



# Library Note

## Women in the House of Lords

There are 199 female Peers in the House of Lords today, who represent 24 percent of the 826 Members of the House. This is only slightly less than the proportion of women in the House of Commons, in which there are 191 female MPs, representing 29 percent of the 650 Members. The House of Lords has had six female Leaders and three female Government Chief Whips. The only two Lord Speakers to date have been women. However, women were not permitted to sit in the House of Lords until 1958, which was 40 years after women were granted the right to stand as MPs.

Women were excluded from the House of Lords before 1958 because the only people who were permitted to sit in the House were hereditary Peers, a small number of judges known as 'Lords of Appeal in Ordinary' (or 'Law Lords') and Bishops. There were women who were hereditary Peers, but they were not allowed to sit in the House of Lords. Women were barred from the judiciary until the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, and in fact there was not a female Lord of Appeal in Ordinary until Baroness Hale of Richmond was appointed to this position in 2004. The Church of England has not, until recently, allowed women to become Bishops; the first female Church of England Bishop was consecrated in January 2015 (please see section 3.4 of this note for further information). The Life Peerages Act 1958 allowed women and men to be created Peers for life; the first fourteen life Peers who were announced included four women. Although the Life Peerages Act 1958 enabled life peerages to be given to women, female hereditary Peers continued to be excluded from the House, until the Peerage Act 1963 gave them the right to sit in the House of Lords.

Whilst there are now 199 women in the House of Lords, and many female Peers have achieved senior parliamentary positions, there remains concern that women still represent a minority of the overall membership. Some commentators have suggested that female membership is increasing too slowly. Others have argued that gender balance should be an objective of House of Lords reform.

This Note provides a short history of women in the House of Lords, looking at the events which led to the first female Peers being permitted to sit in the House. It provides a list of 'firsts' for women in the House of Lords, and a list of women who have held significant office in the House. It examines the factors which may improve or impede the appointment of female Peers, and looks at the research on the voting and attendance of women in the House of Lords. It considers the issue of gender balance in the context of House of Lords reform. Lastly, the Note offers a full list of all the female Members who have sat in the House of Lords, and statistics on the proportion of female Members since 1958. This Library Note updates LLN 2014/008, March 2014.

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## I. Short History of Women in the House of Lords

Most hereditary peerages descend down the male line, which means that the peerage can only be inherited by a male relative. However, it is possible for a peerage to pass to a woman in certain circumstances; women may inherit a title which is a barony by writ (rather than the more common letters patent); in Scotland most peerages may pass to a woman in families with daughters but no sons; a ‘special remainder’ may be granted by the Crown to allow a woman to inherit a title; and lastly a woman can be given a hereditary peerage by the Crown (there are several examples of such peerages being given to a widow to honour her husband’s memory).<sup>1</sup>

Women who inherit or are given a title in this way are known as hereditary Peers ‘in their own right’, to distinguish them from women who have a title by virtue of their relationship to a male Peer (for example the wife of a Lord is known as a ‘Lady’, although she does not hold a peerage herself). There is evidence to suggest that there have been female hereditary Peers in their own right for centuries, but they were excluded from the House of Lords before 1963 because they did not have a ‘writ of summons’ from the Crown which entitles a Peer to become a Member of the House of Lords. For example, in 1606 the Court of Star Chamber stated that a Countess by marriage or descent could not be arrested for debt or trespass “for although in respect of her sex she cannot sit in Parliament, yet she is a Peer of the realm, and shall be tried by her Peers”.<sup>2</sup> Even in the medieval period, it appears that this distinction was made clear; Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock have suggested that “although women were sometimes summoned to attend medieval parliamentary assemblies, they never actually attended in person or sat in Parliament. Contemporary doctrines of Roman law and canon law effectively precluded women from participating in public life”.<sup>3</sup>

In 1918, following a campaign by the women’s suffrage movement, the passage of the Representation of the People Act 1918 gave most women over the age of 30 the right to vote, and the Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918 allowed women to stand for election to the House of Commons. The following year, the Sex Disqualification Removal Act 1919 removed the bar on women becoming senior civil servants, magistrates and judges. None of these pieces of legislation extended to membership of the House of Lords. There were efforts to challenge this. Amendments were tabled to include female hereditary Peers in the Parliament (Qualification of Women) Bill 1918 in both the Lords and the Commons, but these were unsuccessful. The Sex Disqualification Removal Bill 1919 originally included a clause which stated that any future special remainders could allow a woman to inherit a seat in Parliament as well as her father’s peerage, but this was deleted.<sup>4</sup>

Duncan Sutherland has suggested that the question of female hereditary Peers’ right to sit in the House of Lords was deliberately excluded from the campaign for women’s suffrage because “the admission of hereditary Peeresses did not stir the same popular enthusiasm as the cry of ‘votes for women’”. Sutherland has also asserted that “most upper class women opposed suffrage”.<sup>5</sup> However, Mari Takayanagi has pointed out that some aristocratic women were

<sup>1</sup> For more information on this subject, see Duncan Sutherland’s article ‘[Peeresses, Parliament and Prejudice: The Admission of Women to the House of Lords, 1918–1963](#)’, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> House of Lords Library, [The Life Peerages Act 1958](#), 21 April 2008, LLN 2008/011, p 2.

<sup>3</sup> Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock, ‘The Impact of Women on the House of Lords’, *Studies in Public Policy*, 1983, p 4.

<sup>4</sup> Duncan Sutherland, ‘[Peeresses, Parliament and Prejudice: The Admission of Women to the House of Lords, 1918–1963](#)’, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 2000, pp 219–20.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p 219.

suffragettes, and suggested that they played an important role in providing the suffrage campaign with “legitimacy and authority”.<sup>6</sup>

In 1918, a female hereditary Peer in her own right, the Viscountess Rhondda, announced her intention to claim a seat in the House of Lords. Viscountess Rhondda was a Peer by special remainder and a former militant suffragette. She was a prominent businesswoman and in 1926 was elected the first female president of the Institute of Directors.<sup>7</sup> In 1920, she founded a political magazine called *Time and Tide*, and in 1921 she established the Six Point Group, which campaigned for women’s rights.<sup>8</sup>

In 1921, Viscountess Rhondda took a case to the House of Lords Committee for Privileges, a committee of the House of Lords which considered peerage claims and related matters. She suggested that the Sex Disqualification Removal Act 1919 gave her the right to a seat in the House of Lords, because it stated that “a woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage from any public function”. The Committee initially found in her favour, and voted to allow her to sit in the House of Lords. However, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Birkenhead, and several other Peers, raised objections. The House referred the case back to the Committee for Privileges, which this time voted against Viscountess Rhondda’s petition, and concluded that women could only be admitted to the House of Lords when legislation was passed which expressly allowed it.<sup>9</sup>

Viscountess Rhondda asked her lawyer to draft a bill admitting women to the Lords. This Bill was introduced in the House of Lords as a private member’s bill by Viscount Astor, husband of Nancy Astor, the first female MP to take her seat in the House of Commons. He introduced private member’s bills to this effect in almost every year between 1924 and 1928. The House of Lords voted against each of these bills. In 1931, Viscount Astor declined to raise the matter again, suggesting that wholesale reform was needed.<sup>10</sup>

The matter was not raised in Parliament again for 15 years. After the Second World War, a committee was formed, chaired by Edward Iwi, which organised a petition on the subject. This apparently collected 50,000 signatures. Edward Iwi’s article ‘Women and the House of Lords’ provides an account of this campaign.<sup>11</sup> The petition was never presented to Parliament because in 1949, for the first time, the House of Lords voted in favour of a motion to admit female hereditary Peers. However, this did not lead to legislation because the Labour Government did not want to extend the hereditary principle. Duncan Sutherland has suggested that, at this point, the question of women’s rights in the House of Lords became “entangled” with the wider issue of House of Lords reform. He argues that:

The main reason why the implementation of women’s equal political rights took so long is that the question of women’s admission to the Lords became entangled with the

<sup>6</sup> Mari Takayanagi, ‘[A Changing House: The Life Peerages Act 1958](#)’, *Parliamentary History*, October 2008, p 383.

<sup>7</sup> In fact Viscountess Rhondda was the only woman who had acted as the leader of the Institute of Directors until earlier this year, when Barbara Judge was appointed as the organisation’s national chair (Institute of Directors, ‘[Lady Barbara Judge CBE Appointed New IoD Chair](#)’, 12 February 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Professor Angela V John gave a lecture on the life of Viscountess Rhondda on 26 October 2011 to mark the acquisition by the House of Lords Works of Art Committee of a portrait of the Viscountess (BBC News, ‘[Suffragette Margaret Haig Thomas Portrait to Go on Show](#)’, 29 October 2011) and has since published a biography about her (*Turning the Tide: The Life of Lady Rhondda*, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Duncan Sutherland, ‘[Peeresses, Parliament and Prejudice: The Admission of Women to the House of Lords, 1918–1963](#)’, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 2000, p 221.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, p 222.

<sup>11</sup> Edward Iwi, ‘Women and the House of Lords’, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 1953.

more controversial question of the wider reform of the Lords' composition and powers. This was much more difficult to achieve than the simple admission of 25 Peeresses to the Lords, and the connection of the two questions ensured the repeated postponement of the settlement of this issue.<sup>12</sup>

Sutherland has suggested that the two Acts by which women were eventually given the right to a seat in the House of Lords, the Life Peerages Act 1958 and the Peerage Act 1963, focused on other constitutional questions, and female representation was just the by-product. He writes that the Life Peerages Act 1958 sought to make the House of Lords more effective, addressing the issue of low attendance, and more representative; for this reason the House of Lords agreed that women should be included. The first life Peers, ten men and four women, were announced on 24 July 1958. The House agreed in principle that female hereditary Peers should be admitted in 1959, but this was not reflected in legislation until the Peerage Act 1963, which, Sutherland suggests, "was primarily drafted to allow MP Anthony Wedgwood Benn and other reluctant Peers to disclaim their peerages". For more information on the Life Peerages Act 1958 and the Peerage Act 1963, please see the House of Lords Library Note, [The Life Peerages Act 1958](#).<sup>13</sup>

Since 1958, 1458 peerages have been created, including 266 women.<sup>14</sup> Since 1963, 25 female hereditary Peers have taken a seat in the House of Lords. Section 6 of this Note provides a list of the female Peers who have sat in the House of Lords, and a graph on the ratio between men and women in the House in every year since 1958. One significant event for women in the House of Lords was the passage of the House of Lords Act 1999, which removed all but 92 of the hereditary Peers from the House of Lords.<sup>15</sup> The proportion of women in the House of Lords almost doubled overnight, from 8.8 percent to 15.8 percent.<sup>16</sup> Since then, the ratio of female Peers to male Peers has continued to increase, albeit more slowly. Between 1999 and 2015, the number of female Peers has increased from 106 at the start of the 1999–2000 session to 199 today, while the proportion of female Peers has increased from 15.8 percent in November 1999 to 24 percent today.<sup>17</sup> Some commentators have suggested that this represents a slow increase; the Equality and Human Rights Commission has described it as a "snail's pace".<sup>18</sup> Christina Eason has suggested that, since 1999 "the size of the women's group in the Lords has increased only nominally".<sup>19</sup> Section 3 of this Note will consider the factors which may have affected the rate of new female membership.

