Order! Order!

The Official Journal of the Association of Former Members of Parliament

WINTER 2026

GIVING TRUMP THE ELBOW



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WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

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KALI MOUNTFORD

LABOUR MP FOR COLNE VALLEY, 1997–2010



I first became convinced of the need to get involved in politics when I was at school in the early 1970s influenced by my parents and two notable teachers of history and government and citizenship. I was 14 and equal rights were the clarion call. I played a recording of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech to my school assembly to the astonishment of many. I took the call to heart and developed my thinking later through work in the trade union, local government and the voluntary sectors. Eventually I ended up as a candidate despite much opposition, losing my job as a researcher in the Department of Employment was a blow that made my election so much sweeter.

Entering the House felt like coming home. I realised that with only a small majority in Colne Valley I might not have the luxury of promotion, but my skills as a researcher were especially useful in advancing the causes close to my heart and some of my ideas for equal rights in employment and pensions found support and have not yet been undone.

Most valuable were the select committees like the ones for social security and the Treasury and endless standing committees. I was appointed PPS to Des Browne, which proved a successful partnership. When a former colleague, advising a standing committee, asked me if I wouldn't prefer to go back to the civil service as life was so exciting, I replied, of course not. No politician would.

My experience taught me that despite our differences we have the same objectives. It is indeed noble to strive to improve the conditions and lives of others. Sometimes we agree and work together well. Debate can deliver positive results and I remain an addicted supporter from afar.

NICK PALMER

LABOUR MP FOR BROXTOWE, 1997–2010



I was elected in 1997 rather unexpectedly. Broxtowe in the East Midlands had always been Conservative, and I'd been working in Basel, Switzerland for 18 years, and had spent most of my younger life in Denmark. I was just approaching 50 and standing for Parliament was a belated concession to a lifetime interest. I didn't expect to win from 700 miles away but took it seriously, coming over nearly every weekend for a year. My main opponent, the late Sir Jim Lester, was an MP with an excellent reputation who had served for over 20 years and had a majority of nearly 10,000. In the event I won by more than 5,000 votes. My boss in Basel rolled his eyes when I gave notice – "I thought you said you weren't going to win," he protested with suitable exasperation.

I hastily made arrangements to move back to the UK and to Broxtowe. In view of the Conservative history of the seat, I devoted more time to keeping it by constituency work than was perhaps usual – I visited every house at least twice – and held on in the three subsequent elections before finally succumbing in 2010 by 400 votes. I served on the Northern Ireland, European, Treasury and Justice Select Committees, all of which offered considerable insight into the issues facing the government although, unlike the American system with their extremely powerful congressional committees, our select committees have a generally advisory role. British politics works primarily by informal discussion and select committees play their part by steering the debate rather than open confrontation.

By 2010, my knowledge of computing, which I'd worked on in Switzerland, was seriously out of date. I'd focused among other areas on animal welfare, and after Parliament I worked as director of international affairs in Cruelty Free International and then as head of the UK arm of Compassion in World Farming. Both charities are heavily involved in parliamentary lobbying, so it was a fairly natural choice. I was (and am) still active in politics, and was elected to Waverley Borough Council, surrendering my seat only when I moved to Oxfordshire for a late and very happy marriage to Rosemary Pinfield, a retired nurse and health visitor, who continues to put my political knowledge of the health service in the shade.

TASMINA AHMED-SHEIKH

SNP MP FOR OCHIL AND SOUTH PERTHSHIRE, 2015–17



It was a privilege to serve in Parliament representing a diverse and beautiful constituency. I was the first woman of colour elected from Scotland to the UK Parliament and was appointed as spokesperson for International Trade and Deputy Shadow Leader of the House of Commons, by my party.

I represented the UK at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, serving on key committees including Legal Affairs, Political Affairs and Culture & Media.

I also served as a member of the board of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and as Director and Trustee of the Industry and Parliament Trust.

I was delighted to be involved in the Speaker's inaugural Democracy Awards and to serve on the appointment committees of both Speaker's Counsel and the Sergeant at Arms.

I am founder of The Sovereign AI Power Index and The SAPI Terminal – the global benchmark for national AI competitiveness – advising governments, sovereign wealth funds, family offices and institutional investors on where sustainable AI advantage is being built.

I regularly speak on international platforms, as well as at home, on the importance of women in leadership roles in politics, diplomacy, business and security and I serve as an advisory board member at Berkeley, the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California, as well as continuing to practise Law.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Nicola Rivis

On Monday 5 October, while on holiday in Canada, I visited Parliament Hill in Ottawa for a private tour of the parliamentary buildings, followed by lunch and a meeting with the **Association of Former Parliamentarians of Canada**.

The visit offered valuable insight into Canada's parliamentary heritage, traditions and democratic institutions. During the meeting we exchanged perspectives, our different Associations' rules and regulations, and had a conversation on the continuing role of former parliamentarians in public life and what it entails.

I feel as though it has strengthened our connections with Parliament Hill and I am in the process of arranging a follow-up online meeting with their chairman and ours, to continue the dialogue and information sharing exercise. I was hugely grateful for the warm welcome and hospitality extended throughout the visit by their chairman, Matt, and also office staff Bem, Carolina and Ali, and can't wait to visit again. It was a thoroughly worthwhile visit, where I learnt a great deal about their practices and procedures and came away with some great ideas.

The Christmas Drinks Reception will take place on Thursday **3 December** 2026 from **18.00 to 20.00** in the River Room, House of Lords. The Lord Speaker has kindly allowed us the use of the River Room for our reception again. The reception will follow the All-Member Meeting from **16:30–18:00** in CR1, our speaker will be Vicky Pryce.

If you wish to attend the Christmas Reception, please provide me with confirmation of all names wishing to attend by email. Partners are welcome, but please no guests due to restriction on numbers. This event is ticketed at £30 per head. Payment can be made by bank transfer or cheque in the post to me.

One of the writers of *The Gang of Three*, a play about Roy Jenkins, Denis Healey and Tony Crosland has been in touch. The Gang of Three is a drama, though also funny. Many of you will remember these years at first hand, and the writer would be very interested in your verdict should you choose to go and see it.

The play had a sell-out run at the King's Head Theatre in 2025. It is now on a national tour. The run will end in Guildford from 17-21 November, to book: https://thegangofthree.co.uk





ABERFAN, AND THE DUTY OF CANDOUR

By Alun Michael

There are events so shocking that people remember exactly where they were when the news broke – the assassination of John Kennedy, planes crashing into the twin towers, fire engulfing Grenfell. Just such a moment of horror occurred 60 years ago, on 21 October 1966, as coal slurry engulfed Pantglas School in Aberfan, south of Merthyr Tydfil.

As a trainee reporter on the South Wales Echo doing daily checks, I was told by the fire service that something awful had happened. All they knew was that a school roof might have collapsed. The only two experienced reporters available at the time had both been banned for drink driving so I was sent to drive the pool car.

The impact of what we saw when we got there was enormous and the pictures still have a devastating capacity to shock. Later, there were the small coffins lined up to take the bodies from the chapel which served as a morgue, anger when an overseas photographer tried to get in to photograph the rows of bodies, shock as the size of the disaster dawned – 116 children and 28 adults had died.

A year later I was sent with Herbert Williams, a superb old-school feature writer, to help him with a series of "a year on" accounts of the disaster, and learned a lot from the gentle way he listened and engaged with people to enable both the anguish and the anger to come through in what he wrote. But what came across on 21 October this year was that memories are still raw and the events remain shocking.

Miners and mine rescue workers – themselves a reminder of the dangers facing mining communities on a daily basis – dug desperately into the slurry to rescue surviving children. Over the heads of the rescuers Mel, a local photographer for the Merthyr Express, threw me a reel of photographs to be rushed to Cardiff to be developed. On it was an iconic photograph – a police officer carrying a young girl survivor through the lines of digging miners – which appeared immediately across the front page of the Echo's last edition and within hours had flown around the world.

The following day Mel asked who had taken the photograph – he'd held his camera over his head and relied on instinct, so he didn't even know he'd captured it himself. But as well as reflecting both the horror of the disaster and extraordinary efforts of the rescuers that photograph is an icon in reflecting the essence of British policing – local, personal and at the heart of the community. Something that it seems that as politicians across party we have to fight for in each successive generation and is still a live issue today.

As well as celebrating good things – the extraordinary and immediate response of mining communities, the worldwide concern, the mutual support and resilience of the people of Aberfan themselves, the personal engagement of the Queen with the community – it's shocking how hard families had to struggle for answers, the reluctance of the NCB to accept blame and the parsimonious payments to bereaved families.

Yet even after 60 years, new stories have emerged of personal heroism within the school. And in his visit to Aberfan on 19 October Andy Burnham became only the second prime minister, after Harold Wilson, to visit and engage with the local community, doubtless informed by his experience of the continuing pain of survivors and families from Hillsborough in 1989.

Hillsborough and Aberfan are only two of the disasters that have led to calls for a statutory "duty of candour" which Bishop James Jones has championed. It sounds simple – just tell it as it is, just tell the truth – but the duty needs to deal with a highly complex set of issues. It needs to clearly provide a legal over-ride for internal rules and departmental policies, for example, to negate any clause in an insurance policy that says any action or statement by a representative of the insured (such as a councillor or a council officer) that might be construed as admitting liability immediately invalidates the policy, something I came across as a city councillor in Cardiff following the floods in the city in 1979.

The duty will help the survivors and relatives of such major events but there are many "lesser" disasters, not as dramatic as Aberfan, Hillsborough or Grenfell but still leaving families and communities devastated.

There is still plenty of food for thought 60 years on.

LETTER FROM CANADA: ELBOWS UP!

BY GORDON PRENTICE



In March 2025 Mark Carney told Canadians it was time for Elbows up!

Donald Trump had just slapped a 25 per cent US tariff on imported vehicles and Carney said it was a "direct attack" on Canadian workers.

Elbows up! is an ice hockey term meaning a rough, physical type of play which is now a synonym for defending Canada's sovereignty, independence, interests and self-respect.

Tariffs are putting huge pressure on the Canadian economy.



