

# Pagefield



Backbenchers:  
the real  
powerbrokers?



# Foreword



The spirit of campaigning has always shared an intimate relationship with politics; look through a history book and you'll see many of the seismic changes in society we've witnessed have sprung from the tireless campaigning of individuals committed to a cause.

Campaigners take all shapes and sizes, from the humble local community group through to international organisations and charities. But just as important as civic engagement is someone fighting your corner in SW1; at the heart of campaigns time and again are hard-working backbench MPs, fighting for the cause in Parliament.

Their status affords them a privileged position in supporting their constituents' causes and helping drive changes that – while sometimes out of view of those in ministerial offices and the front pages – make real differences to the lives of those they represent. In essence, the meaning of public representation. And following the tragic and untimely death of Sir David Amess, one of the most dedicated backbenchers who embodied the essence of campaigning with his tireless efforts to see Southend made a city (and someone who undoubtedly would have otherwise made this list), it's more important than ever to recognise the important public service delivered by these men and women.

I'm delighted to celebrate these 20 inspiring individuals – whose causes are as varied as the people they may represent – as they showcase those that are good in public office at a time when public opinion sorely needs to see them.

**Lord Grade of Yarmouth**



## The corridors of Westminster have always been synonymous with political power.

Whether it's the large buildings housing Government departments and their civil service ecosystems, or rallying speeches at the Despatch Box from Ministers and the Opposition, it's where the decisions are made that affect millions of people's lives every single day.

But there is too often a narrow focus on who is – and who isn't – influential.

If you read the papers, the suggestion is that the individuals that hold the keys to change are Government Ministers, with the support and endorsement of No.10.

However, there is a group of individuals who are oft-overlooked, but who have consistently worked away in the background, meeting with campaign groups, developing compelling arguments for their cause, and striking out on their own to make the case for policy change.

We want to recognise the vital role that these individuals play in our democracy. Not on the government payroll, they have the freedom to take a different stance where they need to, raise their voices above the parapet and call for something different.

As numerous interventions during the last two years have shown, the humble backbencher can hold just as much power as those leading departments or, at times, the Government itself.

This is what our new annual report 'Backbenchers: The real powerbrokers?' is all about. We want to give recognition to those MPs who, through their own endeavours are holding the Government to account and making a difference from the backbenches.

We're delighted to have put forward a truly diverse group of MPs – with the causes they champion as broad as the constituencies they were all elected to represent.

Celebrating their achievements shows us that power is not just concentrated at the centre of our political system. In fact, some of the policy changes enacted from the backbenches have, in our view, made more of a difference than many of the government's own policy decisions.

We hope that you enjoy learning about those backbenchers who we believe have been most influential this year, and join us in applauding them for showing that anyone is capable of making a difference. Please go to [@PagefieldLondon](#) on Twitter or follow [Pagefield](#) on LinkedIn to vote for your personal favourite. Voting will be open from Monday 13th December until Friday 7th January.

**Oliver Foster, Chief Executive, Pagefield**

# Introduction

Welcome to Pagefield's top 20 influential backbench MPs – a report looking at the important work done by MPs right across the Chamber in championing causes close to them and, in many cases, delivering real change through their efforts.

This report looks at 20 of the most influential MPs currently sitting on the backbenches, and the work they've done to end up on the list. They've been involved in campaigns ranging from better support for veterans through to establishing funding for children's funerals; from putting a greater focus on women's rights issues through to more awareness on the disadvantages facing white working-class pupils.

Whether in the governing party or opposition, these MPs have used their position as a Member of Parliament to bring further prominence to these important campaigns.

This new annual report forms part of the wider work being done here at Pagefield to celebrate campaigning, and the central role it plays in politics and wider society.

Campaigning has been at the heart of Pagefield's work for the 11 years we've been in existence, whether that's been through the global media campaign for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant or marking

British Airways' Centenary Year; whether by helping Starling Bank go from a fledgling challenger to 2 million customers or launching Philip Morris's Smoke Free Future; whether through supporting Camelot's third licence campaign for the National Lottery, or exonerating those accused under Operation Midland.