## 2. Women in the House of Lords: 'Firsts' and Significant Office Holders

Many female Peers have achieved senior parliamentary positions. In a paper published in 1983, Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock observed that: "one striking characteristic of women Peers is their success in obtaining frontbench office". They speculated that this may be because "in

<sup>12</sup> Duncan Sutherland, 'Peeresses, Parliament and Prejudice: The Admission of Women to the House of Lords, 1918–1963', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 2000, p 216.

<sup>13</sup> House of Lords Library, [The Life Peerages Act 1958](#), 21 April 2008, LLN 2008/011.

<sup>14</sup> This includes hereditary Peerages created since 1958, as well as Lords of Appeal in Ordinary created under the Appellate Jurisdiction Act 1876, and Life Peerages created under the Life Peerages Act 1958.

<sup>15</sup> For more information on this subject, please see the House of Lords Library Note, [Hereditary Peers in the House of Lords Since 1999](#), 27 March 2014, LLN 2014/014.

<sup>16</sup> Christina Eason, '[Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?](#)', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 399.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*, p 405 and p 407.

<sup>18</sup> EHRC, *Sex and Power*, September 2008, p 3.

<sup>19</sup> Christina Eason, '[Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been feminised since 1999?](#)', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 413.

contrast to the highly competitive position of MPs, Peers usually arrive in the Lords, in middle or old age, with their reputations secure. Male Peers do not feel under competitive pressure from female colleagues, and women Peers themselves are experienced and well-established in their own right”.<sup>20</sup>

More recent analysis may support the theory that women are more often represented on the frontbench in the Lords than in the Commons. In the current Government, of 110 Government ministers to appear on the list provided on the Parliament website, 29 (26 percent) are women. 91 ministers currently sit in the House of Commons, 22 (24 percent) of whom are women. 19 ministers currently sit in the House of Lords, 7 (37 percent) of whom are women.<sup>21</sup> In a blog post published in June 2015, Lord Norton of Louth, commenting on committees in the House of Lords, remarked that several of the most prominent leadership positions in the Lords were currently occupied by women:

The House appoints tomorrow the members of four ad hoc committees established for this session—on the Equality Act 2010 (looking at the impact on people with disabilities), Sexual Violence in Conflict, Social Mobility, and the Built Environment. What is notable is that each is being chaired by a female Peer—Baroness Deech (cross-bencher), Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne (Lib Dem), Baroness Corston (Lab) and Baroness O’Cathain (Con) respectively. The first three also have a majority of women peers as members.

The House has been notable for the leadership positions held by women Peers. Both elected Lord Speakers have been female, five of the past eight Leaders of the House have been female, and one woman Peer has just succeeded another as Leader of the Opposition. We thus now have the three leadership positions of Lord Speaker, Leader of the House, and Leader of the Opposition held by women. Although the result of the general election has meant the proportion of women Members is greater in the Commons than in the Lords, the Commons has yet to match the Lords in terms of the combination of leadership positions held by women.<sup>22</sup>

The following are some examples of ‘firsts’ for female representation in the House of Lords:

- Labour Peer Baroness Wootton of Abinger was the first woman to be created a life Peer, in 1958.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, she is said to have been the first female Member of the House of Lords, although Baroness Swanborough was actually the first woman to take her seat in the House of Lords.<sup>24</sup>
- Baroness Strange of Knokin was the first woman to take her seat in the House of Lords by virtue of being a hereditary Peer, in 1963.<sup>25</sup> In fact, a female hereditary Peer in her own right had already become a Member of the House of Lords: Baroness Ravensdale of Kedleston, who was one of the first female life Peers.

<sup>20</sup> Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock, ‘The Impact of Women on the House of Lords’, *Studies in Public Policy*, 1983, p 12.

<sup>21</sup> Statistics provided by the House of Commons Library; based on the list which is published on the Parliament website, ‘[Her Majesty’s Government](#)’. For further information, please see: House of Commons Library, [Women in Parliament and Government](#), 19 June 2015, SN01250.

<sup>22</sup> Lord Norton of Louth, ‘[Women Peers and Leadership](#)’, Lords of the Blog, 10 June 2015.

<sup>23</sup> [The London Gazette](#), 8 August 1958, p 4930.

<sup>24</sup> HL *Hansard*, 21 October 1958, [col 661](#).

<sup>25</sup> HL *Hansard*, 19 November 1963, [col 207](#).



- The first female Government whip in the House of Lords was Labour Peer Baroness Phillips, who served as Baroness in Waiting between 1965 and 1970.
- Baroness Llewelyn-Davies of Hastoe was the first female Chief Whip (see table below).
- Baroness Young was the first female Cabinet minister in the House of Lords, and the first female Leader of the House of Lords (see table below).
- Baroness Hale of Richmond became the first female Law Lord in 2004.
- Baroness Scotland of Asthal was appointed the first female Attorney-General in June 2007, a position she held until May 2010.
- The only two Lord Speakers to date have been women: Baroness Hayman, who became the first Lord Speaker in July 2006, and Baroness D’Souza, who became the second Lord Speaker in September 2011. When she was Lord Speaker, Baroness Hayman commented that: “it gives me some quiet satisfaction that, should a man break through the glass ceiling to succeed me, he will be known as the first male Lord Speaker”.<sup>26</sup>
- Baroness Stowell of Beeston was appointed as Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal on 15 July 2014 (see table below). Due to other changes in the Cabinet, it was revealed that Baroness Stowell would not be a member of the Cabinet and would therefore receive a lower salary than her predecessor as Leader of the House of Lords (the Lord Hill of Oareford).<sup>27</sup> It has been suggested that this was the first time there were no Members of the House of Lords in the Cabinet.<sup>28</sup> In May 2015, Baroness Stowell was promoted to the Cabinet as Leader of the House.<sup>29</sup>

The table below shows women who have held certain positions in the House of Lords, and the relevant dates. The table is in chronological order.

<b>Leaders of the House</b>	<b>Government Chief Whips</b>	<b>Party or Group Leaders, other than Leaders of the House</b>
Conservative Peer Baroness Young was Leader of the House, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster between September 1981 and April 1982, and as Lord Privy Seal between April 1982 and May 1983.	Labour Peer Baroness Llewelyn-Davies of Hastoe was Government Chief Whip in the House of Lords and Captain of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms between March 1974 and May 1979.	Baroness Hylton-Foster was Convenor of the Crossbench Peers between March 1974 and June 1995.

<sup>26</sup> Baroness Hayman, *Women in the Lords: The Life Peerages Act—Women and Change in the House of Lords since 1958*, 6 December 2007.

<sup>27</sup> BBC News, ‘[Lords Leader Baroness Stowell Rejects Tory ‘Top-Up’ Salary](#)’, 23 July 2014.

<sup>28</sup> House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution, *Status of the Leader of the House of Lords*, HL Paper 41 of session 2014–5, p 6.

<sup>29</sup> Gov.uk, ‘[Election 2015: Prime Minister and Ministerial Appointments](#)’, May 2015.

Labour Peer Baroness Jay of Paddington was Leader of the House, as Lord Privy Seal between July 1998 and May 2001.	Labour Peer Baroness Royall of Blaisdon was Government Chief Whip in the House of Lords and Captain of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms between January 2008 and October 2008.	Baroness Seear was Leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords between March 1984 and March 1988.
Labour Peer Baroness Amos was Leader of the House, as Lord President of the Council between October 2003 and June 2007.	Conservative Peer Baroness Anelay of St Johns was Government Chief Whip in the House of Lords and Captain of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms between 12 May 2010 and August 2014.	Baroness Stedman was Leader of the Social Democrat Party in the House of Lords between 1988 and 1991.
Labour Peer Baroness Ashton of Upholland was Leader of the House, as Lord President of the Council between June 2007 and October 2008.		Baroness D'Souza was Convenor of the Crossbench Peers between November 2007 and June 2011.
Labour Peer Baroness Royall of Blaisdon was Leader of the House, as Lord President of the Council between October 2008 and June 2009, and as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster between June 2009 and May 2010.		Labour Peer Baroness Royall of Blaisdon was Leader of the Labour Party in Opposition in the House of Lords between May 2010 and May 2015.
Baroness Stowell of Beeston was appointed Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal on 15 July 2014.		Baroness Smith of Basildon was appointed as Leader of the Labour Party in Opposition in the House of Lords in May 2015.

### 3. Factors which Influence the Number of Women in the House of Lords

There are currently several different routes to membership of the House of Lords. The largest group of Peers in the House of Lords are life Peers. The House of Lords Library Note [Peerage Creations Since 1997](#) provides a summary of how life Peers are appointed:

The Sovereign, on the advice of the Prime Minister, formally confers all peerages. There is no statutory limit on the number of new peerages. It is the Prime Minister who decides what number is appropriate. By convention, when recommending peerages for members of political parties other than their own, prime ministers take advice from the leader of that party. In addition, the House of Lords Appointments Commission makes

recommendations for non-party political peers and vets party nominations for propriety.<sup>30</sup>

Two further groups make up the membership of the House of Lords: hereditary Peers and Bishops. The House of Lords Act 1999 removed the right of most hereditary Peers to sit in the House. Under the terms of the 1999 Act, 92 hereditary Peers are permitted to sit in the House. Two of these are ex-officio Members, the Lord Great Chamberlain and the Earl Marshal. Fifteen of the hereditary Peers are office holders, such as deputy speakers, who are elected by the whole House. The remaining 75 are elected by hereditary Peers from their own political group within the House of Lords.<sup>31</sup> There are 26 places in the House of Lords reserved for Bishops. Section 3.4 of this Note explains more about how these places are allocated.

It is possible that each of these methods of selection affect the representation of women. Each is discussed below. For more information on routes to membership of the House of Lords, see the briefing produced by the House of Lords Information Office, [House of Lords Briefing: Membership](#).<sup>32</sup>

### 3.1 House of Lords Appointments Commission

The House of Lords Appointments Commission was established in May 2000, as a non-statutory non-departmental advisory public body. It has two functions: to make recommendations to the Queen for non-political Peers and to vet for propriety all nominations for peerages, including those from political parties.<sup>33</sup> The House of Lords Appointments Commission was created following the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the House of Lords, chaired by Lord Wakeham. The Wakeham Commission recommended that an appointments commission should be created, which should “be under a statutory duty to ensure that a minimum of 30 percent of new members of the second chamber should be women, and a minimum of 30 percent men, with the aim of making steady progress towards gender balance in the Chamber as a whole over time”.<sup>34</sup> This suggestion has never been adopted.

To date, 63 crossbench life Peers have been appointed based on the nominations of the House of Lords Appointments Commission; 23 of these, or 36 percent, are women.<sup>35</sup> When the House of Lords Appointments Commission was established, the Government stated that, in considering applications for crossbench life Peers, members of the Commission must take into account:

The impact of an individual’s nomination on the composition and balance of the House as a whole, in relation to the range of expertise, experience and outlook and the spread of gender, age, ethnic background and geographical representation.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>30</sup> House of Lords Library, [Peerage Creations Since 1997](#), 20 May 2015, LLN 2015/010, p 1.

<sup>31</sup> For more information on this subject, see the House of Lords Library Note, [Hereditary Peers in the House of Lords Since 1999](#), 27 March 2014, LLN 2014/014.

<sup>32</sup> House of Lords Information Office, [House of Lords Briefing: Membership](#), 2009.

<sup>33</sup> For more information, see the House of Lords Library Note, [House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), 9 May 2012, LLN 2012/016.