Ontario, the most populous of Canada's ten provinces, with over 16 million people, exports 72 per cent of its goods and services to the US – $287 billion out of $397 billion exported internationally.

And here in Newmarket, where I live – an attractive and prosperous town about an hour north of Toronto, and 115 miles from the nearest US border crossing – we trade with America and have done for as long as anyone can remember.

However, the Trump tariffs are biting in all sorts of unexpected quarters. Businesses face huge administrative burdens and uncertainty with Trump's policies changing on a whim. New systems must be set up to collect and remit tariffs and to do the ever-increasing paperwork to get things across the border.

For example, Maplelea sells top quality Canadian-themed dolls and accessories, and the US is their biggest growth market. But it's an uphill struggle. The current US tariff for toys made in China is 12.5 per cent, regardless of the country an American buys them from. For Canadian-made products, with any China-made component, the current duty is 12.5 per cent plus 50 per cent – a staggering 62.5 per cent in total. American buyers get to the online check-out, see the tariff, and abandon their cart.

No More the Nice Guy

Canadians, for so long the nice guys, have counterpunched by slapping tariffs on the quintessentially American Harley Davidson motor bikes, as well as white goods such as fridges, freezers, washing machines (25 per cent) and steel and aluminium products (up to 50 per cent). Canadians are prepared to tough it out.

The tariff tit-for-tat means, of course, that consumers in both countries are paying more than they should. Or they can't buy the product they want in the first place because it is no longer carried. In March last year, the Ontario government removed all American wines and spirits from the shelves of the government-owned alcohol retailers (the LCBO) and no one batted an eyelid. ***Elbows up!***

A neighbour tells me he went to "The Rest is Politics US", a live broadcast at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in Toronto. "At one point," he said, "the hosts polled the audience asking if we agree with Canada's retaliatory tariffs. Easily over 90 per cent of the audience put up their hands, despite the price we may have to pay."

People make a point of buying Canadian and shunning US products on the supermarket shelves. They tell me they've given up their favourite breakfast cereal, their favourite ketchup and off-season lettuce because, "dammit", they will not buy American. People complain when Canadian-owned stores still carry American produce.

One tells me: "With the rise of Trump II and his bellicosity, our family has made it a practice to buy food and products originating outside of the United States, even if it means paying a little more, or doing without.

LEFT:

HUNDREDS GATHERED IN NATHAN PHILLIPS SQUARE TO PROTEST PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S RHETORIC ABOUT CANADA BECOMING THE 51ST STATE AT TORONTO CITY HALL IN TORONTO. MARCH 22, 2025

BELOW:

MARK CARNEY ON THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

RIGHT:

EVEN CHILDREN'S DOLLS ON SALE IN CANADA THESE DAYS ARE DRAPED IN PATRIOTIC WORDS, COLOURS AND SYMBOLS





Grapes from Peru, vegetables from Mexico, more homegrown produce from Ontario greenhouses.

"America is no longer a trusted partner and although there will be a significant impact on Canada's economy for the foreseeable future, Trump has given us the economic and cultural wake-up call we needed to begin the journey to reaching our fullest potential. A wag noted Trump should be given the Order of Canada for his service to building a united Canada. Fortunately, we don't give that award to felons."

Canadians back Carney for looking beyond the United States for trading partners.

No more US visits

It is not just boycotting American produce – Canadians are voting with their feet. Travel to the United States slumped by about 25 per cent in 2025. Return trips by car to the US are down 31 per cent from September 2024 to September 2026, and by air almost 19 per cent.

The mood of Canadians I meet is one of bristling contempt for the US political system – and a feeling it is in need of urgent repair.

They scoff at Trump's latest claims that Canada is guilty of election interference, influencing the mid-terms, when gerrymandering in the United States is baked into the whole rotten system. There is no equivalent of Elections Canada in the United States.

Wildfire

Trump says there's nothing that Canada has that the United States needs. Leave aside the potash, rare earth minerals, aluminium, hydro-electricity, lumber, fresh water and all the rest.

We've got plenty of wildfire smoke he definitely doesn't want. Earlier this year, in mid-July, thick acrid smoke from wildfires in Northern Ontario blanketed Toronto, taking the air quality index into "very high risk" territory. Our local paper described the daytime skies turning an "eerie, hazy orange".

How appropriate then for this pall of orange smoke to drift south and smother the northern United States.

President Trump fumed: "We are holding Canada responsible for the fact that they are not properly maintaining their forests, and brush therein, and the US is being unnecessarily invaded by filthy, polluted and unhealthy air. This is wilful negligence...costing the US billions of dollars."

Nothing to do with climate change (which he denies). It is apparently about Canada's negligent failure to sweep the forest floor over 1.42 million square miles – a huge swathe of planet earth.

Up here, north of the 49th parallel, we laugh at Trump. I have never known Canada more united. We are in it for the long haul. ***Elbows up!***

Gordon Prentice was MP for Pendle from 1992-2010. He blogs on local Newmarket politics at ournewmarket.ca.

BRING BACK THE GOOD OLD DAYS



Sir Ivan Lawrence on why Parliament should go back to its old practice of keeping the mornings clear so that MPs can have other jobs

We often talk about how much better things were in "the good old days". The House of Commons used to begin debates after 4pm, allowing MPs to have a job outside Parliament. In my 23 years as an MP, I was also a practising criminal barrister. At the Old Bailey at 9am; at the House for business and voting after Court had risen. In the "good old days" I could not only supplement my modest parliamentary salary (which my constituency officers were quite happy about), I could also, from time to time, make a useful contribution to criminal justice reform. I could go from court directly to see the Home Secretary at Westminster, tell him what had just happened in my case in court, and start to improve some aspect of a failing legal system. May I give two examples of this occurring?

When I began my life as a criminal barrister, there was something called "the judge's rules". The police when reporting in evidence what they saw, or what they said they were told by an alleged bank robber, were able to refer to their notebook for accuracy – provided the note was "contemporaneous". In time the judges got slack and allowed "contemporaneous" to mean that two police officers could get together the next day, or even the next week, and agree a dishonest note. If claiming to be reporting what was said, this was called, in the criminal jargon, a "verbal". The police would frequently allege that an admission of guilt had been made, or that something had been said that could only be consistent with guilt.

Often these allegations were manifestly absurd: new pages appeared in the notebook that did not quite fit, or whose staples were the wrong shape, were said to have been the original pages on such and such a date. Sometimes there was an imprint on the page which showed that a page had been torn out of the book with some other words originally written than those now being relied upon. With the opportunity to falsify such evidence, the police did not have to try so hard to find other more honest evidence.

Such dishonest police evidence was widespread. In London, juries tended to disbelieve the police, who seldom achieved convictions where the defendant denied a "verbal" if there was no other evidence against him. Verballing became counter-productive.



Apart from lowering the reputation of the police there was always the possibility that a great injustice was being done in blaming the wrong offender.

Over many years I conducted a campaign in the courts and in Parliament to replace the "verbal" with tape-recorded interviews of suspects. This improvement was a long time coming because it was bitterly opposed by the police. One day, after a particularly egregious example of a "verbal" in my current Old Bailey case, I left court and hurried to corner Home Secretary Leon Brittan in his office. He was, like me, a barrister, and knew well of my campaign. He introduced tape-recorded interviews in his Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1992, and the "verbal" more or less disappeared. Evidence of what the defendant told the police was only admissible if contained in a tape-recording of which both prosecution and defence had properly authenticated copies. Henceforward, the police were less often attacked in court and so became more respected by juries, and the terrible injustice of a wrongful conviction of the innocent became less likely.

A second example illustrating the importance of having practising criminal lawyers in Parliament, took place during the Brinks Matt gold bullion trials in 1984. I was acting for two alleged money-launderers. One regularly banked large sums of money with Barclays Bank, and the manager assured the jury that he had no reason to think that money had come from the Brinks Matt robbery. I was able to say to the jury that if the bank manager had no reason for thinking there was any connection, how could they be sure my client must have known the source was dishonest. Likewise with the gold bullion which my client took regularly to the assay company. Their representative told the jury that he had absolutely no reason for thinking that this was Brinks Matt gold, and I was able to say to the jury that if that were so, how could they be sure my client must have known its dishonest source. On both counts, although there was clearly a lot of suspicion, it was not enough, and my client was properly acquitted.

I went immediately to see Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary. I told him what had occurred in court that day. I thought that it was ridiculous that we had no law requiring banks and financial institutions to require handlers of large sums of money which were suspicious to explain where they had come from, and to place a burden on them to make inquiries and report their suspicions to the police. He agreed and shortly afterwards we introduced a law against "suspicious transactions" which has become just about the strongest weapon we have against money-laundering.

Morning sittings of Parliament now mean that a barrister cannot safely book a case in court if Parliament is sitting. More injustices may occur.

In this regard, at least, the "good old days" may perhaps have gone!

Sir Ivan Lawrence was MP for Burton, 1983–97.



Political Incident No.13

In election campaigns the car cavalcade plays an important part. Cars bear posters proclaiming the candidate's and party's virtues. There should be at least three people in each vehicle, so that supportive shouts can ring out from both sides. And the route must be thoroughly checked in advance to avoid road works.

One day in Walthamstow during the General Election campaign of 1987 six cars assembled, five with just one poster timidly taped to each side. But Bruce the handyman had excelled, fitting his Volvo estate, the sixth car, with poles at all four corners and plywood sheets between with four A3 posters each side. Between the posters he had painted on the plywood in large blue letters the words "Hugo for Stow". His handiwork was greatly admired. Then each car was placed in order, Bruce in number three position, and off we went. I had the loudspeaker in the front car: "This is Hugo Summerson your Conservative candidate asking for your support", again and again, while we wound through the selected residential and shopping areas.

As we crossed Walthamstow High Street, the longest street market in Europe, we slowed right down and I shouted "Vote Hugo for Walthamstow! Hugo Summerson your Conservative candidate asking for your support!" There was no particular response. People just stood and stared. But on our second circuit hostile elements in the market heard us coming. They grabbed ammunition, ran to the roadside and took aim – not at the front car, but at Bruce's ornamented car, the obvious target. Apples and pears, lettuces and tomatoes, even a cauliflower, sailed through the air and bounced off or splatted against his Volvo as we hastily moved on.