That's why we're going to be doing a wide range of work over the next year to reflect on the benefits of campaigning, what makes a good campaign, and wholeheartedly banging the drum for campaigning as a way to shape our country for the better.



**Age:** 35

**Constituency:**  
Hitchin and Harpenden

**First elected:**  
2017

**Majority:** 6,895

CONSERVATIVE

## Bim Afolami MP

**Widely seen as emblematic of the future of the Conservative Party, Bim Afolami sits firmly on its progressive, modernising wing.**

He joined the Conservative Party following the election of David Cameron as leader in 2005, worked briefly with George Osborne, and cited William Hague and Rory Stewart as politicians he admired. He was critical of Brexit, abstaining on a three-line Whip vote over a no deal Brexit, saying he had always opposed a no deal and so couldn't vote against the motion in good conscience.

He has previously held positions on the powerful Public Accounts and Regulatory Reform Committees, from which he has gained valuable insight into macroeconomic policy and a deep understanding of public spending.

In the media, he is a clear voice for the ability of the Conservative Party to deliver meritocracy, citing the successes of his Nigerian parents, and praising the Conservatives' education policies. He has made allies across the party in his vocal support for colleagues, praising Chancellor Rishi Sunak's economic policies, including the unpopular NI increase, defending Priti Patel, and drawing attention to the talent and work ethic of fellow Black MPs Kemi Badenoch and James Cleverly.

Amid fears that the Conservative Party may be too reliant on older voters, Afolami is part of a cohort of young, dynamic MPs, whose successes and life experiences are living proof of what the Conservatives can offer.



**Age:** 77

**Constituency:**  
Worthing West

**First elected:**  
1997 General Election

**Majority:** 14,823

CONSERVATIVE

## Sir Peter Bottomley MP

**As the current Father of the House, Sir Peter Bottomley has enjoyed an enduring parliamentary career since 1975.**

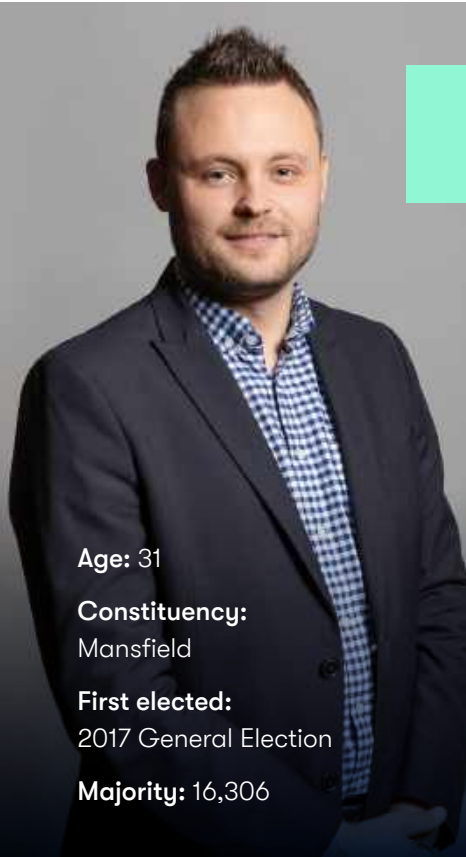
A background both in business and as president of the Conservative Trade Unionists has led to Bottomley being classified as a left-leaning Conservative and allowed him to achieve consensus on many middle-ground issues surrounding workers and domestic affairs.

He has also been one of the most vocal in the House in promoting equal rights for same-sex couples, even at times when there was far less support than there is today.

Following several years in Government from 1984 to 1990 Bottomley has since conducted himself from the backbenches and has steadily built-up influence and rapport across different areas of expertise.

Having been a member of more All-Party Parliamentary Groups than any other MP in 2011, Bottomley is still a member of seventy APPGs and chairs many pertaining to his current campaigns such as leasehold reform, reducing the voting age to sixteen, haemophilia awareness, and promoting the arts.

With a well-rounded portfolio of campaigns and an elevated status afforded to him as Father of the House, Sir Peter Bottomley's backbench career will continue to hold influence for as long as he is an MP.