<sup>34</sup> Royal Commission on the Reform of the House of Lords, [A House for the Future](#), January 2000, Cm 4534, p 188.

<sup>35</sup> HOLAC website, ‘[HOLAC Appointments](#)’, accessed 18 June 2015.

<sup>36</sup> HOLAC, [House of Lords Appointments Commission Report on First Term 2000–2003](#), 17 July 2003, p 29.

The House of Lords Appointments Commission published a set of selection criteria in September 2000:

- A record of significant achievement within the nominee’s chosen way of life that demonstrates a range of experience, skills and competencies;
- an ability to make an effective and significant contribution to the work of the House;
- the time available to make an effective contribution within the procedures and working practices of the House;
- some understanding of the constitutional framework, including the place of the House of Lords;
- outstanding personal qualities, in particular integrity and independence;
- a strong and personal commitment to the highest standards of public life; and
- independence of any political party.<sup>37</sup>

These criteria remain largely unchanged. The [current criteria](#) are available on the HOLAC website.<sup>38</sup>

From the outset, the House of Lords Appointments Commission has received criticism for appointing members who are not deemed to be representative of society. The first 15 nominations were announced in April 2001.<sup>39</sup> Four of these were women. The *Independent* published an article which commented that, rather than “give ordinary people, such as teachers and nurses, a voice in framing the country’s laws for the first time”, the Commission had chosen an elite group, since “more than half of those selected already boast titles, as well as extensive entries in *Who’s Who*”.<sup>40</sup> Several MPs criticised the list, including in terms of gender balance, during a Westminster Hall debate on 9 May 2001.<sup>41</sup> Gordon Prentice, Labour MP for Pendle, said “if we are having 15 people’s Peers, half should be women, but that did not happen. There are seven knights, three professors and only a handful of women”.<sup>42</sup> Professor Robert Hazell has also suggested that there were too few women in the initial list of appointments. In a report in 2002, he said:

The Commission could have set out more vigorously to redress the imbalance of women, who are more seriously under-represented on the cross benches (11 percent) than elsewhere in the House of Lords. If Stevenson [Lord Stevenson of Coddenham, the first chair of the Commission] had appointed a majority of women, and announced his intention of continuing to do so until the imbalance was redressed, his initial list might have had a stronger rationale and been greeted with a little more respect.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, p 30.

<sup>38</sup> HOLAC website, ‘[Criteria Guiding the Assessment of Nominations for Non-Party Political Life Peers](#)’, accessed on 24 June 2015.

<sup>39</sup> HOLAC website, ‘[HOLAC Appointments](#)’, accessed on 24 June 2015.

<sup>40</sup> *Independent*, ‘Meet the “People’s Peers”’, 27 April 2001.

<sup>41</sup> HC *Hansard*, 9 May 2001, [cols 71–91WH](#).

<sup>42</sup> HC *Hansard*, 9 May 2001, [col 84WH](#).

<sup>43</sup> Robert Hazell, [Commentary on the White Paper: The House of Lords—Completing the Reform](#), January 2002, p 16.

The House of Lords Appointments Commission published a report in 2003 which sought to defend its record on gender balance:

In line with its brief from the Prime Minister, the commission made it plain that it wished to encourage nominations from groups who were under-represented in the Lords, such as women and ethnic minority communities. However, the Commission made it clear—in line with its brief—that all appointments would be made solely on the basis of merit.

[...] The Commission did not recommend individuals on the basis of gender or ethnicity but on merit alone. The outcome of this was that of the fifteen nominees, four were women and four were of non-white ethnic background. This does not reflect the balance of the UK population—the proportion of non-white appointments being larger and that of women smaller than the respective proportions in the population as a whole. This illustrates the need to consider achieving a balance over an extended period of time if the appointments process is to be entirely merit based.<sup>44</sup>

The report stated that the number of applications it had received from women had been low:

In the Commission's first round about 80 percent of nominees were men and, all things being equal, this would suggest that the same proportion of appointees would be men. It is difficult to achieve a gender balance when the nominations are weighed heavily in the direction of one gender.<sup>45</sup>

It appears that this pattern has continued: in an article published in 2009, Christina Eason presented an analysis of the Commission's appointment of women. She observed that, in each of the ten rounds of applications which the Commission processed between 2001 and 2008, the proportion of women who applied was around 20 percent of the total.<sup>46</sup> In 2006, the BBC published a leaked document, [House of Lords Appointment Commission Nominations from Women: A Note from the Secretariat](#), in which the Commission discussed how to increase the number of applications it received from women.<sup>47</sup> This stated that:

The Commission receives four times more nominations from men than from women. One conclusion is that the Commission needs to radically increase the number of women being nominated.<sup>48</sup>

The document went on to suggest that:

The Commission may wish to invite the Secretariat to develop some ideas for attracting more high quality nominations from women. For example, the Commission could consider direct mailing of professional organisations or a system of 'shoulder tapping' by commission members. Contacts with government departments or agencies could be used to stimulate nominations from women.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> HOLAC, [House of Lords Appointments Commission Report on First Term 2000–2003](#), 17 July 2003, pp 26–7.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*, p 27.

<sup>46</sup> Christina Eason, '[Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?](#)', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 409.

<sup>47</sup> BBC News, '[House of Lords Appointments Commission: Tapping Shoulders](#)', 19 June 2006.

<sup>48</sup> [House of Lords Appointment Commission Nominations from Women: A Note from the Secretariat](#), 2006, para 3.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*, para 6.

Christina Eason has suggested that, since women have on average made up 20 percent of those who apply to the Commission, but have made up 36 percent of their total appointments, the Commission may be exercising a form of “positive discrimination” in their selection method. She questioned whether this was “involuntary or part of a more purposeful feminisation”.<sup>50</sup>

The Commission’s selection criteria state that the Commission “is committed to independent and fair assessment of nominations. Its recommendations will be made on individual merit and not on any other basis”.<sup>51</sup> However, the Commission’s most recent annual report also states that: “the Commission has been asked by the Prime Minister to consider nominees who would broaden the expertise and experience of the House and reflect the diversity of the people of the United Kingdom”.<sup>52</sup>

Christina Eason interviewed members of the Commission in 2009, who rejected her suggestion that any form of positive discrimination was taking place:

Interviews with members of the HOLAC stressed that there were no special measures given to women applicants. It was emphasised very strongly that the calibre of female applicants was exceptional and the idea of positive discrimination was refuted adamantly.<sup>53</sup>

In 2010, Lord Jay of Ewelme, who was then the chair of the House of Lords Appointments Commission, gave evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution on this subject:

The remit given to us is to ensure that the broad diversity of the United Kingdom is represented in the House and we would look, therefore, at ethnic diversity; we would look at disability; we would look at gender; we would look at representation from within the United Kingdom.

We would want to be able to look back and say, taking one thing and another into account, if you look back over the last few years there is a reasonable representation of Britain’s diversity in the House of Lords, always, of course, subject to the individuals concerned being of very considerable quality and calibre and being able and willing to make a contribution to the work of the House.

When you make five or six appointments a year it is going to take quite a long time for this to become apparent, but that is the basis on which we would try to do our job; and I think if you look at the figures of appointees by the Commission in terms of gender and disability and ethnic minorities then it is higher than it might otherwise have been. I think, therefore, that that is working reasonably well.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Christina Eason, [‘Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?’](#), *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 410.

<sup>51</sup> HOLAC, [‘Criteria Guiding the Assessment of Nominations for Non-Party Political Life Peers’](#), accessed 19 June 2015.

<sup>52</sup> HOLAC, [House of Lords Appointments Commission Annual Report October 2011 to September 2013](#), October 2013, para 7.

<sup>53</sup> Christina Eason, [‘Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?’](#), *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 410.

<sup>54</sup> House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution, [Meeting with the Chairman of the House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), 7 April 2010, HL Paper 109 of session 2009–10, pp 8–9.

## 3.2 Party Political Appointments

All party political appointments to the House of Lords are made by the Sovereign on the advice of the Prime Minister, who also takes into account recommendations from the other party leaders. The number of party political life Peers who have been appointed in this way since 1958 is 1006. Of these, 219 have been women. It has been suggested that successive prime ministers have not appointed enough women. For example, in its evidence to the Joint Committee on the *House of Lords Reform Draft Bill*, Unlock Democracy suggested:

Despite having none of the barriers frequently ascribed to elected chambers, the appointment process has repeatedly failed to produce a genuinely representative second chamber; if appointment worked, there is no reason why it should not produce 50:50 gender balance. There is certainly no evidence that appointment is inherently better for women or ethnic minorities, significant progress can be made in elected chambers if political parties are willing to act.<sup>55</sup>

In her book, *Reforming the House of Lords: Lessons from Overseas*, Meg Russell suggested that the low percentage of party political peerages which had been given to women reflected the tendency of political parties to offer peerages in recognition of achievement in the House of Commons.<sup>56</sup> She suggested that this was a pattern internationally, remarking that appointment to the upper houses of the Parliaments of France, Canada, Australia, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the UK tends to reward political achievement in the lower house or in regional government, stating that in these countries:

The traditional nature of the upper house, and the connection to a record of achievement elsewhere in politics may result in a lower proportion of women than sit in the lower house.<sup>57</sup>

Adrian Vatter has conducted analysis of bicameral systems in OECD countries, which revealed that “compared to unicameral systems, women are significantly under-represented in bicameral structures”. He has suggested “this under-representation of women in second chambers can be attributed to the systematic over-representation of bourgeois and conservative parties that are traditionally dominated by men”.<sup>58</sup> The Inter-Parliamentary Union has created a list which shows the number of women in upper chambers around the world.<sup>59</sup>

For Meg Russell, women’s low representation in the House of Lords is symptomatic of their low representation in the House of Commons. Recent statistics appear to bear this out: 25 percent of the life peerages which have been created since 1997 have been given to people who were previously MPs.<sup>60</sup> Since the proportion of women in the House of Commons is now at 29 percent and, until 1997, had not risen above 10 percent, it follows that the number of women appointed to the House of Lords is low.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Joint Committee on the Draft House of Lords Reform Bill, [Draft House of Lords Reform Bill](#), 23 April 2012, HL Paper 284-II of session 2010–12, p 231.

<sup>56</sup> Meg Russell, *Reforming the House of Lords: Lessons from Overseas*, 2000, p 100.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Adrian Vatter, ‘Bicameralism and Policy Performance: The Effects of Cameral Structure in Comparative Perspective’, *Journal of Legislative Studies*, March 2005.

<sup>59</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union website, ‘[Women in National Parliaments](#)’, 1 May 2015.

<sup>60</sup> House of Lords Library, [Peerage Creations Since 1997](#), 20 May 2015, LLN 2015/010, p 6.

<sup>61</sup> House of Commons Library, [Women in Parliament and Government](#), 19 June 2015, SN01250, p 6.



It has been suggested that some prime ministers and party leaders have actively sought to increase the number of women in the House of Lords. Christina Eason has pointed out that “women consistently received less than one-fifth of appointments until 1997”.<sup>62</sup> However, she has calculated that women comprised over 20 percent of new appointees to the House of Lords when Tony Blair was Prime Minister, and received 30 percent of appointments under Gordon Brown. Eason quotes several female Peers, who she does not name, who suggested that Tony Blair as Prime Minister employed a deliberate policy of appointing more women to the House of Lords. This evidence, she suggests, “illustrates Blair’s capacity to feminise the Lords, with his presence deemed crucial to women’s greater numbers”.