Bruce was stoical about the mess on his car afterwards – "Just as well nobody was selling bricks," he said.

Hugo Summerson was MP for Walthamstow, 1987–1992. Between 1982 and 1994, he stood three times as a council candidate, and three times as a parliamentary candidate.

A QUARTER CENTURY ON...

Celebrating 25 years of the Association of Former Members of Parliament – By Eric Martlew

Since 2001, the Association has brought together former MPs from across the political spectrum, helping members stay connected to Parliament and to one another. This followed a debate in the Chamber when Joe Ashton proposed forming an Association. There was only three of us in the Chamber, but Speaker Martin chaired it, and after the debate, he told me I had to get involved! Not so much a request – but an instruction. I subsequently became one of the two sitting MPs on the Executive.

In 2006, when the Association had 330 members, it fell to me to move the resolution "that the House recognises the Association" as the official body to represent former members. Today we have 479.

Over the past 25 years there have many people who who have made a significant contribution. But two individuals stand out: Joe Ashton, who chaired the


Order, Order!

Welcome

In the first newsletter of the Association of former Members of Parliament.

And what better start than a special message from Mr Speaker, The Rt Hon Michael Martin MP

Association and was the driving force in its early years and Lady Sally Grocott, who ran the administration for two decades. Without her efforts, the Association would not have thrived.

Leaving the House of Commons can be a significant personal and professional change. A community of people who understand that experience, offering friendship, advice and support, makes a real difference. Over the past quarter of a century, the Association has provided a place to maintain old friendships, build new connections and share experiences of public service.

Our members also hold a wealth of knowledge about representing communities, scrutinising legislation and holding governments to account, alongside the personal stories and lessons learned along the way.

As we mark this anniversary, we thank the members, staff and supporters who have helped build this community.

We look forward to continuing our work together, supporting former MPs and helping more people engage with Parliament.

Eric Martlew was Chair of the Association of Former Members of Parliament 2020–25



NEWS FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OUTREACH TRUST

An update from the Chair, John Austin

It is with great sadness that we record the death in June of our Vice-Chair, Michael Meadowcroft, one of our founder Trustees. Michael was a fiercely independent thinker who held fast to his philosophy of traditional liberalism and in 1988, shortly after the formation of the Liberal Democrats, became co-founder and first Leader of the continuing Liberal Party. He rejoined the Liberal Democrats in 2007. He was a great support in establishing the Trust.

Annual General Meeting

At the Annual General Meeting of the Trust, in July, the following were elected:

Trustees: John Austin (Chair), Keith Best (Secretary), Sarah McCarthy-Fry (Treasurer), Dr Tania Mathias and Adrian Sanders (Vice-Chairs)

Additional Committee Members: Huw Edwards, Nigel Griffiths, Dame Sylvia Heal, Tom Levitt, Lawrie Quinn, David Morris.

Activities in Schools and Universities

Since our last report we have been in discussions with Exeter University regarding participation in their Parliamentary Studies Programme. We have also been working with Nottingham Trent University, and in October, **Jim Fitzpatrick** led a discussion with students on parliamentary scrutiny and the role of Select Committees; Tom Levitt will be making a presentation to Brunel University students in November on Parliamentary procedure; and **Margot James** will be talking about the role of the Whips in December.

We continue to work with the charity **Futures For All** by providing speakers through their Speakers for Schools programme. In June **Victoria Borwick** addressed 210 students in two sessions at the Harris Academy, Sutton; and in July **Sir Vince Cable** participated with 143 students aged 14-18 in a Model United Nations Conference at Impington International College, Cambridgeshire. In October, **Jeremy Lefroy** addressed 125 students aged 16-18 at the Cadbury Sixth Form College, Birmingham; and **Ian Lucas** spoke to students at Ysgol Aberconwy, Wales.

The Future

The Trust has operated without administrative or secretarial support for the past ten years but is hopeful that a bid from the Association of Former MPs to the House of Commons Finance Committee, to support the work of the Trust beyond 2027 will be successful. Sadly, without such support, the future of the Trust is uncertain.

IN-BOX

By Gordon Banks and Lawrie Quinn

Going forward, members of the Association's executive committee will highlight important subjects for your attention. Here are a few topics we wish to call attention to which have developed since our last Westminster meeting in July 2026:

Ann Widdecombe's murder and security considerations for former MPs

Our Scottish branch considered the consequences for personal security for former parliamentarian colleagues, their families and former constituency staff.

Advice from both Speakers' offices indicated colleagues should check that their local territorial police leaders know their current addresses and contact details to ensure rapid communication in the event of a perceived threat.

Scottish colleagues made us aware that arrangements which appear to apply for English and Welsh former MPs are not yet consistent across Scotland. Consequently, Lawrie and Gordon have written to the Secretary of State for Scotland to highlight these member concerns, and will communicate his resultant actions by email directly to all our members when he replies to us.

Should you wish to contact the Association with any personal information that will assist us with improvements to security protocols please email Nicola, the Association Administrator, immediately on rivisn@parliament.uk.

An invitation from our colleagues in Dublin

After a provisional request from the Irish Association of Former Parliamentarians in Dublin inviting our Association to participate in a special seminar to consider the future role of the British Isles in the European Union, that they will be convening on Friday 22 January 2027.

The Association is considering asking three colleagues to join this discussion. Unlike sister organisations in other countries, our Association can only offer 50 per cent financial support for our successful representatives, who will hopefully reflect the wide range of views of our members, at this Dublin seminar.

To help the executive select our representation at our executive meeting on 3 November, we would like you to send in your thoughts about the topic for discussion in Dublin on 22 January and on engagement with international organisations who share our objectives.

It might be useful to remind you that Anne Taylor and Steve Norris represented the Association in Washington DC when former congressional colleagues considered parliamentary research arrangements across the Atlantic. This visit was generously supported by the Library of Congress as part of their 200th anniversary celebrations.

2027: a big year for the Speaker's office

Next year will mark the 650th anniversary of the role of Speaker in the Commons.

- 2027 Celebration: the UK Parliament is marking the occasion through official commemorations, including the release of the Official Speaker's House 2027 Calendar, which showcases the exclusive architecture and neo-gothic state apartments where the Speaker resides.
- Evolution of the Role: Originally, the Speaker literally acted as a spokesperson to deliver messages from the House of Commons to the reigning monarch. This was historically a highly dangerous task; seven Speakers were executed by beheading between 1394 and 1535 when kings grew angry with Parliament's messages. The Modern Office: Today, the Speaker (currently Sir Lindsay Hoyle) acts as a politically impartial referee, who manages debates, maintains order, and protects the rights of backbench MPs from his or her official residence within the Palace of Westminster.

How should the Association aim to ensure our membership's role in this milestone event is celebrated? Please drop your thoughts to us so we can feed them into the planning considerations of Mr Speaker's team via Nicola on rivisn@parliament.uk.

Pension Fund and Members' Benevolent Fund

We hope to run a feature in the next edition of *Order! Order!* early in 2027 which looks at these important parliamentary institutions and ask colleagues to send us questions/comments for the Association to raise with the chairs of both funds as we prepare for their New Year interviews.

Comments by email to Nicola on rivisn@parliament.uk.

Independent Examiner

As an unincorporated membership organisation, the Association is not required to have its accounts professionally audited. However, as a measure of good practice, for the last few years we have enjoyed the services of a retired bookkeeper, who has independently examined our accounts to ensure they are in order. Unfortunately, she is no longer able to provide this service for us and so we are now looking for someone else to undertake this task. If any member of the organisation would be able to do this, or knows of someone who could do so, please contact our Administrator Nicola Rivis (rivisn@parliament.uk).

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

JACKIE LAWRENCE
PRESELI PEMBROKESHIRE 1997–2005



BY 2005 I HAD SERVED EIGHT YEARS AS MP for Preseli Pembrokeshire, my home community. My decision to step down at that time was driven by the fact that during those eight years we had become grandparents to seven grandchildren, and my husband was due to retire.

Six months after I left Westminster, I joined the annual visit to Davos of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Switzerland as a former member, and unfortunately had a serious accident. As a result, I endured seven operations on my leg and three years in and out of a wheelchair until it was healed. So, involvement in any work or community activities was extremely limited.

At Westminster I had been one of the 12 sponsors of Michael Foster's bill to end the hunting of animals with hounds. People opposed to this told me that hunting dogs would be destroyed if the bill passed because they were no use as pets. As an important part of my recuperation was walking, I decided to prove them wrong and we adopted an ex-hunting dog as a family pet. We subsequently adopted three more, and I become involved in animal welfare issues both here in the UK and in France and Spain which we visited regularly.

Shortly after his retirement my husband was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, which has meant that since that time I have effectively been his carer. He is currently receiving a new treatment which we hope will improve his quality of life and again for that reason other activities have been limited.

ROGER CASALE
WIMBLEDON 1997–2005

WINNING WIMBLEDON FOR LABOUR IN 1997 WAS A SURPRISE. And it was a surprise to survive losing it. Luckily, my Italian background, coupled with my Westminster experience, opened doors at the Italian aerospace and defence company, Finmeccanica (now Leonardo). I joined their government affairs team and never looked back.

What caught up with me was not so much Wimbledon as Europe. I'd always had a strong interest in deliberative democracy and the role of citizens and civil society.



Wimbledon was not a red wall seat, to put it mildly. My approach was to bring people together and work things out across boundaries. I became curious how this ground-up approach could work at a European level.

I began New Europeans in 2013 to work for this vision of a Europe of the citizens: a community of values, not just interests.

We started by championing the rights of EU citizens and Britons who had made Europe their home. Before the referendum, that meant building consensus on safeguarding those rights. Once the UK voted to leave, it meant fighting to secure them.

Today New Europeans is working for a new, resilient Europe that doesn't stop at the EU's borders. From the Baltics to the Balkans, from the UK to Ukraine, can citizens be mobilised to defend a Europe that is a safe place for freedom and democracy? Do drop me a line if you agree.