**Age:** 31

**Constituency:**  
Mansfield

**First elected:**  
2017 General Election

**Majority:** 16,306

CONSERVATIVE

## Ben Bradley MP

**Ben Bradley is the Chairman of the Blue Collar Conservatives and one of the key parliamentarians behind the Education Select Committee's publication of a report on the disadvantages facing white working-class pupils.**

He notably became the leader of Nottingham County Council this year, and he intends to manage this role alongside his Parliamentary duties, in order to more effectively represent constituency issues.

Whilst seen as controversial by many commentators, and the Opposition, he has used the position to champion devolution for the East Midlands, creating a combined authority for its 28 councils.

He has spoken about this frequently in the House of Commons, and has secured broad support from Government for his decision.

At a time when levelling-up is high on the Government's agenda, Bradley will likely play a more important role in showing how this can happen in practice. We would envisage seeing additional investment and more regional powers for the East Midlands as a result.



**Age:** 59

**Constituency:**  
Rhondda

**First elected:**  
2001 General Election

**Majority:** 11,440

LABOUR

## Chris Bryant MP

**Chris Bryant has remained a prominent figure within the Labour Party since he was first elected in 2001, having held numerous positions across the Government, the Shadow Cabinet, and various committees.**

In recent years he has energetically campaigned to highlight the 'hidden epidemic' of people living with an acquired brain injury in the UK. This has involved launching an APPG for Acquired Brain Injury, securing parliamentary debates and recently gaining Government support for the establishment of a task force to assess the effects of associated brain injuries (ABI) across the UK. Beyond these causes, Bryant successfully tabled an amendment to the Domestic Abuse Act, which would require prisoners to be screened for brain injuries sustained through domestic violence. He has also led the Acquired Brain Injury Bill which is set for its Second Reading in the Commons this December, seeking a statutory requirement for the Government to consult on, publish, and review an Acquired Brain Injury Strategy.

A well-known voice in the House, Bryant is an enthusiastic campaigner who is poised for greater success as a backbencher beyond his work on acquired brain injuries.



**Age:** 52

**Constituency:**  
Brent Central

**First elected:**  
2005 (unsuccessfully ran in 2010, re-elected in 2015)

**Majority:** 20,870

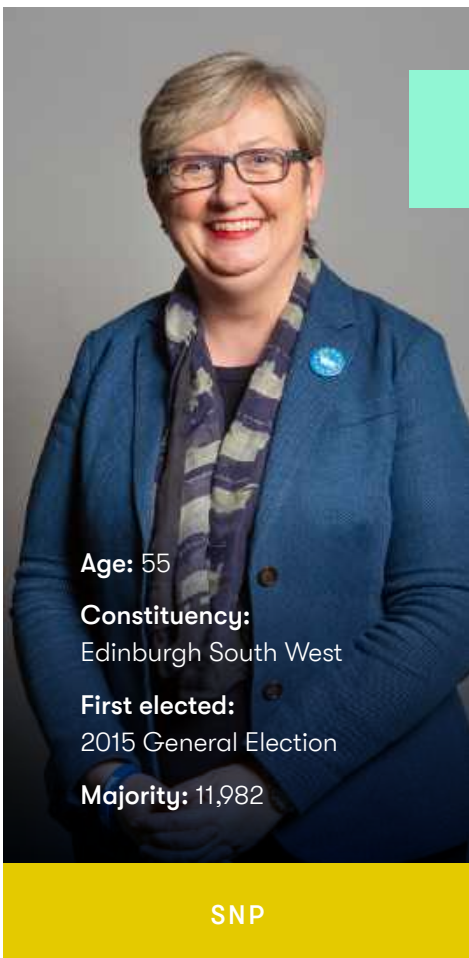
**LABOUR**

## Dawn Butler MP

Dawn Butler has recently made a name for herself after she was asked to leave the Commons for saying that the Prime Minister had “lied to the House and the country over and over again”. In doing so, Butler has joined the likes of the CWU’s Peter Stefanovic and Peter Osborne in their bid to publicise what they perceive to be the Prime Minister’s unchallenged lying.