In an article in the *Guardian* in 1992, Madeleine Bunting argued that Paddy Ashdown, as Leader of the Liberal Democrat party, also sought to increase the number of women in the House of Lords.<sup>63</sup> She quoted Liberal Democrat Peer Baroness Hamwee, who told Bunting: “I’m here because Paddy Ashdown wanted a woman Peer”. For Bunting, the appointment of female Peers was “a form of positive discrimination which works”.

In a 2011 report, Dr Alan Renwick commented that David Cameron, as Prime Minister, had so far appointed a significant number of women to the House of Lords.<sup>64</sup> David Cameron had previously indicated that he wanted to improve the representation of women in Parliament. In 2005 he said he was keen to “change the scandalous under-representation of women in the Conservative party”.<sup>65</sup> To date, 64 out of a total of 192 Peers appointed under David Cameron have been women, or 33 percent.

In 2011, the Liberal Democrat party conference adopted a resolution on gender balance in the House of Lords, which stated:

With specific regard to gender balance, conference calls on Liberal Democrat parliamentarians to:

- i) ensure the reformed House begins its mandate with in-built gender balance
- ii) pilot modern flexible working practices in the reformed House
- iii) ensure any further interim appointments mitigate, rather than perpetuate, the current gender imbalance, and, if an appointed element is retained,
- iv) press for a transparent skills and competency based approach to new appointments.<sup>66</sup>

Christina Eason has suggested that, in some cases, prime ministers and party leaders have sought to appoint women to the House of Lords to “compensate” them for failure to win a seat in the House of Commons. She has presented data which, she suggests, shows that “in all of the main political parties, women are significantly more likely to have attempted but failed to reach the House of Commons”.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Christina Eason, [‘Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?’](#), *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 405.

<sup>63</sup> Madeleine Bunting, ‘Men’s Club or One for the Ladies’, *Guardian*, 16 November 1992.

<sup>64</sup> Alan Renwick, [‘House of Lords Reform: A Briefing Paper’](#), Political Studies Association, July 2011, p 12.

<sup>65</sup> David Cameron, [‘Speech at Conservative Leadership Election Results’](#), BBC News, 6 December 2005.

<sup>66</sup> Liberal Democrats, [‘Autumn Conference, Conference Daily: Saturday 17 September 2011’](#), p 5.

<sup>67</sup> Christina Eason, [‘Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?’](#), *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 413.



### 3.3 Hereditary Peerages

Female hereditary Peers in their own right were excluded from the House of Lords until the Peerage Act 1963. Between 1963 and 1999, 25 female hereditary Peers in their own right were admitted to the House of Lords (section 6 of this note, ‘Facts and Figures’, offers a full list). Under the terms of the House of Lords Act 1999, all but 92 hereditary Peers were excluded from the House of Lords. Of the 92 who were to remain, two were ex-officio Members, fifteen were elected by the whole House and 75 were elected by their party groups. One of the fifteen hereditary Peers who were elected by the whole House in 1999 was a woman: the Countess of Mar, a Crossbencher. Four of the 75 who were elected by their party groups were women: Baroness Darcy de Knayth, Lady Saltoun of Abernethy, Baroness Strange and Baroness Wharton, who were all elected by the Crossbench Peers.

Today, only one female hereditary Peer in her own right sits in the House: the Countess of Mar. Three of the group of five who were elected in 1999 have died, and have been replaced through by-elections for hereditary Peers. One of the group, Lady Saltoun of Abernethy, retired in December 2014, under the terms of the House of Lords Reform Act 2014. No female hereditary Peers in their own right have been admitted to the House through by-elections. There are no women on the most recent register of hereditary Peers who have put themselves forward to be considered at future by-elections.<sup>68</sup>

Although certain peerages may pass to women, the vast majority of titles may only be inherited by a man: this is known as the principle of male preference primogeniture.<sup>69</sup> The Succession to the Crown Act 2013, which entered into force in March 2015, ends the principle of male preference primogeniture for heirs to the throne.<sup>70</sup> The House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee’s 2011 report on the rules of succession to the Crown recommended that the Government should also consider ending the system of male preference primogeniture in hereditary peerages:

The proposal to end the preferential treatment of men in the line of succession has been widely welcomed, and with good reason. It does, however, cast the spotlight on the hereditary aristocracy, to which women are for the most part ineligible to succeed, and, where they are eligible, male heirs take preference [...] 92 seats in the House of Lords continue for now to be reserved to holders of hereditary aristocratic titles. Only two of these 92 seats are currently occupied by women. While the holders of hereditary peerages continue to be eligible for membership of the House of Lords, the way in which their titles are inherited, and its effect on the gender balance in Parliament, remain matters of public interest.<sup>71</sup>

The Government published a response to this report which stated:

We entirely accept that the matter of hereditary peerages is of public interest. However, the Government has no plans to change the laws of succession with regard to hereditary peerages. Changes to the law on succession to the Crown can be effected

<sup>68</sup> House of Lords, [Register of Hereditary Peers who wish to stand for election as Members of the House of Lords under Standing Order 10 \(Hereditary Peers: By-elections\) as at 27 May 2015](#), 27 May 2015, HL Paper 2 of session 2015–16.

<sup>69</sup> For a list of titles which are currently held by women, see *Whitaker’s Almanack 2015* (page 48 ‘Countesses in their own right’, and page 59 ‘Baronesses/Ladies in their own right’).

<sup>70</sup> HC *Hansard*, 26 March 2015, [col. 171WS](#).

<sup>71</sup> House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, [Rules of Royal Succession](#), 7 December 2011, HC 1615 of session 2010–12, paras 15–17.

without any change to the legitimate expectations of those in the line of succession. Changes to the rules governing succession to hereditary titles would be far more complicated to implement fairly. For this reason, we do not believe that changes to the rules governing succession to the Crown should serve the purpose of addressing what is quite a separate issue.<sup>72</sup>

There have been a number of attempts to legislate on this issue. Conservative Peer Lord Trefgarne has introduced a private member's bill in the current session, the [Succession to Peerages Bill \[HL\]](#). The Bill would enable daughters (and their offspring) to inherit a peerage, although sons (and their offspring) would still take precedence over their sisters in the line of succession. The Bill received a first reading on 2 June 2015.<sup>73</sup> Lord Trefgarne introduced a [Succession to Peerages Bill \[HL\]](#) in the previous session; this Bill did not progress beyond first reading. Conservative Peer Lord Lucas introduced a private member's bill in the 2013–14 session, the [Equality \(Titles\) Bill \[HL\]](#). This Bill sought to make it possible for a female heir to succeed to a hereditary peerage, if the incumbent of the peerage had written to the Lord Chancellor to ask that this should occur. The Bill would also have entitled the husband or civil partner of a Peer to use the courtesy title “The Honourable”. The Bill received a second reading and completed one day in committee.<sup>74</sup> Lord Lucas introduced a similar bill in the 2012–13 session, [Hereditary Peerages \(Succession\) Bill \[HL\]](#), but this did not progress beyond first reading. In the House of Commons, during the 2012–13 session, Mary Macleod (Conservative MP for Brentford and Isleworth) used the Ten Minute Rule to introduce the [Succession to Hereditary Peerages and Estates Bill](#), a bill to remove male preference primogeniture in succession to hereditary peerages and estates; this did not receive a second reading.<sup>75</sup> Lord Diamond introduced a private member's bill in 1992 which aimed to allow hereditary Peers to petition the Crown to amend their letters patent so that the peerage could descend to the eldest legitimate child, male or female.<sup>76</sup> He introduced a similar bill in 1994.<sup>77</sup> Neither of these bills moved beyond second reading.

### 3.4 Bishops

Twenty six places in the House of Lords are reserved for Bishops. Until November 2014, only men could become Bishops. In November 2014, the Church of England adopted legislation to allow women to be ordained as Bishops for the first time. Approved by a show of hands in the General Synod, the law-making body for the Church of England, the decision followed parliamentary approval of the Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure. The first female Church of England Bishop was consecrated in January 2015. Before these reforms took place, women were not permitted to become Bishops; 26 places in the House of Lords were therefore effectively reserved for men. Some commentators suggested that this was sexist, for example the All Party Humanist Group argued that “reserving a set number of places for one branch of one religion, all of whom are men” was “discriminatory in terms of religion and gender”.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>72</sup> House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, [Rules of Royal Succession: Government Response to the Committee's Eleventh Report of Session 2010–12](#), 10 September 2012, HC 586 of session 2012–13, p 2.

<sup>73</sup> HL *Hansard*, 2 June 2015, col 298.

<sup>74</sup> HL *Hansard*, 6 December 2013, cols 538–64.

<sup>75</sup> HC *Hansard*, 25 March 2013, cols 1303–6.

<sup>76</sup> HL *Hansard*, 26 November 1992, cols 1118–66.

<sup>77</sup> HL *Hansard*, 7 March 1994, cols 1283–330.

<sup>78</sup> Joint Committee on the Draft House of Lords Reform Bill, [Draft House of Lords Reform Bill](#), 23 April 2012, HL Paper 284–III of session 2010–12, p 5.

Legislation has been passed to enable new female Church of England Bishops to take a seat in the House of Lords more quickly than would otherwise have been possible. Previously, the twenty six places in the House of Lords reserved for Bishops were filled in the following manner: five Bishops (the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of London, Durham and Winchester) would have been automatically granted a seat; the remaining 21 positions would have been filled on the basis of seniority. Under these terms a woman appointed as a diocesan bishop would have had to wait until she was the most senior bishop in order to take a seat in the House of Lords, or be appointed to one of the five positions automatically granted a seat. The Lords Spiritual (Women) Act 2015 introduces provisions that stipulate that a vacancy amongst the 21 non-reserved seats of the Lords Spiritual will be filled by a woman English diocesan bishop, ahead of male English diocesan bishops. In the absence of a woman English diocesan bishop the longest serving male bishop will fill the place as normal. The provision is set to last for ten years. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has stated that this legislation “will mean that at last this will be the last parliament where any Bench of either House is occupied solely by men”.<sup>79</sup> Information on the background to the Lords Spiritual (Women) Act 2015 is available in a House of Lords Library Note, [Lords Spiritual \(Women\) Bill \(HL Bill 87 of 2014–15\)](#).<sup>80</sup> Information, more broadly, on the role of the Bishops in the House of Lords is available in a House of Lords Library Note, [House of Lords: Religious Representation](#).<sup>81</sup>

### 3.5 Law Lords

In 2009, the Supreme Court was established, and the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary were suspended from their membership of the House whilst sitting as Supreme Court Justices. Before this point, these Law Lords were included in the membership of the House, and the percentage of women in this group was low: there has only been one female Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, Baroness Hale of Richmond, who was appointed in 2004. Baroness Hale gave a speech in 2004 which considered whether she could be open to a challenge on the legality of her appointment, since the Appellate Jurisdiction Act 1876, under which she was appointed as a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, was passed “when women could not join either branch of the legal profession let alone become judges”.<sup>82</sup> Christina Eason suggests the lack of female representation in this group reflects discrimination in the legal profession which prevents women from reaching senior positions in the judiciary.<sup>83</sup>

### 3.6 Women’s Attitudes Towards Careers in Politics

Section 3.1 of this note (which focuses on the House of Lords Appointments Commission) touches on the issue of the low number of women who put themselves forward for appointment to the Crossbenches. This may also be a factor in party political appointments; although this system is less transparent, so only conjecture is possible, it could be the case that fewer women want to sit in the House of Lords than men.