Home is west London, with my heart still partly in Italy. I live in hope you will one day let me surprise you all again.

COLIN CHALLEN
MORLEY AND ROTHWELL, 2001–2010



I HAVE LONG FELT THE PULL OF TWO POWERFUL VOCATIONS – art and politics – and the two for me have long competed for that precious commodity, time. Since leaving Parliament in 2010 I have to a great extent been liberated from this contest and can devote much of my time to making art. Thankfully I have sufficient independence not to have to worry about selling it, which is perhaps just as well. I've sold very little.

I work in a range of media, but drawing has been paramount. As well as pictures, some of which might be a

bit too big for the average living room, I have also made three-dimensional works, but this activity is threatened by a lack of space as I don't have a separate studio. I did have an exhibition this summer, facilitated by a local arts organisation.

I have also completed an MA in Fine Art with the Middlesborough Institute of Modern Art based at Teesside University. I have long been drawn to industrial landscapes, and one of Middlesborough's most iconic structures, the Transporter Bridge, was the subject of a small exhibition of mine at its visitors' centre. The main exhibit was a large charcoal drawing which sought to visually portray the area's greenhouse gas emissions, connecting art and politics.

During the pandemic I completed my largest work – replicating in my own way the 82 pictures in the Getty Apocalypse – now in book form. All the while aided by listening to Bach's complete cantatas.

DAN BYLES
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE, 2010–2015



I WAS ONE OF THE RELATIVELY FEW MPS TO CHOOSE TO LEAVE PARLIAMENT VOLUNTARILY IN 2015. When I did, I knew I wanted to stay close to the issues that had most interested me in Westminster: energy, climate change, science, technology and the practical application of technology to real-world problems.

For a time that led me deeper into the world of smart cities, digital infra-structure and standards. Over time, it also drawn me into the start-up and innovation space. Today I am co-founder and Chief Commercial Officer of UnifAI Technology, which develops practical AI tools for use in areas including healthcare, environmental monitoring and infrastructure. I am also co-founder of CGE Energy, which is developing a novel hydrogen generation technology.

Much of my work now sits at the intersection of technology, sustainability and implementation: how to move from ideas and policy ambitions to things that actually work in practice. In that sense, my post-Parliament life has been less of a departure than it might appear. The setting changed, but many of the underlying interests stayed exactly the same.



SIMON FELL
BARROW AND FURNESS, 2019-24

LEAVING PARLIAMENT ISN'T EASY. Elected for Barrow and Furness in 2019 on my third attempt, I loved serving my constituents and remain proud of our work on submarines, fraud and prison reform. But in 2024 the country wanted change. With three small children and retirement stubbornly out of reach, I needed to find a job.

AUKUS initially took me to Adelaide, advising on preparations for Australia's submarine programme. Fascinating work, but replacing a six-hour commute with a flight across the world wasn't quite the family-friendly reset I had imagined.

Instead, I returned to fraud prevention, my field for 15 years before Parliament and my ministerial-adjacent obsession as Rishi Sunak's anti-fraud champion. My dear friend Mark Fullbrook very kindly provided me a berth doing some consulting work while I established my own practice helping banks, telecoms firms and charities protect their customers and the wider public.

For the last few months, I have been special adviser to the Online Crime Centre, an initiative I launched in government. There's something reassuring about finding that your own policy has created you a job.

Public service still matters enormously to me and I greatly enjoy contributing, albeit in a very different way to when I squatted on the green benches. I'm a trustee at Switchback – supporting criminal justice reform to stop the hideous waste of human potential that defines so much of our prisons policy.

Shortly after the election, we packed up and moved to Cambridgeshire, accidentally buying Betty Boothroyd's former home. Apparently, I can leave Parliament, but Parliament can't leave me.

Would I go back? Possibly. Westminster really is, to borrow from Monty Python, a very silly place. But you can do remarkable (and un-silly) work there. For now, though, breakfast and school pick-ups with my children are proving remarkably persuasive alternatives to Westminster. The hours are better, too, although the questions can be equally unforgiving.

COMMONS AND LORDS – SAME FACES, DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORKING

FORMER MPS ADMITTED TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS are apt to make the mistake of thinking that, apart from the different colour of the benches, one place works in the same way as the other, according to the current Leader of the Lords.

Baroness Smith of Basildon, who was a Labour MP for nearly 13 years, was guest speaker at the Association's summer meeting. She has the grand-sounding title of Lord Privy Seal, though she would have done without these honours and happily carried on representing Basildon in the lower House. As she put it: "I was in the House of Commons for about twelve-and-a-half years, 1997-2010, then I basically got booted out and booted up. It wasn't a choice."

She described the slow progress of reforming the Lords. The remaining hereditary peers lost their right to vote earlier this year, apart from a few of the most active, who were awarded life peerages. An all-party commission chaired by Ann Taylor is considering introducing a retirement age, though it has been noted that



two of the most active peers, Alf Dubs and Elizabeth Butler-Sloss are 93-years-old.

She wondered whether the rule that says to retain their right to participate, sitting peers are required to turn up just once a session, is too lenient. "That really doesn't show much commitment to the work of the Lords," she remarked. But any attempt to make more room to bring in new blood meets resistance. She was told by one peer, whom she did not name: "I come in for my lunch every day. I miss people." She wondered if there should be an Association like ours for former members of the House of Lords.

But her main warning was to ex-MPs who are awarded peerages, to be aware they are entering a different place from the one they have left. "My advice to people coming to the House of Lords from the House of Commons is that there is enough similarity to lure you into a false sense of security and make a complete and utter prat of yourself, because the building is the same, many of the faces are the same, but the whole approach to the work is very, very different.

"You get legislation through the House of Lords by engaging, by discussion. There isn't the same cut and thrust as you would get in the House of Commons. Some people like that, some people don't, but get used to it.

"We want people with judgement and clarity of thought. People who in their professional lives have done something, who will show commitment, and intelligence of mind – people who have professionalism, commitment, and time."

A WELSH BRANCH?

MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MPS are being asked whether they would like to form a Welsh Branch of the Association, following the successful development of the Scottish Branch. The Association's Executive has noted that cost and distance often prevents former MPs attending meetings in London and that meetings elsewhere - including the North of England - would make the Association more inclusive.

The new Secretary of State for Wales, Rt Hon Stephen Kinnock MP, has offered to host the first meeting at the Wales Office (200 yards from Cardiff Central Station), and, if the response to the questionnaire currently being sent to Association Members is positive, a date for an inaugural meeting will be arranged.

The development comes as the Prime Minister has re-ignited debate about what devolution really means, with a speech in Motherwell that emphasised the importance of "local" and a sense of place, challenging governments to cooperate more with each other. It will provide a Welsh focus on what the Association describes as its "clearly defined role in making the wide-ranging experience of former MPs available to the Government of the day and the nation" while enabling former MPs for Welsh constituencies and those with strong Welsh roots to provide mutual support and reflect on current and past political developments.

The Scottish Branch has already explored common interests with the Association of Former MSPs, and while there is no such association in Wales, it has been suggested that a Welsh Branch might explore common interests with former members of the Senedd.

The Executive has asked Alun Michael to explore interest in the proposal and members wishing to contribute with ideas and suggestions are invited to contact Alun (alun@alunmichael.net) or the Association's Administrator, Nicola Rivis (rivisn@parliament.uk).

NEWS FROM THE SCOTTISH BRANCH

Gordon Banks, Chair of the Scottish branch



THE SCOTTISH BRANCH was delighted to welcome Scottish football legend **Jim Leishman MBE** as a guest speaker at an event held on 27 August.

Jim's contribution followed a branch Executive and an All Member meeting to which we were delighted to welcome the chair of our UK Association, Lawrie Quinn.

The day's events were all held in the Cabinet Room, Queen Elizabeth House, Sibbald Walk, Edinburgh – which is home to the Scotland Office.

Many thanks to everyone involved in making the day a success, including Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State, for allowing us to use the facilities in the Scotland Office and Linda Gilroy, our branch secretary, for her hard work and determination in ensuring the event was a success.

Please watch this space for more information as we hopefully move towards a permanent solution to the issues surrounding online access to our events and meetings.

Jim Leishman MBE

Jim was introduced by branch chair, Gordon Banks, who provided a little background to Jim's careers in football and politics.

Jim Leishman is a proud Fifer and made his name in football. He played for Dunfermline and Cowdenbeath in the 70s before moving into coaching and progressing to club management.

Jim has managed Kelty Hearts, Dunfermline (twice), Inverness Thistle, Montrose, Rosyth Recreation, Meadowbank Thistle and Livingston (twice) and is currently chairman of Dunfermline Athletic FC.

He was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 2007 and elected as a councillor in Fife in 2012. He has also held the position of Provost of Fife since 2012. Jim has an outstanding reputation as an excellent after-dinner and motivational speaker and is proud of his working-class roots and continues to work tirelessly for the Kingdom of Fife as Provost.

Jim began his contribution with an introduction of his companion Svitlana Iniakoviene who accompanied him. She has received support from the Mary Leishman Foundation (in memory of Jim's late wife) for the work her charity Intertwined is carrying out for Ukrainian (and Scottish) military personnel suffering PTSD. It was agreed that as a branch we would like to invite Svitlana to a future Scottish Branch All Member event.

Jim as usual delivered an amusing and informative coverage of his time as a professional football player, manager, now chairman, and how this interlinked with his role as Provost of Fife. Jim's tales kept the meeting amused and engaged and it was warming to see his satisfaction with his many achievements in Scottish football. He also outlined how he had become famous for reciting poetry in the dressing room to bolster his sides and also told many life stories about how a football manager of teams such as Livingston and Dunfermline had to bolster individuals who may feel overawed by facing Scottish giants Rangers and Celtic. It was plain to see that Jim isn't easily overawed.

Jim even regaled us with the story of his 81st-minute winning goal against Rangers at Ibrox (Rangers 3 Dunfermline 4) in April 1972 – as an 18-year-old fullback.

