for the detailed work on introducing market forces into electricity supply, a fiendishly complex issue which he navigated with consummate skill. One day, as we sat in a ministerial meeting, where debate was raging over whether

we should privatise it as a monopoly or create separate supply companies, he whispered to me 'Unless I get competition, I am resigning.' He won; the regional boards became individual plc's, and again, the public benefits from competitive pressure on energy prices. Sadly, Michael's endeavours to drive forward competition in coal met resistance.

In 1993 Michael set up the ERG, with around 25 members, who after the 1997 election included Oliver Letwin and one John Bercow. Both added their names to a document opposing UK membership of the Euro, another successful campaign with Spicer at its heart. He identified a bright young man to be our researcher and, with that apprenticeship behind him, Daniel Hannan subsequently launched onto the national stage, to the delight of Eurosceptics across the world.

At the '22 Michael had another very close friend of mine, Richard Ottaway, as his deputy. Despite differences of view on Europe, the two worked in close harmony demonstrating Michael's ability to get on with a wide range of colleagues.

He bore his final illness with quite extraordinary courage and unbounded good humour. Visiting him in hospital last summer, when he was incredibly frail, and earlier this year, I found Michael just enthusiastic to know how the Brexit campaign was going.

Like so many of us, Michael could not have achieved what he did without the support of his wonderful wife, Ann, and their three children, Annabel, Antonia and Edward. Michael was a devoted family man but his departure is a loss to his entire political family, too.



ANNUAL SUMMER RECEPTION 2019

Our thanks to our Patron, Mr Speaker, who has kindly agreed that we can again hold our Summer Reception in Speaker's House on Tuesday the 16th July.

If you wish to attend please complete and return the slip below with your payment.

I would like to attend the Annual Summer Reception on Tuesday 16th July 2019 6–8pm

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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I would like to bring my partner (NAME) _____

I enclose a cheque for one/two places – £40 per head – made payable to the Association of Former MPs

Please return to Sally Grocott:

Association of Former MPs, House of Commons, Room G13, 1 Parliament Street, LONDON, SW1A 2NE



THE HOUSE OF COMMONS MEMBERS' FUND

What is the Members' Fund?

The Members' Fund is a benevolent fund that assists former Members of Parliament and their dependants who are in financial need. It was established in 1939, when there were no pension arrangements for Members, to provide former Members with benefits in lieu of a pension. Former Members and certain dependants can apply for assistance, particularly in times of financial hardship.

What are its current aims and how is it funded?

Its aims are to continue to make annual grant payments to existing claimants and to provide one-off payments to former MPs and/or their spouses, children and any other financial dependants who are experiencing financial hardship. All current Members automatically contribute £2 per month by deduction from their salary.

How is it managed?

It is managed by a board of Trustees, who are either serving Members appointed by the House, or former Members.

They consider all applications for benefits and grant suitable awards after they have looked at all the circumstances of the applicant, particularly their financial circumstances. All matters related to the Fund are handled on the basis of utmost confidentiality.

Who may benefit from one-off payments?

Any former Member or any person who appears to the Fund's Trustees to be, or to have been, a financial dependant of a former Member.

How do I apply for assistance?

If you would like to apply for financial assistance from the Members' Fund, please contact the HCMF Secretariat using the contact details below. You will be sent an application form requesting further information about your financial situation and reasons for applying and you will be required to provide documentary evidence of your finances. The Trustees will then consider your case and you will be notified of their decision in due course.

Enquiries and further information:

The HCMF Secretariat
House of Commons Members' Fund
Pension Secretariat
Corporate Services
House of Commons
LONDON SWA1 0AA

E-mail: hcmf@parliament.uk

Phone: 020 7219 2106

Fax: 020 7219 2554



WEBSITE

Run by Politics Home – just enter "Former MPs" in Google or go to www.politicshome.com/organisation/association-former-members-parliament. It contains an up to date list of our members – currently 440 and gives details of any memorial services for our late colleagues. And copies of our lively and informative magazine *Order! Order!* are included.



FIRST READING

Dods has launched a new Monday morning email called First Reading, previewing the key business in both Houses, and featuring pieces from MPs and peers about their campaigns, debates and PMBs. The aim is to provide a useful, brief round-up of the week ahead.

Anyone who wishes to receive it can sign up to: <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/t/81AF1D71AEA18132>

CONTACT DETAILS

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