<sup>79</sup> HL *Hansard*, 12 February 2015, [col 1366](#).

<sup>80</sup> House of Lords Library, [Lords Spiritual \(Women\) Bill \(HL Bill 87 of 2014–15\)](#), 3 February 2015, LLN 2015/002.

<sup>81</sup> House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Religious Representation](#), 25 November 2011, LLN 2011/036.

<sup>82</sup> Baroness Hale of Richmond, ‘[The House of Lords and Women’s Rights, or Am I Really a Law Lord?](#)’, lecture delivered at the Society of Legal Scholars’ Annual Conference, Sheffield, 2004.

<sup>83</sup> Christina Eason, ‘[Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?](#)’, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009, p 414.

This has been identified as a problem in the representation of women in the House of Commons. On 12 November 2008, the House of Commons agreed to the Speaker's Conference on Parliamentary Representation, a committee chaired by the Speaker which would "make recommendations for rectifying the disparity between the representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled people in the House of Commons and their representation in the UK population at large". The [Speaker's Conference on Parliamentary Representation](#) published a final report in 2010. This identified a number of "supply side barriers" which could deter people from putting themselves forward for selection as a parliamentary candidate. The conference suggested that, of these apparent "barriers", the following particularly applied to women:

- Concerns about the cost of mounting a campaign to be selected and the subsequent election campaign, since "financial barriers impact on women more greatly than men due to the gender pay gap, the fact that women are more likely to work in lower paid sectors of the economy, and also because they are more likely to have caring responsibilities towards children or other relatives";
- Time pressures associated with working as an MP, including the sitting hours of the House, which "make little allowance for family commitments";
- Lack of support because women were among those people who may be less likely to have access to "the networks, training, role models and support that are essential for aspiring MPs";
- Lack of confidence (the report states that "research carried out by the National Federation of Women's Institutes revealed that lack of confidence was the main reason given by women who said that they would not stand for public office"); and
- Parliamentary culture, since the group was told that "the confrontational style of 'yah-boo' politics which is strongly associated with the House of Commons is particularly off-putting to many women".<sup>84</sup>

The Institute for Government published a report in 2011 which also sought to explore the "pattern of under-supply of women candidates" for parliamentary seats. It suggested that "on average women may be less likely to have the self-confidence to put themselves forward" as a candidate, and cites evidence that being "encouraged by established party figures often made the difference between women choosing whether or not to stand". It also suggested that the cost and time commitment associated with becoming a candidate could be a particular barrier for women because they tend to have greater childcare responsibilities.<sup>85</sup>

The Hansard Society published a report in 2005 which suggested that women were less likely than men to choose to pursue a career in politics because:

Gendered socialisation and the sexual division of labour [...] cause women to have, on average, fewer resources than men—whether that is the necessary free time to engage

<sup>84</sup> House of Commons, [Speaker's Conference on Parliamentary Representation Final Report](#), 11 January 2010, HC 239-I of session 2009–10, pp 46–7.

<sup>85</sup> Rhys Williams and Akash Paun, [Party People, How Do—And How Should—British Political Parties Select Their Parliamentary Candidates?](#), Institute for Government, 14 November 2011, p 37.

in politics, money to fund a selection and election campaign, and/or lower levels of political ambition and confidence.<sup>86</sup>

An update to the 2005 report which the Hansard Society published in 2012 argued that, in 2012, such “barriers to equality” in politics remained “largely intact”, in particular citing “the absence of proper childcare provision” and “inflexible structures for work and careers”.<sup>87</sup>

On 12 January 2012, the House of Commons held a debate, moved by Dame Anne Begg (Labour MP for Aberdeen South) to mark two years since the publication of the Speaker’s Conference report.<sup>88</sup> Several MPs commented on the possible “supply side” factors which might be in play. Margot James (Conservative MP for Stourbridge) suggested that “the personal, and sometimes sexist, coverage of women MPs in the media is also a factor, as is the general level of aggression in some aspects of political debate”.<sup>89</sup> Kate Green (Labour MP for Stretford and Urmston) argued that long working hours acted as a deterrent: “an unhealthy, dysfunctional and non-family-friendly working environment is not good for hon Members or for our effectiveness and it is simply off-putting to many people outside Parliament who might otherwise aspire to join us”.<sup>90</sup>

In July 2014, a report published by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Women in Parliament identified a number of factors “to explain the low numbers of women who seek to participate in elected politics”.<sup>91</sup> These were: “increased media scrutiny of MPs and their families; the poor public perception of MPs; a lack of readily available information on the role; a sense that Parliament is not a place for ‘people like for me’” and “the substantial financial costs and time demands of seeking selection”.

#### 4. Attendance and Voting Behaviour of Women in the House of Lords

Several commentators have noted that, compared to the extensive analysis which has been conducted on the experience and behaviour of female MPs, little attention has been paid to women Peers.<sup>92</sup> One exception is a 1983 paper published by Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock which considers the attendance, voting and contributions of women in the House of Lords as compared to male Members of the House. Drewry and Brock concluded that female Peers did not tend to behave differently to men in terms of their contributions to debates or voting patterns:

Women Peers are not discernibly united by a feminine ideology. Proceedings in which they take part are a cross-section of business. They have not been specifically active on Bills dealing with such female concerns as sex discrimination and abortion. [...]  
Whenever women Peers did deviate from a clearly stated party line then such deviation

<sup>86</sup> Hansard Society, [Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers. Changing Politics?](#), November 2005, p 23.

<sup>87</sup> Hansard Society, [Women at the Top: Politics And Public Life In The UK](#), 11 January 2012, p 11.

<sup>88</sup> House of Commons, [Speaker’s Conference on Parliamentary Representation Final Report](#), 11 January 2010, HC 239-I of session 2009–10.

<sup>89</sup> HC *Hansard*, 12 January 2012, [col 431](#).

<sup>90</sup> *ibid*, [col 436](#).

<sup>91</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group for Women in Parliament, [Improving Parliament: Creating A Better And More Representative House](#), July 2014, p 10.

<sup>92</sup> Christina Eason, ‘[Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?](#)’, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009; Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock, ‘The Impact of Women on the House of Lords’, *Studies in Public Policy*, 1983; and Duncan Sutherland, ‘[Peeresses, Parliament and Prejudice: The Admission of Women to the House of Lords, 1918–1963](#)’, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 2000.

was invariably an expression of individual interest or expertise in the matter in question and was not directly gender-related.<sup>93</sup>

Drewry and Brock did find that there were differences in the average attendance of male and female Peers:

A comparison of all women Peers with all male Peers shows that 44 percent of women as against 22 percent of men attended half or more of the possible sitting days.<sup>94</sup>

The trend in levels of attendance appears to have continued. Analysis of House of Lords Journal Office data on attendance for the three parliamentary sessions 2010–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14 reveals that, on average, female Peers attended 70 percent of the possible sitting days, compared to 60 percent for the whole House.

It seems that, since the pamphlet written by Drewry and Brock, no further academic analysis of female Peers' voting behaviour has been published. Several of the pieces of written evidence which were submitted to the Joint Committee on the [House of Lords Reform Draft Bill](#) suggested that efforts should be made to increase the number of female Peers because women work in a way which would make the House of Lords more effective. For example, the evidence submitted by Counting Women In stated: "there is a growing body of evidence, largely drawn from business, that women make a positive difference to the quality of decision-making".<sup>95</sup> Some pieces of evidence also suggested that female politicians tend to focus on issues which particularly affect women. For example, the Fawcett Society argued that women in Parliament "can and do bring issues to the table which may not otherwise be debated, or which might otherwise be considered to be of less significance".<sup>96</sup>

Some commentators have questioned the logic of the argument that female politicians behave in a way that is different from their male counterparts. Writing in the *Guardian*, Catherine Bennett described this argument as "benign, female essentialism", which assumes that a woman's "party political complexion" is less important than her gender.<sup>97</sup> Research on the views and behaviour of female MPs has produced a range of conclusions. Research conducted by the Hansard Society in 2005 found that female MPs, in their contributions to parliamentary questions and debates, tended to raise issues which particularly affect women.<sup>98</sup> Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris used survey data from 2001 to examine the attitudes of MPs. They concluded that "once we control for party, there are no significant differences among women and men politicians across the value scales concerning the free market economy, Europe and moral traditionalism. Yet on the values most directly related to women's interests—namely the affirmative action and the gender equality scales—women and men politicians differ significantly within each party".<sup>99</sup> Sarah Childs analysed the voting behaviour of Labour party politicians in the 1997 parliament; she found that female Labour MPs "voted disproportionately with the Government. They were less than half as likely to rebel against the party whip as the rest of the

<sup>93</sup> Gavin Drewry and Jenny Brock, 'The Impact of Women on the House of Lords', *Studies in Public Policy*, 1983, pp 1, 24.

<sup>94</sup> *ibid*, pp 15–16.

<sup>95</sup> Joint Committee on the Draft House of Lords Reform Bill, [Draft House of Lords Reform Bill](#), 23 April 2012, HL Paper 284–III of session 2010–12, p 35.

<sup>96</sup> *ibid*, p 61.

<sup>97</sup> Catherine Bennett, '[Imposing Quotas is Not as Crucial as Changing Cultures](#)', *Guardian*, 11 December 2011.

<sup>98</sup> Hansard Society, [Women at the Top 2005: Changing Numbers, Changing Politics?](#), November 2005, chapter 2, 'Making a Difference and Acting for Women?', pp 48–73.

<sup>99</sup> Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris, '[Westminster Women: The Politics of Presence](#)', *Political Studies*, March 2003, p 84.



parliamentary Labour party”. She suggested that party loyalty was a greater predictor of the behaviour of female politicians than their intention to “act for women”; but also theorised that gender may play a role in the propensity to rebel, since loyalty may be a trait considered particularly female.<sup>100</sup>

In a lecture in 2008, Crossbench Peer Baroness Young of Hornsey cautioned against making assumptions about the role of women in the House of Lords:

There’s an expectation or a fear that women will be confined to promoting ‘women’s interests’ or a common feminist ideology [...] It’s likely that women will speak with authority on a whole range of subjects because these are related to roles which women most often fulfil: women are more likely to be carers of children, parents and relatives, professionally and personally, for example. The impact of legislation on people in that position is a subject, then, about which women might have something productive to say born of experience.

But let’s think about that for a moment. First of all, party political affiliation is a far greater determinant of a woman politician’s view than her gender. It may well be the case that a woman will feel compelled to fight her corner within the party, but women are no more likely to rebel against the whips than men. Perhaps more importantly, we should switch the emphasis of the question and ask why it is that men do not take up these issues. Simply because fewer men have direct experience of full-time child rearing, doesn’t absolve of them those responsibilities. And thankfully, we’re seeing more and more men taking a greater role in that area.<sup>101</sup>

In a lecture in 2007, Baroness Hayman, who was then Lord Speaker, suggested that increased diversity in the membership of the House of Lords, in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion and disability had lent the House of Lords legitimacy because it allowed the Lords to reflect the “diversity of the country”.<sup>102</sup>

## 5. Women and House of Lords Reform

It has been suggested that the question of gender balance has not been prioritised in House of Lords reform.<sup>103</sup> Baroness Hayman has suggested that in the past gender equality has been overlooked in House of Lords reform because “the anticipation of a large-scale reform stalled attempts at more incremental changes”.<sup>104</sup>

Following the passage of the Life Peerages Act 1958 and the Peerage Act 1963, the question of gender balance in the House of Lords was not raised in any piece of legislation, bill, or significant reform proposal, until the Wakeham Commission published its report in January

<sup>100</sup> Sarah Childs, ‘[A Feminised Style of Politics? Women MPs in the House of Commons](#)’, *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 2004, p 12.