Throughout Jim's contribution it was easy to see that he was proud of his upbringing in Lochgelly, Fife and how his parents had been a great support to him, even though his dad made him get a job before he turned professional.

Jim's contribution was amusing, warm and grounded, covering many aspects of his life in football and politics, even alluding to a future book entitled From Ball to Chain.

Following his presentation Jim took a number of questions from members and his contribution was extremely well received. He is an inspiring and humorous individual who has worked in high-profile positions in football and politics while managing to keep his feet firmly on the ground and this was recognised by all present.

Chair, Gordon Banks, warmly thanked Jim for his contribution and presented him with a bottle of champagne and a bottle of red wine to show our appreciation.

A GOOD READ

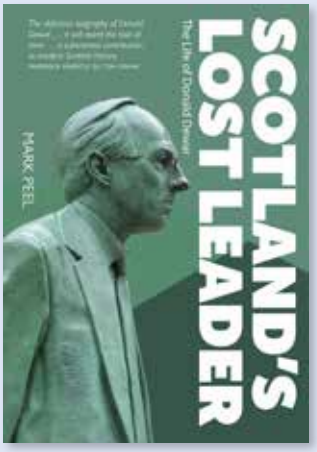
SCOTLAND'S SAD UNFORGOTTEN FIRST MINISTER

Helen Liddell

Scotland's Lost Leader: The Life of Donald Dewar

By Mark Peel

Luath Press £20



I KNEW DONALD DEWAR WAS ECCENTRIC, but I knew little of his background until I read this book.

At the age of two his parents sent him to a small school in Perthshire run by friends of theirs, then to a boarding school in the Borders. His parents were ill, but I cannot begin to understand the effect on such a small child. Years later, he wondered why no relative had offered to take him in.

He then went to Mosspark Primary School in Glasgow, where he was ridiculed for his spectacles and "odd accent". Next came the elite Glasgow Academy which led to Glasgow University where he thrived and made lifelong friends, among them John Smith and Meta Ramsay. Surprisingly, he got married and had two children and then became MP for Aberdeen South and the family moved to London. At the next election, he lost. The family stayed on in London, and Donald returned to Glasgow. In September 1973 he divorced his wife after a five-minute hearing, citing adultery.

But then the Glasgow, Garscadden by-election happened. Donald was the candidate, and on the 13 April 1978 he became an MP, but 1979 saw Labour out of Government for 18 years. Over the years he became Secretary of State for Scotland, then First Minister, but being MP for Garscadden was what he was most proud of.

His eccentricity did not diminish though. When baby Leo was born Tony Blair took Donald upstairs to see him. Donald commented to the new father: "Babies are ugly, aren't they?"

As First Minister he gave the most amazing speech at the opening of the Scottish Parliament on 1 July 1999 and he was one of the key people who made it happen.

However, he had health issues and was in hospital for a while. On 10 October 2000 he fell down the steps on his official residence in Edinburgh and died the next day.

His was a state funeral, with a heartfelt speech by Tony Blair, then the hearse drove through Glasgow, including his beloved Garscadden, where people gathered along the road. Even the supermarkets observed a minute's silence. There is an amazing statue of Donald in the middle of Glasgow, it is on the cover of Mark Peel's book.

I thought I knew Donald, but this book convinced me that behind the dishevelled appearance was a sad man, but one Scotland will never forget.

Baroness Liddell was Secretary of State for Scotland, 2001-03.

A MESSAGE FROM GORDON BANKS, SCOTTISH BRANCH CHAIR

The Scottish Branch is holding its last meetings of the year on **25 November 2026** in the Cabinet Room, Queen Elizabeth House, 1 Sibbald Walk, Edinburgh EH8 8FT.

The afternoon will see an Executive meeting, followed by an All-Member meeting, then our guest speaker Devin Scobie, culminating in our "social half hour".

Devin will speak to us on the topics of –

- The Holyrood Parliament and government six months on from the May 2026 elections
- How the SNP minority government is shaping up
- How well this Parliament, with exactly 50 per cent newly elected MSPs, will hold them to account

Devin is one of Scotland's most experienced public affairs specialists, with 30 plus years' experience in political consultancy, and has worked with and around the Scottish Parliament, and mainly Scottish MPs at Westminster, since the 1990s. Although never an MP (or MSP), he did serve one term as an elected councillor in the 1990s.

Devin also ran his own consultancy for nearly 20 years, returning to the freelance world and working with a wide range of associates post-Covid.

In addition to political communications, he also delivers media and Scottish Parliament committee training. He currently works with a cross-section of trade bodies covering railways, building safety and the electrical industry. In recent years he has advised a wide range of companies including Forth Ports, Diageo GB, Arriva UK Trains, the Railway Industry Association, Tesco, ScottishPower, Pfizer, National Farmers Union, Scotland and the National Trust for Scotland. He is currently a trustee (and, until May, chair) of UK charity Starfish Asia which funds primary schools in minority Christian slum areas in Pakistan.

Scottish branch members should look out for communications in their email boxes about this event and it would be great to have a good turnout for our final event of 2026 – I look forward to seeing you there.

A GOOD READ

THE FARAGE PHENOMENON

Jerry Hayes

The Farage Factor, Reform UK and the Remaking of British politics

By Michael Ashcroft

Biteback £22

A WEEK MAY BE A LONG TIME IN POLITICS, but it is even longer if you are trying to write an up-to-date biography.

Michael Ashcroft and his team have attempted a balanced effort, trying to explain the force of nature that is Nigel Farage. Ashcroft's problem is that this book was written at the height of his popularity, when he bestrode the opinion polls like a colossus and when many had written off the Conservatives and saw Farage as the prime minister in-waiting. It predates the Channel 4 shock and James Orr sting, the orchard of rotten apples, the "patriots" in balaclavas, and vast sums of cash appearing from crypto billionaires. It was even before Robert Jenrick's pledge to unleash lethal force against unarmed men, women and children adrift in rubber dinghies. It was also before that other force of nature, Kemi Badenoch, wrenched the tectonic plates of British politics towards the restoration of two-party politics.

There are some interesting insights into the school days of Nigel Farage. Ashcroft deals head on with the allegations of antisemitism and racism which is vehemently denied. What is most telling is a quote from a school master who was dealing with a young miscreant.

"Smoking Farage? Bloody stupid." Farage then looks at the overflowing ashtray with a smirk.

"Smoking sir?"

"No, I mean you're stupid for getting caught." That was a lesson well learned.

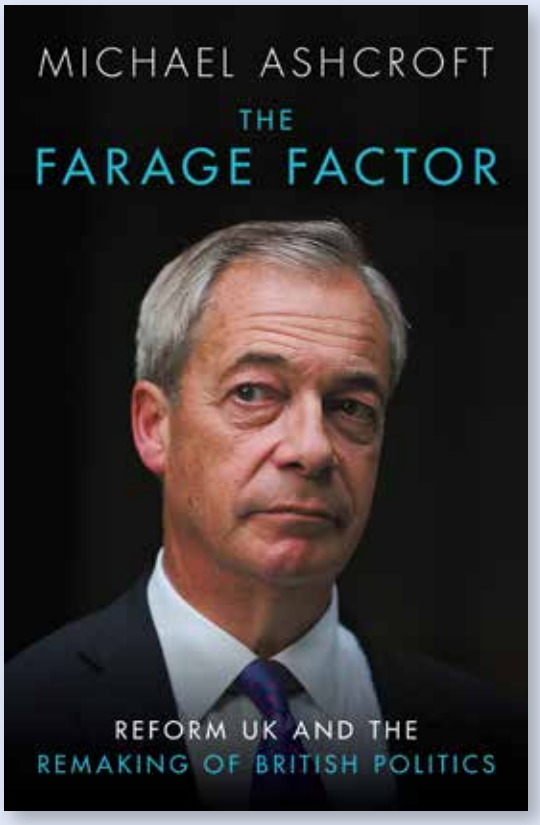
Ashcroft reminds us of a time when, despite his formidable gifts as a communicator, Farage was not universally loved by those who ran UKIP, dubbed by Robert Kilroy-Silk as "a party of eight thousand members that had nine thousand egos".

Richard North, then research director, was not prepared to be a bag carrier. "Nor would I fetch and carry for Farage, or write his letters. Or to be available to pour

him into a taxi when he was so blind drunk that he could no longer stand. Or cover for him when he failed to turn up for his morning appointments because he would be out on the tiles all night long."

North, Kilroy-Silk, Ben Habib, Rupert Lowe and anyone else who opposed Farage were airbrushed out of history like disgraced politburo members on the tomb of Lenin. If you are not obedient best not stand next to an open window, and if the coffee smells a bit whiffy you may be in for a fatal surprise. Although like Rasputin, Lowe still lives, stealthily pushing Reform to the dark side of politics.

Farage has also joined the queue of those betrayed by Boris Johnson. He told a friend, writes Ashcroft, "if Johnson had offered him a peerage there would have been a good chance he would have accepted it, therefore ruling him out of a political comeback."



In March 2021 he revealed to the Sunday Telegraph that he had finished with politics again.

"I know I've comeback twice when people thought I'd gone. But this time it's done. It's over." Not quite, as the people of Clacton later discovered.

One revelation which I didn't see coming was the importance of Liz Truss. According to Richard Tice, "She believed in a lot of the same things as us. So, I wasn't sure if there was any point in keeping going … if Truss had succeeded as prime minister Reform wouldn't exist."

What of the future?

"One source close to [Farage] says whether he actually wants to be Prime Minister in his deepest soul, I don't know, but he is committed to doing it."

Another, "I think, if it were at all possible, he would like to be a presidential figure to Robert Jenrick's Prime Minister." This will not be received well by the warm and cuddly Zia Yusuf whom Farage once said "is the future".

The open warfare with ITV and Channel 4 goes way back before the latest line of stings. He will never forgive ITV for trying to claw back some of his £1.5 million fee for appearing on I'm a Celebrity . . . Get me out of Here! over what Farage claims were trumped up allegations.

Yet the sky is black with tweets coming home to roost. One of his many problems is that he has been around for a very long time. As election day approaches, we will be reminded of his quotes about Putin, Nato, privatising the NHS and hostility to the RNLI.