On the left of the Labour Party, Butler has opposed the Iraq War, up-front tuition fees and supported a return to the grants system for university students. Butler has also opposed the Government over the renewal of the Trident system. Butler’s tenure as an MP has seen her spend time on both the frontbenches and backbenches, but it has also seen her consistently challenge established norms in Parliament, such as when she asked her first question in British Sign Language in the Commons in 2017. Butler has also established herself as a fiercely loyal constituency MP, having opposed Jeremy Corbyn’s three-line whip to vote in favour of Article 50 in 2017, citing her constituency’s overwhelming support to remain in the EU.

As an outspoken and principled MP, Butler combines her varied experience in Parliament to further the views of the Party’s left and those of her constituency. Having been removed from Keir Starmer’s Shadow Cabinet in 2020, Butler could prove herself as a thorn in his side as a popular, media-friendly and combative backbencher.



**Age:** 55

**Constituency:**  
Edinburgh South West

**First elected:**  
2015 General Election

**Majority:** 11,982

**SNP**

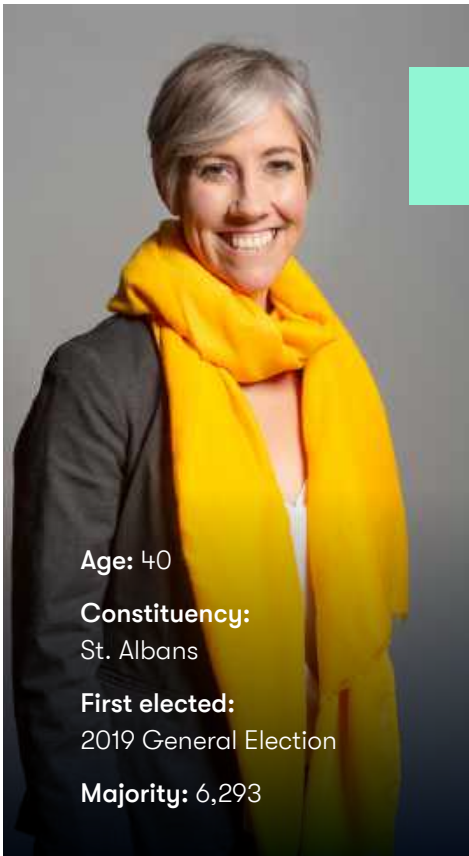
## Joanna Cherry MP

Having served as a Junior Counsel to the Scottish Government and currently serving as Queen’s Counsel, Joanna Cherry has utilised her twenty years of legal expertise within the House, gaining a strong reputation for her advocacy of women’s issues through her pro bono work for different women’s charities.

As the SNP Spokesperson for Justice, Cherry played a critical role as leading litigant against the UK Government, successfully reversing the prorogation of Parliament during the Brexit process. Cherry has also been a longstanding advocate of Scottish Independence, having campaigned and led ‘Lawyers for Yes’ and has actively spoken on the topic ever since.

After being kicked off the SNP frontbench after criticising the Scottish Government’s gender self-identification plans, and later resigning from the SNP’s National Executive Committee, it leaves questions as to whether she will leave the party and risk losing her 23% majority.

Regardless of her future in the SNP, if she remains in the House, she will continue to provide compelling legal critiques and garner support for her forensic and unwavering style.



**Age:** 40

**Constituency:**  
St. Albans

**First elected:**  
2019 General Election

**Majority:** 6,293

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT

## Daisy Cooper MP

**Cooper made three unsuccessful attempts to run for election as an MP before succeeding eventually in 2019, and in the process became one of the few MPs to unseat a Conservative incumbent. Cooper is now the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats and their spokesperson for education.**

A background in political communications and a strong affiliation with the Liberal Democrats dating back to 2009, Cooper has been able to quickly ascend the party ranks and become one of its most vocal members in the House. With her experience as a Campaign Director for Jo Swinson's successful leadership bid, many expect Cooper to make her own bid for the party leadership, especially if she can help lead the strategic growth of the party within the southern Conservative 'blue wall'.

With over 700 parliamentary contributions in this short time, she displays a wide range of expertise and an oratorical talent that reflects her increasing ambition and influence.