<sup>101</sup> Professor the Baroness Young of Hornsey, ‘[Women at Work in the House of Lords: Culture, Language and Identity](#)’, 28 February 2008.

<sup>102</sup> Baroness Hayman, ‘Women in the Lords: The Life Peerages Act—Women and Change in the House of Lords since 1958’, 6 December 2007.

<sup>103</sup> Christina Eason, ‘[Women Peers and Political Appointment: Has the House of Lords been Feminised since 1999?](#)’, *Parliamentary Affairs*, 27 January 2009; and Duncan Sutherland, ‘[Peeresses, Parliament and Prejudice: The Admission of Women to the House of Lords, 1918–1963](#)’, *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 2000.

<sup>104</sup> Baroness Hayman, ‘Women in the Lords: The Life Peerages Act—Women and Change in the House of Lords since 1958’, 6 December 2007.

2000, [A House for the Future](#). In 1999, the Government established a Royal Commission to consider House of Lords reform, chaired by Lord Wakeham. The Wakeham Commission recommended that a statutory appointments commission should be set up, which would be responsible for all appointments to the second chamber. On gender balance, the report stated:

The House of Lords has for far too long contained an excessive proportion of white males. Even the present life peerage, although it includes a higher proportion of women and members of minority ethnic groups than the former House of Lords, is far from being representative of British society in either respect. The reformed second chamber should be different. There should be steady progress towards gender balance and a more substantial representation of minority ethnic groups.<sup>105</sup>

The report recommended that:

An Appointments Commission, independent of the Prime Minister, government and the political parties, should be responsible for all appointments to the second chamber. [...] It should be under a statutory duty to ensure that a minimum of 30 percent of new members of the second chamber should be women, and a minimum of 30 percent men, with the aim of making steady progress towards gender balance in the chamber as a whole over time.<sup>106</sup>

In November 2001, the Government published a white paper in response to the Wakeham Commission's report, which stated:

In line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, the government proposes to establish a statutory independent Appointments Commission. [...] The Appointments Commission will ensure that at least 30 percent of new appointees are women and 30 percent are men, working towards gender balance in the chamber as a whole over time.<sup>107</sup>

In May 2000, Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, announced the membership of an "interim House of Lords Appointments Commission", which was established on a non-statutory basis.<sup>108</sup> The House of Lords Appointments Commission has remained on a non-statutory footing, and the proposal that a quota of 30 percent women should be applied has not been adopted.

In May 2002, the Government established a Joint Committee on House of Lords Reform. The Joint Committee published a report which suggested that the House of Lords was not "representative" enough of the population, noting that "it is overwhelmingly male".<sup>109</sup> The Committee offered seven different options for reform, including a wholly elected House, a wholly appointed House and five different combinations of elected/appointed. The Committee suggested that, in a fully appointed House, it should be the responsibility of a statutory appointments commission to ensure that "representativeness" was achieved in terms of gender balance, ethnic diversity and age.<sup>110</sup> It also advised that, in an elected House, "some form of

<sup>105</sup> Royal Commission on the Reform of the House of Lords, [A House for the Future](#), January 2000, Cm 4534, pp 98–9.

<sup>106</sup> *ibid*, p 114.

<sup>107</sup> HM Government, [The House of Lords: Completing the Reform](#), November 2001, Cm 5291, paras 65–66.

<sup>108</sup> HC *Hansard*, 4 May 2000, cols 181–2W.

<sup>109</sup> Joint Committee on House of Lords Reform, [House of Lords Reform: First Report](#), 10 December 2002, HL Paper 17 of session 2002–03, p 16, para 33.

<sup>110</sup> *ibid*, para 64.



indirect election might possibly be a better way of achieving the aims of representativeness and regional balance in a second chamber” than a “first-past-the-post” system.<sup>111</sup>

In September 2003, the Government published a consultation paper which recommended that a statutory appointments commission should be established, and stated that in the House of Lords “we wish to see a mix of independent members that are representative of the nations and regions of the UK and are balanced in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, disability and faith”.<sup>112</sup>

In February 2007, the Government published a white paper, which proposed a hybrid House with at least 20 percent non-party political appointments, and the rest elected through a partially open list system. The white paper stated that:

Under this kind of system, parties will wish to consider how they ensure that their lists are representative of the diversity of the United Kingdom. The government will consult on and consider whether there is a case for making diversity a formal requirement for party lists, in respect of gender and/or ethnicity, and/or other factors.<sup>113</sup>

For the appointed element, the statutory appointments commission would be required to “encourage the appointment of a widely representative House of Lords”.<sup>114</sup> The Government published a green paper which commented on House of Lords reform in July 2007, and a white paper in July 2008.<sup>115</sup> Neither of these papers made any reference to gender balance in the House of Lords.

In May 2011, the Government published a [House of Lords Reform Draft Bill](#). This stated that:

There is widespread agreement that the balance between men and women members in Parliament needs to be improved. Research suggests that the choice of proportional representation should facilitate the election of women to the reformed House of Lords. However, parties also have an important role to play in ensuring that Parliament reflects the society that it serves. Reform of the House of Lords is therefore an opportunity to consider how to increase the participation of women in Parliament. The political parties and the government should consider how to achieve this.<sup>116</sup>

The House of Lords Reform Bill 2012–13 did not progress beyond second reading.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *ibid*, para 69.

<sup>112</sup> Department for Constitutional Affairs, [Constitutional Reform: Next Steps for the House of Lords](#), September 2003, CP 14/03, para 53.

<sup>113</sup> HM Government, [The House of Lords: Reform](#), February 2007, Cm 7027, p 39, paragraph 7.94.

<sup>114</sup> *ibid*, p 42, para 8.24.

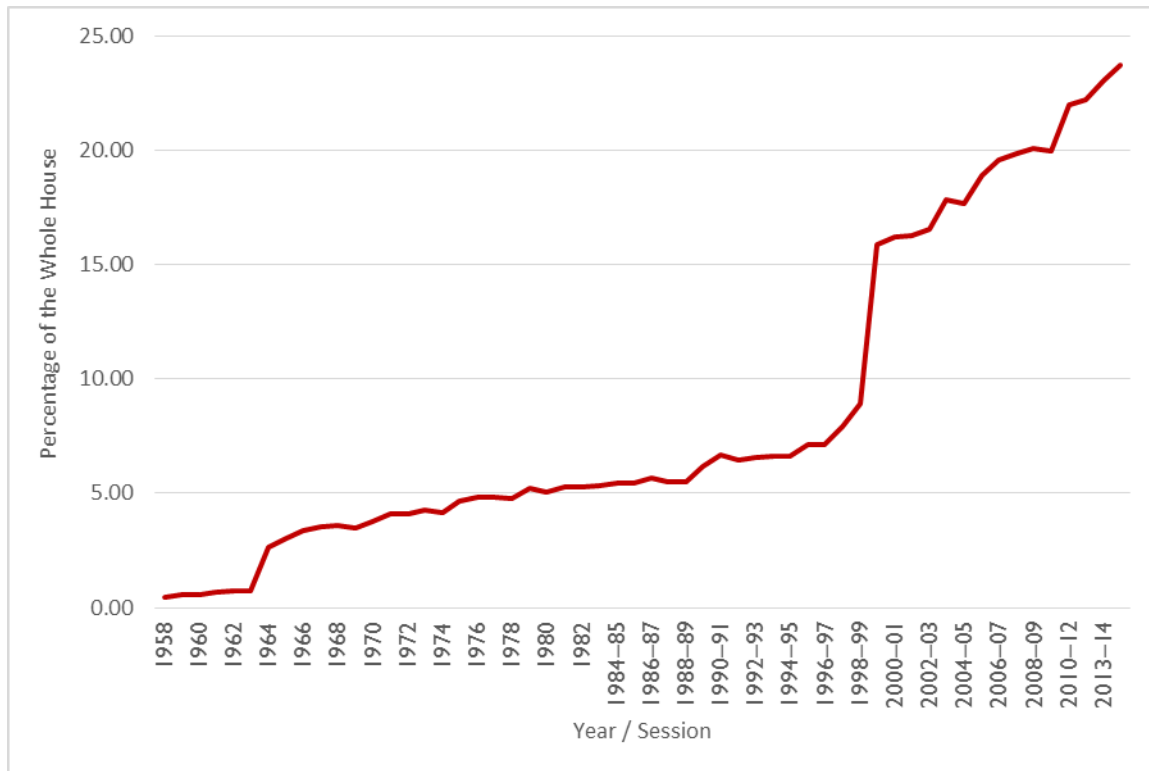
<sup>115</sup> HM Government, [The Governance of Britain](#), July 2007, Cm 7170; and [An Elected Second Chamber: Further Reform of the House of Lords](#), July 2008, Cm 7438.

<sup>116</sup> *ibid*, p 17, paras 48 and 49.

<sup>117</sup> Further information is available in House of Lords Library Note, [House of Lords Reform 2010–15](#), 25 March 2015, LLN 2015/009.

## 6. Facts and Figures

**Figure 1: Percentage of Women in the House of Lords**



The section of this graph which covers the period 1958–1983 was created using *Vachers Parliamentary Companion*, the final edition of each year; the section which covers the period from the 1984–5 session to the 2013–14 session was created using *House of Lords Sessional Returns*, as at end of session, and House of Lords Journal Office information. The graph includes Members who have not taken the Oath, are without writ of summons, on leave of absence, disqualified as senior members of the judiciary or disqualified as an MEP.

**Table 1: Female Hereditary Peers in their Own Right who took their Seats in the House of Lords under the Peerage Act 1963 from 1963 to 1999**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Session</b>
Baroness Audley Baroness Beaumont Countess of Erroll Lady Kinloss Baroness Strange of Knokin	1963/64
Lady Nairne	1964/65
Baroness Berkeley Countess of Loudoun Lady Ruthven of Freeland Lady Sempill	1966/67
Countess of Sutherland	1967/68
Baroness Darcy de Knayth	1968/69
Baroness Dacre	1969/70
Baroness Portal of Hungerford	1971/72
Baroness Dudley	1972/73
Baroness Lucas Countess of Mar	1974/75
Lady Saltoun of Abernethy	1979/80
Baroness Bray	1985/86
Baroness Strange	1986/87
Countess Mountbatten of Burma	1987/88
Baroness Wharton	1989/90
Baroness Willoughby de Eresby	1993/94
Baroness Berners	1994/95
Baroness Arlington	1998/99

Total: 25

The Table does not include Baroness Ravensdale, who was already a member of the House of Lords in 1963, having been granted a life peerage under the Life Peerages Act 1958. She was amongst the first batch of fourteen life Peers announced under the Act in July 1958, which included four women. This Table was created using alphabetical lists of Lords who took the Oath or Affirmed during each Session in the *Journals of the House of Lords*.