When Alan Sked, the founder of UKIP, said of Sir James Goldsmith, "the politics of Sunset Boulevard practised by a playboy plutocrat," he could have been referring to Farage.

Time will tell.

A GOOD READ



THE STATELESS REFUGEE WHO BECAME A DAME

Denis MacShane

Battleaxe: A Memoir

by Dame Margaret Hodge

William Collins £25

THERE ARE MANY MPS WHO HAVE MADE THEIR MARK as council bigwigs, ministers, party infighters, or ran successful campaigns. Margaret Hodge though must be top of the list for putting more notches on her 50-year-old Labour Party axe than any recent MP, minister and now member of the House of Lords.

At a time when many political knees jerk with excitement against migrants and refugees, her background provides a counterweight. She is the daughter of Jewish parents from Germany and Austria who got into Egypt before Hitler's ethnonationalist death machine did its work. The family lived as stateless aliens in London well into the 1950s.

But then she took off and powered her way as a feminist student activist in the London School of Economics in the 1960s and then a Labour Party activist in Islington – where else? – during the strike happy 1970s, before becoming leader of Islington Council and one of the Labour women who took on Margaret Thatcher.

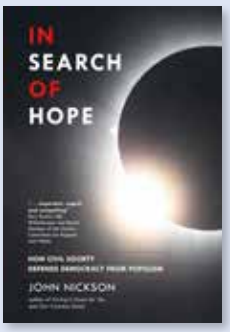
The then rulers of the Labour Party – beer-sodden white men, clutching trade union rulebooks, united in dislike of Europe, foreigners, and worst of all, "feminists", a word they never quite translated correctly – were swept away by Hodge's energy, radical enthusiasms and infectious sense of humour as she dragged Islington Council into the late 20th century.

She became MP for Barking and mobilised effectively to stop the far-right contender Nick Griffin, pointing out to him on the hustings that as a Jewish refugee from German-speaking Europe of the 1930s her family had first-hand experience of where racist hate politics ended up.

After the 1983 general election ended in Labour's worst ever-defeat, Hodge turned to Tony Blair to pull Labour back to the centre of British politics. She joined up with other Labour women whose names began with H, like Harriet Harman and Patricia Hewitt, and provided Blair with the female ministerial talent, ideas and energy that helped him become the longest serving Labour prime minister

He made her Britain's first Children's Minister and her Sure Start programme gave many thousands of poor children a better start in life then previous generations.

She finished in the House of Lords of course – where else? But her radicalism never softened and this is a fascinating history of the rise of a generation of Labour women Robespierres who changed their party and British politics.



FINDING HOPE BY GIVING

Fiona Mactaggart

In Search of Hope

By John Nickson

Tandem £20

DEFENDING DEMOCRACY FROM POPULISM is a cause close to the heart of most readers of Order!Order! but although John Nickson's book ends with a manifesto setting out how to do that, it starts from a surprisingly apolitical place.

John was a fundraiser; he was good at it. He helped English National Opera, the Royal Academy and Tate to reach great success. His account of how good leadership is critical to success in cultural and charitable organisations is gripping and a lesson to anyone who is a trustee or board member of any kind.

But he didn't just raise money for good causes, he joined the board, including of the international school, Atlantic College, and while at a meeting there, he responded to the chair's request for student sponsorship. He responded to the chair's request for student sponsorship by saying that he would sponsor a refugee. That was the start of his transformation from someone who asked to someone who gives.

Innocent, the Rwandan refugee he sponsored, changed John's life. John backed him with scholarship funds, warm clothes and love. Innocent, now a father himself, has taken John's name and has at last obtained his own nationality so that he can travel between continents.

John's thesis is that giving can change society, which has become more selfish. He may not be familiar with the old motto of Battersea borough council "non mihi, non tibi, sed nobis": (not for me, not for you, but for us), but he argues that is why giving fosters democracy and strengthens the notion of society.

Nickson's wealth was largely inherited from an ancestor who built the Blackpool tower. Consequently, he spent on needs in Blackpool. He and a colleague sponsored research which uncovered the existence in 12 streets of 400 young people who were NEETs. The researcher talked to them and to the voluntary organisations in the town to develop a programme which got them out of their beds and into positive activity. Building on this, required voluntary organisations to work together, to pool requests for funding and to agree a theory of change which emphasised early intervention.

Nickson is gay and this has inspired his determination to oppose individualistic, arrogant populism that picks on minorities. The inside cover of his book includes a reproduction of da Vinci's Annunciation with Archangel Gabriel reaching out to Mary with, as Nickson puts it, the gift of love bringing redemption. His argument is that giving can build hope. It is not just the Labour party which aims for hope again. All democratic politics does, Nickson's book provides one recipe to build it. Read it.

A GOOD READ

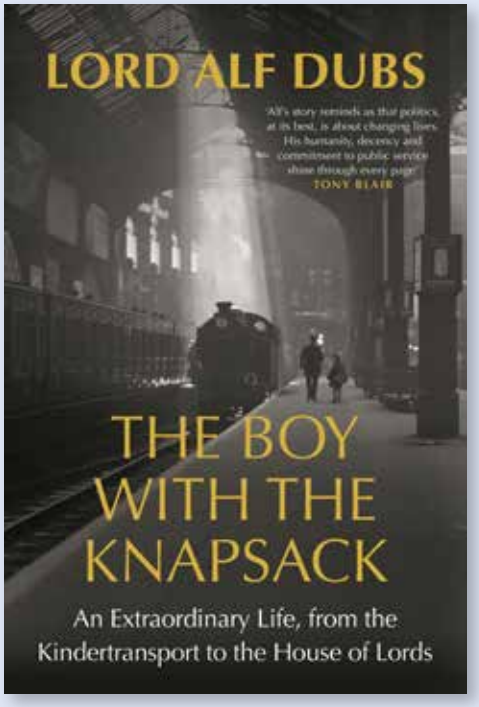
FROM A CZECH CHILDHOOD TO THE LORDS

Denis MacShane

The Boy with the Knapsack

By Alf Dubs

Ithaka £25



IT IS UNLIKELY THAT A SMALL REFUGEE BOY fleeing persecution would get much of a welcome in today's Britain, where every party's hand – some with uglier language than others – has its palm up against offering shelter in Britain.

Lord Dubs, who has been a pillar of Labour in the Commons and then Lords, was luckier. Pre-1939 English politics was riddled with anti-semitism. The Tory "statesman", Austen Chamberlain wrote of Disraeli that although he was an English patriot "he was not an English gentleman." Later, in an attack on the Jewish Tory minster Leon Brittan, his fellow Tory MP, John Stokes, a Franco-supporting right-winger, told the Commons, "There are not enough red-blooded Englishmen in the Cabinet."

By some miracle of human decency, the pre-1939 Tory government allowed about 10,000 Jewish children from Nazi controlled Europe – Germany, Austria and part of Czecho-slovakia, handed to Hitler by Neville Chamberlain in Munich in 1938 – to enter Britain. They came alone leaving their parents to be sent to gas chambers. British families offered to take them in.

One of them was a four-year old Austrian boy, Alf Dubs. The family lived in Prague. His father was Jewish but not his mother. After the Conservative government agreed Hitler could take over Prague the family moved there to work in the clothing industry. Luckily Hubert Dubs was in London on business when Hitler rolled over Central Europe. Even more luckily, a British businessman, Nicholas Winton, made it his business to find trains on which Jewish children could escape to England from Austria and Czechoslovakia.

The so-called Kindertransport (Kinder is German for children) brought 10,000 mainly Jewish children to Britain between Hitler's takeover of Prague in autumn 1938 and his invasion of Poland and then France a year later. Alf Dubs's mother was able to get out as a non-Jew.

After school in Cheadle Hume, university at the LSE, which confirmed his interest in politics – but not the politics that had led to the end of freedom in his native Czechoslovakia or the Tory appeasement of Hitler at Munich – and a young marriage, Dubs worked in market research in London and began the traditional climb to a parliamentary seat via a Labour seat on Tory-controlled Westminster City Council. He was elected Labour MP for Battersea South in 1979.

It meant his early years in the Commons were under Mrs Thatcher's rule. Dubs tells many amusing stories and drops many big names into his account of his years on the backbenches.

He was in the middle of the party – opposed to the Militant Tendency, Corbyn-Bennite clique and the fashionable hostility to the European Union that kept Labour in opposition into the 1990s. He worked hard as a backbench and constituency MP, and rose without making enemies – a rare gift but an important talent in democratic politics anywhere in the world. He lost his seat in 1987 to the Conservative John Bowis but turned his personal story to good use as Director of the Refugee Council 1988-1995.

Alf Dubs came to symbolise the Britain that welcomed refugees fleeing political persecution from Right and Left and was regularly on TV and radio when producers wanted someone to talk of the refugee experience. As Labour left behind the anti-European passions that did so much damage to the party under Harold Wilson and Jim Callaghan, Alf Dubs, represented an idea of Europe that was tolerant and opposed to all political extremism. I kept bumping into him on platforms linked to Britain and Europe.

Surefooted as a speaker and very clear where extreme nationalist political passions could end up, he was a natural appointment to the Lords and then a Northern Ireland minister in the first Blair administration. He didn't have an enemy and was one of the most liked, trusted and respected men in recent parliamentary life. He chaired the Broadcasting Standards Commission, the Fabian Society, Liberty, and the Road Safety Foundation.

In every conversation there was balance, judgement and a give-and-take that is not the speciality of most Labour politicians. He kept up the fight for refugees, tabling amendments to different bills to make provision for children to come to Britain to find sanctuary as he did as a small boy.

In 2021, his Czech citizenship was restored, so in his last years he is both a British and a European citizen. His biography is well-written and edited. It is the story of a child of Mitteleuropa who became a distinguished Brit and contributed to upholding the reputation of the British Parliament as one of the best in the world.