**Age:** 44

**Constituency:**  
Walthamstow

**First elected:**  
2010 General Election

**Majority:** 30,862

LABOUR

## Stella Creasy MP

**Working her way up from a councillor to the Mayor for Waltham Forest, Creasy became the MP for Walthamstow in 2010. She has regularly featured as a public spokesperson in the media discussing her numerous campaigns, whilst effectively dismissing the criticisms directed against her. ConservativeHome once described her as Labour's most interesting MP.**

Women's issues are a key area of her activism, leading to Creasy advocating for abortion rights in Northern Ireland, calling for the recognition of misogyny as a hate crime, and even threatening legal action against the Government over its failure to permit backbenchers from taking maternity leave. Recently, Creasy has been an active supporter of the Information and Claims Bill which would allow individuals to obtain information on their peer's salaries, in order to address the root causes of unequal pay. This was introduced as a Private Members Bill and is now awaiting its Second Reading in the Commons.

With regards to her work on finance, Creasy has been vocal in trying to tackle tax evasion overseas, reforming outdated regulation within the banking sector and trying to challenge the increasing uptake of 'buy now, pay later' schemes spurred on by the pandemic.

Frequently shared clips of Creasy being sworn into Parliament or attending debates while holding her baby are emblematic of her unfaltering work on women's issues while also projecting a more relatable and personable side to MPs.





**Age:** 46

**Constituency:**  
Chatham and Aylesford

**First elected:**  
2010 General Election

**Majority:** 18,540

CONSERVATIVE

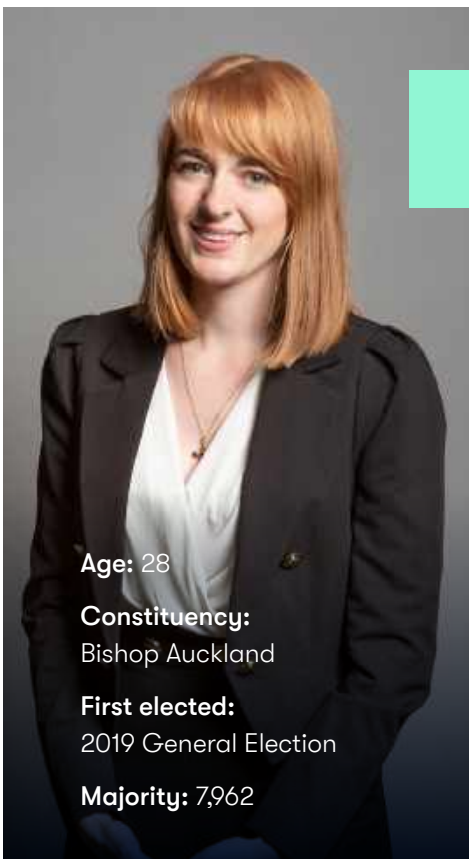
## Tracey Crouch MP

**With an initial career in public affairs alongside roles as a Chief of Staff and political adviser to different MPs, Tracey Crouch has built a solid foundation within the Conservative Party and has consistently improved her standing at the polls.**

Although resolute in her conservative values, Crouch is no stranger to rebelling against the Government and quickly defied the Whip after entering the House when she voted against tuition fee increases. As the Minister for Sport from 2015-18, she also resigned over delays in legislation on limiting the stake of fixed odds betting terminals.

Despite this, Crouch's rapport amongst her colleagues is evident from her appointment to the executive of the backbench 1992 Committee in 2011-12 and the offer of a role in Boris Johnson's Government in 2019, which she turned down due to family commitments.

Crouch chaired the Fan Led Review of Football Governance, which emerged following the fallout of the proposed European Super League, and submitted its interim findings including calling for increased financial governance, the establishment of an independent regulator, and greater investment into grassroots football. With strong engagement across England from fans and clubs alike, Crouch is now responsible for ensuring that the nation's clubs are never again at risk of falling victim to the avarice of owners and investors alike.



**Age:** 28

**Constituency:**  
Bishop Auckland

**First elected:**  
2019 General Election

**Majority:** 7,962

CONSERVATIVE

## Dehenna Davison MP

**28-year-old Dehenna Davison won the County Durham seat of Bishop Auckland, previously a Labour seat since 1885, at the 2019 General Election.**

**This was her third attempt at being elected to Parliament, having previously stood in Kingston-Upon-Hull North in 2015 and Sedgfield in 2017.**

A vocal backbench MP, she has consistently stood up to her own Party, and is part of Jake Berry's Northern Research Group, which was formed to put pressure on the Government for greater investment in the north of England.