**Table 2: List of Female Life Peers Created Since 1958<sup>118</sup>**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Elliot of Harwood	Dame Katherine Elliot	24-Jul-58	Macmillan	Y	Con
Ravensdale of Kedleston	Mary Irene Curzon	24-Jul-58	Macmillan	Y	XB
Swanborough	Dame Stella Isaacs	24-Jul-58	Macmillan	Y	XB
Wootton of Abinger	Barbara Frances Wootton Wright	24-Jul-58	Macmillan	Y	Lab
Horsburgh	Dame Florence Gertrude Horsburgh	19-Sep-59	Macmillan	Y	Con
Summerskill	Edith Clara Summerskill	16-Jan-61	Macmillan	Y	Lab
Burton of Coventry	Elaine Frances Burton	29-Mar-62	Macmillan	Y	Lab
Gaitskell	Anna Dora Gaitskell	23-Dec-63	Douglas-Home	Y	Lab
Northchurch	Dame Frances Joan Davidson	23-Dec-63	Douglas-Home	Y	Con
Brooke of Ystradfellte	Dame Barbara Muriel Brooke	01-Dec-64	Wilson	Y	Con
Emmet of Amberley	Evelyn Violet Elizabeth Emmet	01-Dec-64	Wilson	Y	Con
Asquith of Yarnbury	Dame Helen Violet Bonham-Carter	04-Dec-64	Wilson	Y	Lib
Phillips	Norah Phillips	04-Dec-64	Wilson	Y	Lab
Plummer	Beatrice Plummer	01-May-65	Wilson	Y	Lab
Spencer-Churchill	Dame Clementine Ogilvy Spencer-Churchill	01-May-65	Wilson	Y	Con
Hylton-Foster	Audrey Pellow Hylton-Foster	26-Oct-65	Wilson	Y	XB
Stocks	Mary Danvers Stocks	01-Jan-66	Wilson	Y	Lab
Sharp	Dame Evelyn Adelaide Sharp	11-Jun-66	Wilson	Y	XB
Serota	Beatrice Serota	01-Jan-67	Wilson	Y	Lab
Birk	Alma Lillian Birk	03-Aug-67	Wilson	Y	Lab
Llewelyn-Davies of Hastoe	Anne Patricia Llewelyn-Davies	03-Aug-67	Wilson	Y	Lab
Masham of Ilton	Susan Lillian Primrose Cunliffe-Lister	01-Jan-70	Wilson	N	XB
Tweedsmuir of Belhelvie	Priscilla Jean Fortescue Buchan	02-Jun-70	Wilson	Y	Con

<sup>118</sup> Including Lords of Appeal in Ordinary created under the Appellate Jurisdiction Act 1876.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Bacon	Alice Martha Bacon	07-Aug-70	Heath	Y	Lab
Lee of Asheridge	Jennie Lee	07-Aug-70	Heath	Y	Lab
White	Eirene Lloyd White	07-Aug-70	Heath	Y	Lab
MacLeod of Borve	Evelyn Hester MacLeod	08-Apr-71	Heath	Y	XB
Seear	Beatrice Nancy Seear	08-Apr-71	Heath	Y	Lib
Young	Janet Mary Young	08-Apr-71	Heath	Y	Con
Elles	Diana Louie Elles	30-Mar-72	Heath	Y	Con
Sharples	Pamela Sharples	31-May-73	Heath	N	XB
Hornsby-Smith	Dame Margaret Patricia Hornsby-Smith	05-Apr-74	Wilson	Y	Con
Pike	Dame Irene Mervyn Parmicott Pike	05-Apr-74	Wilson	Y	Con
Robson of Kiddington	Inga-Stina Robson	11-Apr-74	Wilson	Y	Lib
Falkender	Marcia Matilda Williams	02-May-74	Wilson	N	Lab
Fisher of Rednal	Doris Mary Gertrude Fisher	02-May-74	Wilson	Y	Lab
Stedman	Phyllis Stedman	02-May-74	Wilson	Y	Lab
Delacourt-Smith of Alteryng	Margaret Rosalind Delacourt-Smith	15-Jun-74	Wilson	Y	Lab
Stewart of Alvechurch	Mary Elizabeth Henderson Stewart	06-Dec-74	Wilson	Y	Lab
Vickers	Dame Joan Helen Vickers	06-Dec-74	Wilson	Y	Con
Ward of North Tyneside	Dame Irene Mary Bewick Ward	06-Dec-74	Wilson	Y	Con
Faithfull	Lucy Faithfull	18-Dec-75	Wilson	Y	Con
Jackson of Lodsworth	Dame Barbara Mary Jackson	12-Jun-76	Callaghan	Y	Lab
Lockwood	Betty Lockwood	31-Dec-77	Callaghan	N	Lab
David	Nora Radcliff David	21-Mar-78	Callaghan	Y	Lab
Denington	Dame Evelyn Joyce Denington	03-Jun-78	Callaghan	Y	Lab
Ryder of Warsaw	Margaret Susan Ryder	03-Jun-78	Callaghan	Y	XB
Jeger	Lena May Jeger	15-Jun-79	Thatcher	Y	Lab
Airey of Abingdon	Diana Josceline Barbara Neave	26-Jun-79	Thatcher	Y	Con

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
McFarlane of Llandaff	Jean Kennedy McFarlane	26-Jun-79	Thatcher	Y	XB
Skrimshire of Quarter	Margaret Betty Harvie Anderson	26-Jun-79	Thatcher	Y	Con
Trumpington	Jean Alys Barker	08-Jan-80	Thatcher	N	Con
Ewart-Biggs	Felicity Jane Ewart-Biggs	14-Apr-81	Thatcher	Y	Lab
Gardner of Parkes	Rachel Trixie Anne Gardner	14-Apr-81	Thatcher	N	Con
Lane-Fox	Felicity Lane-Fox	14-Apr-81	Thatcher	Y	Con
Platt of Writtle	Beryl Catherine Platt	14-Apr-81	Thatcher	Y	Con
Carnegy of Lour	Elizabeth Patricia Carnegy	12-Jun-82	Thatcher	Y	Con
Cox	Caroline Ann Cox	15-Dec-82	Thatcher	N	Con
Nicol	Olive Mary Wendy Nicol	15-Dec-82	Thatcher	N	Lab
Warnock	Dame Helen Mary Warnock	31-Dec-84	Thatcher	N	XB
Hooper	Gloria Dorothy Hooper	03-Apr-85	Thatcher	N	Con
Turner of Camden	Muriel Winifred Turner	03-Apr-85	Thatcher	N	Lab
Blatch	Emily May Blatch	12-Feb-87	Thatcher	Y	Con
Blackstone	Tessa Ann Vosper Blackstone	13-Feb-87	Thatcher	N	Lab
Hart of South Lanark	Dame Judith Hart	31-Jul-87	Thatcher	Y	Lab
Oppenheim-Barnes	Sally Oppenheim-Barnes	31-Dec-88	Thatcher	N	Con
Park of Monmouth	Daphne Margaret Sybil Desiree Park	30-Dec-89	Thatcher	Y	Con
Brigstocke	Heather Renwick Brigstocke	04-Apr-90	Thatcher	Y	Con
Cumberlege	Julia Frances Cumberledge	04-Apr-90	Thatcher	N	Con
Eccles of Moulton	Diana Catherine Eccles	04-Apr-90	Thatcher	N	Con
Flather	Shreela Flather	04-Apr-90	Thatcher	N	Con
Hollis of Heigham	Patricia Lesley Hollis	04-Apr-90	Thatcher	N	Lab
Castle of Blackburn	Barbara Anne Castle	16-Jun-90	Thatcher	Y	Lab
Dunn	Dame Lydia Dunn	16-Jun-90	Thatcher	N	XB
Seccombe	Dame Joan Anna Dalziel Seccombe	20-Dec-90	Major	N	Con

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
James of Holland Park	Phyllis Dorothy James	31-Dec-90	Major	Y	Con
Denton of Wakefield	Jean Denton	29-Apr-91	Major	Y	Con
Hamwee	Sally Rachel Hamwee	29-Apr-91	Major	N	LD
Hilton of Eggardon	Jennifer Hilton	29-Apr-91	Major	N	Lab
Mallalieu	Ann Mallalieu	29-Apr-91	Major	N	Lab
O'Cathain	Detta O'Cathain	29-Apr-91	Major	N	Con
Perry of Southwark	Pauline Perry	15-Jun-91	Major	N	Con
Chalker of Wallasey	Lynda Chalker	13-Apr-92	Major	N	Con
Thatcher	Margaret Hilda Thatcher	06-Jun-92	Major	Y	Con
Jay of Paddington	Margaret Ann Jay	13-Jun-92	Major	N	Lab
Williams of Crosby	Shirley Vivien Teresa Brittain Williams	31-Dec-92	Major	N	LD
Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde	Brenda McDowall	13-Aug-93	Major	N	Lab
Gould of Potternewton	Joyce Brenda Gould	13-Aug-93	Major	N	Lab
Miller of Hendon	Doreen Miller	13-Aug-93	Major	Y	Con
Farrington of Ribbleton	Josephine Farrington	20-Aug-94	Major	N	Lab
Rawlings	Patricia Elizabeth Rawlings	20-Aug-94	Major	N	Con
Thomas of Walliswood	Susan Petronella Thomas	20-Aug-94	Major	N	LD
Hogg	Sarah Elizabeth Mary Hogg	30-Dec-94	Major	N	Con
Smith of Gilmorehill	Elizabeth Margaret Smith	30-Dec-94	Major	N	Lab
Hayman	Helene Valerie Hayman	17-Nov-95	Major	N	Lab
Wilcox	Judith Ann Wilcox	17-Nov-95	Major	N	Con
Lloyd of Highbury	Dame June Kathleen Lloyd	15-Jun-96	Major	Y	XB
Anelay of St Johns	Dame Joyce Anne Anelay	21-Aug-96	Major	N	Con
Byford	Dame Hazel Byford	21-Aug-96	Major	N	Con
Ramsay of Cartvale	Meta Ramsay	21-Aug-96	Major	N	Lab
Symons of Vernham Dean	Elizabeth Conway Symons	21-Aug-96	Major	N	Lab

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Emerton	Dame Audrey Caroline Emerton	30-Dec-96	Major	N	XB
Lestor of Eccles	Joan Lestor	18-Apr-97	Major	Y	Lab
Amos	Valerie Ann Amos	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Lab
Fookes	Dame Janet Evelyn Fookes	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Con
Kennedy of The Shaws	Helena Ann Kennedy	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Lab
Knight of Collingtree	Dame Jill Knight	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Con
Linklater of Butterstone	Veronica Linklater	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	LD
Ludford	Sarah Ann Ludford	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	LD
Maddock	Diana Maddock	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	LD
Nicholson of Winterbourne	Emma Harriet Nicholson	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	LD
Pitkeathley	Jill Elizabeth Pitkeathley	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Lab
Rendell of Babergh	Ruth Barbara Rendell	01-Aug-97	Blair	Y	Lab
Scotland of Asthal	Patricia Janet Scotland	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Lab
Young of Old Scone	Barbara Scott Young	01-Aug-97	Blair	N	Lab
Richardson of Calow	Kathleen Margaret Richardson	13-Jun-98	Blair	N	XB
Buscombe	Peta Jane Buscombe	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	Con
Crawley	Christine Mary Crawley	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	Lab
Goudie	Mary Teresa Goudie	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	Lab
Miller of Chilthorne Domer	Susan Elizabeth Miller	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	LD
Sharp of Guildford	Margaret Lucy Sharp	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	LD
Thornton	Glenys Thornton	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	Lab
Uddin	Manzila Pola Uddin	20-Jun-98	Blair	N	Lab
O'Neill of Bengarve	Onora Sylvia O'Neill	31-Dec-98	Blair	N	XB
Prashar	Usha Kumari Prashar	12-Jun-99	Blair	N	XB
Stern	Vivien Helen Stern	12-Jun-99	Blair	N	XB
Ashton of Upholland	Catherine Margaret Ashton	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab



<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Barker	Elizabeth Jean Barker	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	LD
Blood	May Blood	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	XB
Gale	Anita Gale	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
Hanham	Joan Brownlow Hanham	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Con
Harris of Richmond	Angela Felicity Harris	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	LD
Howells of St Davids	Rosalind Patricia-Anne Howells	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
Massey of Darwen	Doreen Elizabeth Massey	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
McIntosh of Hudnall	Genista Mary McIntosh	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
Warwick of Undercliffe	Diana Warwick	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
Whitaker	Janet Alison Whitaker	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
Wilkins	Rosalie Catherine Wilkins	19-Jun-99	Blair	N	Lab
Greengross	Sally Ralea Greengross	31-Dec-99	Blair	N	XB
Andrews	Elizabeth Kay Andrews	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	Lab
Billingham	Angela Theodora Billingham	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	Lab
Cohen of Pimlico	Janet Cohen	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	Lab
Gibson of Market Rasen	Anne Gibson	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	Lab
Noakes	Dame Sheila Valerie Masters	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	Con
Northover	Lindsay Patricia Northover	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	LD
Scott of Needham Market	Rosalind Carol Scott	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	LD
Walmsley	Joan Margaret Walmsley	31-Mar-00	Blair	N	LD
Boothroyd	Betty Boothroyd	24-Oct-00	Blair	N	XB
Finlay of Llandaff	Ilora Gillian Finlay	26-Apr-01	Blair	N	XB
Greenfield	Susan Adele Greenfield	26-Apr-01	Blair	N	XB
Howarth of Breckland	Valerie Georgina Howarth	26-Apr-01	Blair	N	XB
Howe of Idlicote	Elspeth Rosamund Morton, Lady Howe of Aberavon	26-Apr-01	Blair	N	XB
Golding	Llinos Golding	01-Jun-01	Blair	N	Lab

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Michie of Gallanach	Janet Ray Michie	01-Jun-01	Blair	Y	LD
Morgan of Huyton	Sally Morgan	11-Jun-01	Blair	N	Lab
Hale of Richmond	Dame Brenda Marjorie Hale	12-Jan-04	Blair	N	XB
Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury	Jane Bonham Carter	01-May-04	Blair	N	LD
Chapman	Nicola Jane Chapman	01-May-04	Blair	Y	XB
D'Souza	Frances Gertrude Claire D'Souza	01-May-04	Blair	N	XB
Falkner of Margravine	Kishwer Falkner	01-May-04	Blair	N	LD
Henig	Ruth Beatrice Henig	01-May-04	Blair	N	Lab
McDonagh	Margaret Josephine McDonagh	01-May-04	Blair	N	Lab
Morgan of Drefelin	Delyth Jane Morgan	01-May-04	Blair	N	Lab
Morris of Bolton	Patricia Morris	01-May-04	Blair	N	Con
Murphy	Elaine Murphy	01-May-04	Blair	N	XB
Neuberger	Dame Julia Babette Sarah Neuberger	01-May-04	Blair	N	LD
Prosser	Margaret Theresa Prosser	01-May-04	Blair	N	Lab
Royall of Blaisdon	Janet Anne Royall	01-May-04	Blair	N	Lab
Wall of New Barnet	Margaret Mary Wall	01-May-04	Blair	N	Lab
Young of Hornsey	Margaret Omolola Young	01-May-04	Blair	N	XB
Fritchie	Dame Irene Tordoff Fritchie	22-Mar-05	Blair	N	XB
Adams of Craigielea	Katherine Patricia Irene Adams	13-May-05	Blair	N	Lab
Bottomley of Nettlestone	Virginia Hilda Brunette Maxwell Bottomley	13-May-05	Blair	N	Con
Clark of Calton	Lynda Margaret Clark	13-May-05	Blair	N	Lab
Corston	Jean Ann Corston	13-May-05	Blair	N	Lab
Morris of Yardley	Estelle Morris	13-May-05	Blair	N	Lab
Shephard of Northwold	Gillian Patricia Shephard	13-May-05	Blair	N	Con
Taylor of Bolton	Winifred Ann Taylor	13-May-05	Blair	N	Lab
Tonge	Jennifer Louise Tonge	13-May-05	Blair	N	LD

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Deech	Ruth Lynn Deech	22-Jul-05	Blair	N	XB
Valentine	Josephine Clare Valentine	22-Jul-05	Blair	N	XB
Ford	Margaret Anne Ford	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	Lab
Jones of Whitchurch	Margaret Beryl Jones	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	Lab
Kingsmill	Denise Patricia Byrne Kingsmill	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	Lab
Paisley of St George's	Eileen Emily Paisley	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	XB
Quin	Joyce Gwendolen Quin	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	Lab
Thomas of Winchester	Celia Majorie Thomas	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	LD
Verma	Sandip Verma	10-Apr-06	Blair	N	Con
Butler-Sloss	Dame Ann Elizabeth Oldfield Butler-Sloss	03-May-06	Blair	N	XB
Meacher	Molly Christine Meacher	03-May-06	Blair	N	XB
Campbell of Surbiton	Dame Jane Susan Campbell	14-Feb-07	Blair	N	XB
Coussins	Jean Elizabeth Coussins	14-Feb-07	Blair	N	XB
Vadera	Shriti Vadera	29-Jun-07	Brown	N	Lab
Garden of Frogmal	Lady Susan Elizabeth Garden	13-Sep-07	Brown	N	LD
Neville-Jones	Dame Lilian Pauline Neville-Jones	13-Sep-07	Brown	N	Con
Warsi	Sayeeda Hussain-Warsi	13-Sep-07	Brown	N	Con
Afshar	Haleh Afshar	18-Oct-07	Brown	N	XB
Manningham-Buller	Dame Elizabeth Lydia Manningham-Buller	18-Apr-08	Brown	N	XB
Campbell of Loughborough	Susan Catherine Campbell	29-Sep-08	Brown	N	XB
Kinnock of Holyhead	Lady Glenys Elizabeth Kinnock	08-Jun-09	Brown	N	Lab
O'Loan	Dame Nuala Patricia O'Loan	13-Jul-09	Brown	N	XB
Grey-Thompson	Dame Tanni Carys Davina Grey-Thompson	05-Feb-10	Brown	N	XB
Armstrong of Hill Top	Hilary Jane Armstrong	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Benjamin	Floella Benjamin	28-May-10	Cameron	N	LD
Browning	Angela Frances Browning	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Con

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Donaghy	Rita Margaret Donaghy	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Drake	Jean Lesley Patricia Drake	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Eaton	Dame Ellen Margaret Eaton	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Con
Hayter of Kentish Town	Dianne Hayter	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Healy of Primrose Hill	Anna Mary Healy	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Hughes of Stretford	Beverley June Hughes	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Hussein-Ece	Meral Hussein Ece	28-May-10	Cameron	N	LD
Liddell of Coatdyke	Helen Lawrie Liddell	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Newlove	Helen Margaret Newlove	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Con
Nye	Susan Jane Nye	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Parminter	Kathryn Jane Parminter	28-May-10	Cameron	N	LD
Ritchie of Brompton	Shireen Olive Ritchie	28-May-10	Cameron	Y	Con
Sherlock	Maeve Christina Mary Sherlock	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Smith of Basildon	Angela Evans Smith	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Stedman-Scott	Deborah Stedman-Scott	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Con
Wheeler	Margaret Eileen Joyce Wheeler	28-May-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Hollins	Professor Sheila Clare Hollins	05-Oct-10	Cameron	N	XB
Bakewell	Dame Joan Dawson Bakewell	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Berridge	Elizabeth Rose Berridge	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Con
Brinton	Sarah Virginia Brinton	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	LD
Doocey	Elizabeth Deirdre Doocey	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	LD
Heyhoe Flint	Rachael Heyhoe Flint	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Con
Jenkin of Kennington	Anne Caroline Jenkin	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Con
Jolly	Judith Anne Jolly	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	LD
King of Bow	Oona Tamsyn King	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Kramer	Susan Veronica Kramer	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	LD

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Lister of Burtersett	Margot Ruth Aline Lister	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Morgan of Ely	Mair Eluned Morgan	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Randerson	Jennifer Elizabeth Randerson	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	LD
Shackleton of Belgravia	Fiona Sara Shackleton	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Con
Stowell of Beeston	Tina Wendy Stowell	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Con
Tyler of Enfield	Claire Tyler	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	LD
Wheatcroft	Patience Jane Wheatcroft	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Con
Worthington	Bryony Katherine Worthington	19-Nov-10	Cameron	N	Lab
Kidron	Beeban Kidron	17-May-12	Cameron	N	XB
Lane-Fox of Soho	Martha Lane-Fox	27-Feb-13	Cameron	N	XB
Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville	Catherine Mary Bakewell	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	LD
Goldie	Annabel Goldie	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	Con
Greender	Rosalind Greender	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	LD
Hodgson of Abinger	Fiona Hodgson	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	Con
Humphreys	Christine Mary Humphreys	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	LD
Jones of Moulsecomb	Jennifer Helen Jones	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	XB
Kennedy of Cradley	Alicia Kennedy	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	Lab
Lawrence of Clarendon	Doreen Lawrence	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	Lab
Manzoor	Zahida Manzoor	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	LD
Neville-Rolfe	Lucy Neville-Rolfe	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	Con
Suttie	Alison Suttie	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	LD
Williams of Trafford	Susan Williams	01-Aug-13	Cameron	N	Con
Brady	Karren Rita Brady	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con
Chisholm of Owlpen	Caroline (Carlyn) Elizabeth Chisholm	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con
Evans of Bowes Park	Natalie Jessica Evans	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date announced</b>	<b>PM in power</b>	<b>Deceased</b>	<b>Party at creation</b>
Harding of Winscombe	Diana Mary Harding	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con
Helic	Arminka Helic	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con
Janke	Barbara Lilian Janke	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	LD
Mobarik	Nosheena Shaheen Mobarik	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con
Pinnock	Kathryn Mary Pinnock	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	LD
Rebuck	Gail Ruth Rebuck	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Lab
Shields	Joanna Shields	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	Con
Smith of Newnham	Julie Elizabeth Smith	08-Aug-14	Cameron	N	LD
Wolf of Dulwich	Alison Margaret Wolf	21-Oct-14	Cameron	N	XB
Altman	Rosalind Miriam Altman	14-May-15	Cameron	N	Con

Note: 'PM in Power' refers to the Prime Minister in power at the time the peerage was announced, not necessarily the Prime Minister who recommended the individual appointment.

(Source: House of Lords Library data on peerage creations since 1958)

**Table 3: Peerage Creations by Gender, by Prime Minister in Power**

<b>Prime Minister</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Macmillan	7	83	90
Douglas-Home	2	27	29
Wilson	14	129	143
Heath	8	40	48
Wilson	11	72	83
Callaghan	5	55	60
Thatcher	27	189	216
Major	29	142	171
Blair	89	297	386
Brown	10	26	36
Cameron	64	132	196
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>1192</b>	<b>1458</b>

Note: 'Prime Minister in Power' refers to the Prime Minister in power at the time the peerage was announced, not necessarily the Prime Minister who recommended the individual appointment.