Denis MacShane was MP for Rotherham 1994-2012

TRIBUTES

MICHAEL MEADOWCROFT

6 March 1942 – 1 June 2026
Liberal MP for Leeds West, 1983–87
By Gordon Lishman



Michael and his widow Liz Bee will be remembered for many reasons by many people. Their wonderful home in Leeds welcomed Liberals, musicians, opera-singers, and a wide variety of people associated with the political and cultural life of their city.

Michael and Liz were Francophiles, particularly from their home in France and committed to the promotion of the local wines of Faugères. Their musical interests ranged from Michael's clarinet playing in Granny Lee's All-Stars to Opera North and the wider music scene in Leeds. I remember when Michael played to a Conference Glee Club of eight people in a hotel room and later to more than a thousand people.

Much of Michael's life was in the Liberal Party, the Liberal Democrats and the cause of liberalism. From chair of Merseyside Young Liberals to Liberal Party local government officer to Leeds City councillor and MP to observer and adviser on elections and democracies in many parts of the world, Michael defined and was defined by his philosophy of life and liberalism. He defied expectations in 1983 by winning Leeds West, which had been a safe Labour seat for decades, and had not had a Liberal MP since 1923. Labour took it back off him in 1987.

Crucially, and in common with the late Lord Tony Greaves, Michael saw no distinction between local politics, national politics and philosophical belief. Philosophy underpins action; it's not separate from everyday hard political choices. Both philosophy and action are founded in the everyday life and language of real folk. He referred to "the councillor as the political arm of his people".

His debate about liberalism and social democracy with David Marquand in 1980, later published by the Liberal Publication Department, his own booklet on "Social Democracy: Barrier or Bridge" and the publications on "Liberals and the Left" and "Liberalism and the Right" were and remain important in understanding the distinctive Liberal identity. The Liberal Yellow Books re-stated practical liberalism in an up-to-date context. One of his most important publications is "Diversity in Danger: Pluralism and Policy Development" published by Beecroft Publications in 1989 and revised in 2009.

Michael's other roles included being an election monitoring observer and governance adviser in 35 new and emerging democracies, and chairing the Electoral Reform Society.

He had been suffering from a brain tumour in recent months and died peacefully with family present, in Adel, Leeds. He continued to engage with friends throughout his last months.

Gordon Lishman is a former Chair of the Social Liberal Forum and is a Trustee of the John Stuart Mill Institute. This is an amended version of a tribute originally published in Liberal Democrat Voice.

JOHN HORAM

7 March 1939–24 July 2026. Labour MP for Gateshead West, 1970–81; SDP MP for Gateshead West, 1981–83; Conservative MP for Orpington, 1992–2010
By Nicholas Bennett



John Horam shared with Reg Prentice and Alan Howarth the distinction of serving as a minister in both Labour and Conservative governments. He had the added distinction of having sat in the House of Commons for three political parties.

John was born in Preston a few months before the outbreak of World War II. His father worked as a fitter for Leyland motors, while his mother ran variously a newsagents and dress shop. He attended Silcoates independent school in Wakefield. After graduating with an MA in Economics at Cambridge, he worked as a market research officer for Rowntree, in York, where in 1962, he helped launch After Eight mints. He switched to journalism as a feature writer for the FT and later The Times and The Economist, then founded a consultancy specialising in minerals and metals.

In 1966, aged 27, he stood for Labour in Folkestone and Hythe, a safe Conservative seat. Four years later he was elected MP for Gateshead West. He chaired the Manifesto Group, who backed Jim Callaghan for Labour leader in 1976, and on Callaghan's appointment as Prime Minister was appointed PUSS at the Department of Transport, under Bill Rodgers. His plans to make seat belts compulsory fell at the election, but became law in 1983.

As Labour drifted left after 1979, John was one of 13 MPs who launched the new Social Democratic Party on 2 March 1981, while his erstwhile boss Bill Rodgers was one of the founding Gang of Four, but his parliamentary career ended when he came third in Newcastle Central to Conservative Piers Merchant in 1983. Twenty years later, he and Piers would be two of the four Bromley Conservative MPs.

John joined the Conservatives in 1987, calling the SDP "Labour without the loonies", and won Orpington in 1992 by nearly 13,000 votes. His reappearance led Denis Skinner to call him a "dirty double rat" to which he replied, in words attributed to Churchill: "Better to change your mind rather than be wrong all the time." John described his Orpington constituency as "exacting – a marginal in tough Tory times". It is a tribute to his diligence that he held it for 18 years, though in 2001, he beat the Lib Dem councillor, Chris Maines, by only 269 votes.

John stood down in 2010, and was created Baron Horam of Grimsargh in the County of Lancashire in 2013.

I got to know him after my election to Bromley council in 2006. An immensely friendly man with no airs and graces and with a lovely sense of humour, it was a pleasure to work with him. He is survived by his wife Judith and two stepsons, one whom, Lincoln Jopp MC, is Conservative MP for Spelthorne.

TRIBUTES

ANN WIDDECOMBE

4 October 1947 – 8 July 2026
Conservative MP for Maidstone, 1987–97; Maidstone and The Weald 1997-2010
By Nicholas Bennett



I knew Ann for over fifty years before her untimely death at the hands of an intruder to her Devon home. We first met at the Federation of Conservative Students, then a nursery for aspiring MPs. The Ann in her twenties was the Ann in her seventies – robust, certain and principled. We were members of the 1987 intake and became ministers on the same day, in John Major's first administration.

As backbenchers we shared a desire to reform the 1967 Abortion Act and reduce the time limits. One of the tactics was to secure a Ten-Minute Rule bill. Ann, David Alton and I organised a rota of like-minded colleagues to queue in a relay through the night outside the Public Bill office to secure one of the prime-time slots.

Ann was a woman of deep Christian faith. She was, at the time, an Anglican although educated at La Sainte Union Catholic Convent School in Bath, but her growing concern about the direction the Church of England was taking on moral matters, and her close working relationship with Catholic MPs like David Alton, led her to reception into the Catholic Church in 1993.

Ann was born in October 1947 and studied Classics at Birmingham University before transferring to Oxford to read PPE, where she was treasurer and secretary of the Union. After Oxford she worked for Unilever for a couple of years, then as a financial administrator at the University of London. Her political career followed the traditional route of fighting unwinnable seats – Burnley in 1979 and Plymouth Devonport in 1983 – before she was selected to contest Maidstone in 1987, which she held for 23 years.

Ann loved the Commons and was an assiduous attender and soon mastered parliamentary procedure and used it to advance her strong views on a range of subjects. Only five foot tall, and as she herself remarked, "I'm toothy, dumpy and a spinster", she stood out on the Tory benches. A fluent speaker, she had a fine voice which commanded attention. Although a supporter of capital punishment, she was a passionate opponent of fox hunting.

In December 1990, she was appointed parliamentary under-secretary at the Department of Social Security under Peter Lilley. She admired Peter and voted for him in the first ballot for Tory leader in 1997. She became a minister of state in the Department of Employment in 1993, and transferred to the Home Office in 1993, as Prisons minister. In typical Ann fashion she set about visiting every prison in England and Wales and was keen to improve conditions and ensure that prison education helped inmates on their release. But relations between her and the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, never recovered from their disagreement over his sacking of the Prisons Director, Derek Lewis, in 1995. When she declared in 1997 that "there was something of the night" about Howard, it damaged them both.

Under William Hague she was appointed shadow Health Secretary in 1998 and in June 1999 shadow Home Secretary. Following the 2001 General Election she declared her candidature for leader but she was seen as not being a reliable team player and failed to gain enough support to be nominated. Of her own volition she returned to the backbenches and in 2002 took part in the ITV Celebrity Fit Club. This was followed by a variety of appearances on TV including six episodes on BBC 2 as an agony aunt in The Widdecombe Project. Other appearances included Have I Got News for You and after retiring from parliament at the 2010 election she became an unlikely star on Strictly Come Dancing surviving for ten weeks before being eliminated. In 2018 she was runner-up in Celebrity Big Brother.

In May 2019, she was elected as one of the Brexit MEPs for the South West of England – but it was a short-lived return to public office, with the UK withdrawal the following January. She stood for Brexit in the 2019 General Election for Plymouth Sutton and Devonport, but finished a poor third with 5.5 per cent of the vote. At the time of her death, she was the immigration and justice spokesman for Reform.

Underneath her sometimes seemingly harsh and severe exterior, the real Ann was a kind and generous women who didn't take herself too seriously. When the tabloid press nicknamed her "Doris Karloff", for her defence of the practice of handcuffing pregnant female prisoners as they were transferred between goal and hospital, rather than take offence, she took to answering the phone as Karloff.

Ann never married and her three-year romance with fellow student Colin Maltby faltered on the altar of her career. Her mother Rita lived with her in her London home for many years, until she died aged 95 in 2007.

She had a powerful sense of justice and when former MP Harvey Proctor was falsely accused by a fantasist of being part of a VIP child abuse and murder ring Ann publicly stood by him. Perhaps the best epitaph for Ann was her explanation of why she crossed the Tiber: "For years I had been disillusioned by the Church of England's compromising on everything. The Catholic Church doesn't care if something is unpopular."

TRIBUTES

PETER SNAPE

12 February 1942 – 13 August 2026
Labour MP for West Bromwich East, 1974–2001
By Lawrie Quinn



Before our parliamentary lives, we all lived and worked in the real world. My good friend and fellow railwayman, Peter Snape shared a similar origin story and I'm pleased to celebrate his life as I prepare to attend his funeral at his beautiful parish church in Gloucestershire and reflect on his life of service at so many levels.

Peter's many contributions to our Association include his role as a founding member 25 years ago and his fine address in December 2025 to us celebrating 200 years of UK passenger railways: "from Signal Box to Despatch Box". He will be missed at many levels across Westminster's parliamentary community both past and present.

Hansard records in March 1974, a month after being elected, Peter Snape MP described his constituents as a "special brand" of people. They were "forthright and honest, with a down-to-earth sense of humour", which has proved to be an understatement of his own half-century of active membership in both Houses.

Lord Snape, as he became in 2004, was someone who enhanced political life because he was clever, funny and sharp as a samurai sword but, much more importantly, because he spoke with the authentic voice of lived experience.