Seen as one of the 'rising stars' of the 2019 intake, she used her maiden speech to discuss how her father was killed by a one-punch assault when she was a teenager, visibly moving those in the Chamber to tears. She marked her father's birthday in 2020 by launching the All-Party Parliamentary Group for One Punch Assaults, which aims to look at justice and sentencing reform, as well as raising awareness of one punch assaults. This has secured support from across Parliament, and her savvy use of social media means that her reasons for setting up the group are widely known, not only in the Westminster bubble.

Demonstrating her prominence on the right-wing of the Conservative Party, she launched 'The Political Correction' on GB News as a programme to discuss the issues of the week, which included Nigel Farage in its first week on air. She is also the first Conservative MP to announce that she is bisexual, further helping to change the view of the Conservative Party amongst voters on LGBTIQ+ issues.



## Barry Gardiner MP

**Age:** 64

**Constituency:**  
Brent North

**First elected:**  
1997 General Election

**Majority:** 8,079

LABOUR

**Barry Gardiner served as Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade and Shadow Minister for International Climate Change from 2016 to 2020.**

Gardiner has scrutinised the Budget for three years in a row on the Finance Standing Committee and played a significant role in scrutinising the Energy Bill through his membership of the Energy Bill Committee. He also founded and was the long-serving Chair of Labour Friends of India for which he was awarded the Padma Shri.

His most recent campaign has been fought through the introduction of a Private Members Bill looking to end the controversial practice of ‘fire and rehire’. With the increasing use of this practice throughout the pandemic, the issue has attracted extensive media coverage and support from politicians on both sides of the House. Notable advocates include the Mayor of London, the Mayor of Greater Manchester and former Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith. The Bill was introduced to the House of Commons earlier this year, and has been adopted as official Labour policy.



## Nus Ghani MP

**Age:** 49

**Constituency:**  
Wealden

**First elected:**  
2015 General Election

**Majority:** 25,655

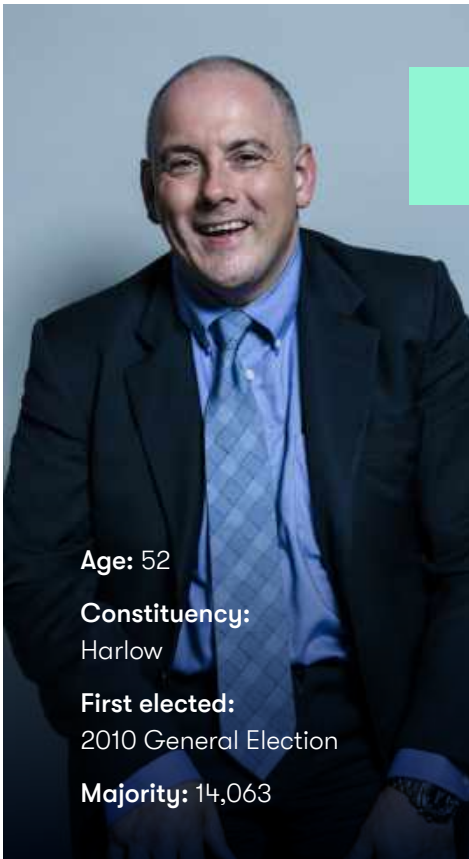
CONSERVATIVE

**Nus Ghani was instrumental in the declaration of a genocide against Uyghur people in Xinxiang, China, garnering unanimous support for her motion in Parliament. Through tabling a Genocide Amendment to the Trade Bill in July this year, she also worked to sanction countries where supply chains are complicit in practices that amount to genocide.**

In a compromise to her amendment, a body of peers with judicial expertise is to be created in order to advise Select Committees when drafting reports on genocide. Having campaigned on this issue for a year, where she subsequently became one of five MPs to be sanctioned by the Chinese Government, she hasn’t erred in continuing to advocate for further diplomatic measures and raising awareness on the national stage.