In a tribute given at Peter's funeral, Lord Boateng reflected that many communities had lost a "mighty tree from the life of our nation" and the assembled mourners "a loyal friend and champion". This was followed by Julia Langdon's moving reading of the Andrew Motion poem "Voices":

The voices live which are the voices lost: we hear them and we answer, or we try, but words are nervous when you need them most and shatter, stop or dully slide away

so everything they mean to summon up is always just too far, just out of reach, unless our memories give time the slip and learn the lessons that heart-wisdoms teach

of how in grief we find a way to keep the dead beside us as our time goes on - invisible and silent, but the deep foundations of ourselves, our corner-stone.

Peter had worked on the railways and been a regular soldier in the army. He knew what he was talking about and instinctively understood what mattered to the men and women on the streets of West Bromwich, or anywhere in working Britain. Peter had no time for self-conscious political showmanship and posturing of his party's Left which, in his view, would do little to improve the lives of working people. His was a rooted socialism, founded by a fundamental belief in fairness and equality, which he reflected in his address to the Association last Christmas.

He was also a skilful political tactician, a natural for the Labour Whips' Office, in which he served in Labour's difficult days in government before 1979. On one occasion, he was profoundly shocked, when sitting on the government bench as the "duty whip" during a late-night debate, to be unexpectedly joined by the Prime Minister, James Callaghan, who asked Peter if he had ever thought of emigrating because "this country is finished". Snape was still a relatively new and young MP and discreetly kept this exchange entirely private.

Peter tried to become Labour's Chief Whip on three occasions in 1983, 1985 and 1990, a post then elected by Labour MPs. This was a personal disappointment and more a reflection on the internal politics of the parliamentary Labour Party at the time than on his suitability for the office.

He also stood unsuccessfully in 1988 for the role of Deputy Chief Whip. Snape was 55 by the time Tony Blair took office in 1997 and was then apparently deemed not a good fit for the red-rose "new" Labour government, despite unwavering party loyalty. When he left the Commons in 2001 he assumed his new role an exceedingly assiduous participant in Lords' debates.

Snape was "a proud son of Stockport" in the words of the Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, who also said: "He was a good friend to me." He was a lifelong supporter of Stockport County FC, of which he was a board member from 2010–13.

He was born in Stockport, the only child of Kathleen (née Critchley) and Thomas Snape. His mother was a former laundry worker. His father was a railwayman, a carriage and wagon examiner, but did not meet his son until he returned from Second World War service, bringing his boy a trainset as a gift.

In accordance with his mother's faith, Peter was a pupil at Roman Catholic primary schools in Stockport, St Bede's RC College, Manchester, and Dialstone secondary school in Bramhall, leaving aged 15 to follow his father into the railways before his life as a respected Labour politician.

Peter was first married to Winnie in 1963. The couple had two daughters and divorced in 1980. He subsequently married Janet Manley, a schoolteacher, in 2004; they separated and she died in 2024. In later years he found great happiness with Lynda Waltho, former MP for Stourbridge. They were married earlier this year, and she survives him, together with his daughters, Angela and Katie.

TRIBUTES

SIR GEORGE HOWARTH

29 June 1949 – 3 July 2026. Labour MP for Knowsley North, 1986–2010, Knowsley 2010–24

By Jack Straw



It's four months since George Howarth died, and I still miss him as much as I did when I first heard the news of his death.

Maintaining really close personal friendships in politics is difficult, in my experience. The vagaries of political careers, the whims of party leaders, can pull people apart.

George was the exception to this rule. We became close during his autumn 1986 by-election campaign, and got closer still. He was a friend first, a colleague second. He was loyal, entertaining, with a wonderful caustic wit. When the Guardian's acerbic parliamentary sketch-writer Simon Hoggart said of George that he looked like a "serial killer", George shot back a note saying that "appearances were not always deceptive". I can still see him giggling with mirth as he told me this.

Some have described George as the archetypal constituency MP. He was all of that. Born and brought up in the constituency which he was to represent for 38 years, he knew every street, church and school in his patch, and an astonishing number of his constituents. They reciprocated. In the 2017 election he received 17 in 20 of every vote cast (85.3%), a record. George did things in his constituency of national importance. He was critical to landing the Shakespeare North Playhouse into Prescot, in the heart of the constituency.

But George was much, much more than simply a good constituency MP. He worked with me in my Shadow Home Office team from 1994-97, and then as a minister in the Home Office from 1997-99. He was one of the best ministers I ever had in my 13 years in Cabinet. I trusted him completely. He handled all kinds of tricky issues and never dropped the ball.

George received a kind of "half promotion" when he moved in 1999 to the Northern Ireland Office. After the 2001 General Election Tony Blair inexplicably dropped him from government. It was a serious waste. But he took life as it came. He made a second parliamentary career as a chairman of committees, and sometimes acting Deputy Speaker.

George was a lovely guy. But there was steel there too. Labour's internal politics in the 1980s were foul. The Militant Tendency had taken over

Knowsley. When the sitting MP, Robert Kilroy-Silk resigned to work in TV, Labour's NEC imposed George. I was his minder. The local party boycotted the campaign. Despite badly hurting his back in the middle of campaigning, George still won handsomely.

One key to George was his wife, Julie, herself steeped in Labour politics, who ran his office for years. He leaves Julie, and two sons. His knighthood, awarded in 2019, was richly deserved.

TERRY LEWIS

7 March 1939–24 July 2026.
Labour MP for Worsley, 1983–2005.

By Brian Iddon



Terence (known as Terry) Lewis was born in Hope Hospital, Salford and lived in the Ordsall district of the city, close to the Manchester docks where his father Andy was a dock worker. He and his younger brother and sister were educated at Mount Carmel RC School near the family home. Terry started work at the age of 15, with a firm which manufactured lenses for eye glasses. After two years National Service with the Royal Army Medical Corps, at its Crookham Headquarters near Aldershot, Terry worked as a store keeper at the Associated Electrical Industries factory on Trafford Park, and then for Corn Products Corporation UK, starting as a cleaner, where he was a TGWU shop steward, and from 1974-82 Industrial Relations Officer. Having joined the Labour Party in the mid-1960s, he was a councillor on Kearsley UDC (1971-74), and Bolton MBC (1976–84). He resigned after being elected to Parliament in 1983.

He was a left-of-centre Labour MP, who supported CND and opposed the presence of troops in Northern Ireland, and the Iraq war. He signed an astonishing 4,397 EDMs and was a master of the one-line quip. On 9 May 1995, when Ann Widdecombe, then an employment minister, was giving long answers, he told her to "make it quick because her broomstick was being clamped". He was reprimanded by the Speaker on 5 July 1984 for throwing a bundle of papers at the Health Minister, Kenneth Clarke.

His parliamentary interests included leasehold reform, animal welfare, the dangers of smoking, and road safety – but the campaign for which he was best known was against BT's Premium Service telephone lines. These cost 38p per minute or more and allowed people to hold group conversations, or one-to-one conversations, mainly between men and hard-up women "talking dirty" – which Terry labelled "verbal pornography". The Talkabout chatline was much used by children, whose contributions were monitored by paedophiles. This campaign lasted several years, creating media attention across Britain, as the Department for Trade and Oftel were reluctant to do anything to stop BT making a fortune from people who could ill-afford these "services". Ironically, a similar battle is being fought today with the providers of social media sites. In 2002 Terry announced that he would retire at the next election.

Terry Lewis married Audrey Clarke, from Salford, in 1958. They had two sons – Andrew, who died from a brain tumour in 1975, and David. Audrey died, aged 87, on 3 January 2024. Terry died a few days after being transferred from his home to a nursing home in Swinton.

REGULATIONS FOR FORMER MEMBER PASS HOLDERS

1. You are reminded that you have agreed to observe the regulations applying to holders of a Former Member pass.

2. Former Members are explicitly forbidden from using the privilege in connection with lobbying activity. Former Members who undertake, or may be perceived to undertake, lobbying activity are invited to notify the Security & Access Hub and voluntarily surrender their Former Member pass for the duration of that activity. Where a pass is surrendered on this basis, the usual six-month deadline for renewal or initial application will be paused.

3. Parliamentary business must take precedence.

Entrance and internal access

4. You must always wear your pass when you are on the estate. It enables you to use the main passholder entrances into the Palace of Westminster and Portcullis House to attend meetings and access facilities (see below).

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6. You are entitled to use the following catering venues at any time (except the external dining area of the Terrace Cafeteria):

Internal dining area of the Terrace Cafeteria

- Open to all passholders
- When: At any time the cafeteria is open
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- No booking required
- External dining area of the Terrace Cafeteria
- When: On days when the House is not sitting
- No guests are permitted
- No booking required

Debate Cafeteria

- Open to all passholders
- When: At any time the cafeteria is open
- No guests are permitted
- No booking required

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- Open to all passholders
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- No guests are permitted
- No booking required

7. You are entitled to use the following catering venues at certain times:

Strangers' Dining Room

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The Adjournment Restaurant

- When: Wednesday evenings and Thursday lunchtimes
- Up to three guests are permitted
- Booking required

Members' Dining Room

- When: Monday lunchtimes, and Tuesday and Wednesday evenings
- No guests are permitted
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- When: Thursdays
- No guests are permitted

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- Make use of any other facilities in the Palace of Westminster or the parliamentary outbuildings. These include telephones, printers, House of Commons stationery and Official Paid envelopes, and Library and research facilities.
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- Enter any of the Catering & Retail service rooms (except those described above) or areas in the House, Terrace or the outbuildings unless accompanied by a full pass holder.
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- Use the Underground Car Park or any of the car parking facilities.

10. The Administration Committee has oversight of pass rules including for former Members, administered by the Security & Access Hub. Passes can be suspended or withdrawn if the above rules are contravened.

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12. If your former Member pass lapses, you must apply for its renewal within six months of it lapsing, otherwise you will be ineligible for a future pass.

13. New and renewal applications are administered via an online portal. Requests should be submitted in the first instance to the SecurityandAccessHub@parliament.uk. This email address may also be used for any further queries or information on pass and access arrangements, including rules on eligibility.

Parliamentary Security Department

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