Through her work with the Covid Recovery Group, she has increasingly rebelled against the Government in calling for changes to national lockdown strategies and investing in less restrictive approaches through a stronger emphasis on an effective test and trace operation.

With previous experience working in Afghanistan with the BBC, Ghani is also likely become a key figure in voicing her concerns on the US and British withdrawal of troops and will continue to publicise the plight of women in Afghanistan.



**Age:** 52

**Constituency:**  
Harlow

**First elected:**  
2010 General Election

**Majority:** 14,063

CONSERVATIVE

## Robert Halfon MP

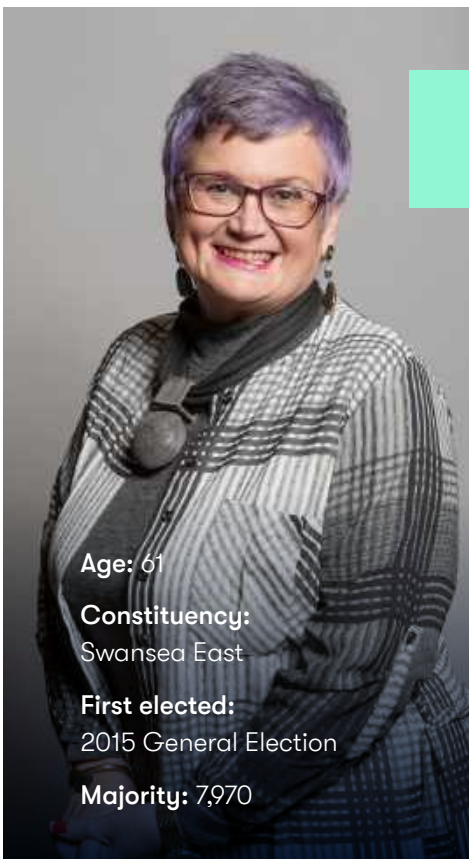
**Robert Halfon has had an extensive political career, spanning various roles as a researcher, political director, chief of staff, and councillor. After contesting the seat of Harlow in 2001 and 2005 and eroding the Labour majority, he finally made his way to the House in 2010 with a majority of 4,925.**

Serving as Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills before becoming Chair of the Commons Education Select Committee in 2017, Halfon has become an outspoken figure on education in the media. Whether on the suspension of schools, isolation for pupils, examinations, or vaccinations, he often challenges Government approaches in a constructive manner that focuses on those at risk of being 'left behind' by the fallout of the pandemic.

Even in the face of controversy when publishing a report under the Education Committee, which explored a systematic neglect of white working-class children, Halfon has become a widely recognised spokesperson for educational matters and holding the Government to account in a number of ways, receiving perhaps even more publicity than the Secretary of State, at the time, Gavin Williamson.

Beyond education, Halfon has not been afraid to rebel against the party line either, having been one of the few Conservative MPs to support Labour's proposal to extend free school meals over the holidays.

A principled Conservative who is highly active in the Commons, Halfon will likely enjoy a long career as a Parliamentarian.



**Age:** 61

**Constituency:**  
Swansea East

**First elected:**  
2015 General Election

**Majority:** 7,970

LABOUR

## Carolyn Harris MP

**Boasting a variety of successful campaigns to her name since becoming MP for Swansea East, Carolyn Harris has gone from strength to strength in building wide-reaching political support for a variety of issues.**

In 2016, she led the campaign to establish a Children's Funeral Fund to provide financial support for bereaved parents – an experience she herself had to undergo when taking out a loan to pay for her son's funeral. Her campaigning led, by 2018, to the Fund being established across England, Wales and Scotland.

Her focus then turned to reforming gambling legislation, in which she successfully campaigned to lower the maximum stake of fixed-odds betting machines to £2, which the Government went on to implement in 2020.

Most recently, Harris secured another victory in lowering costs for women accessing Hormone Replacement Therapy for menopause through the NHS. After introducing the Menopause Bill and building consensus in the House, she later withdrew it in October after receiving confirmation from the Government of the changes. Harris will also be co-chairing the Menopause Taskforce created by the Government in looking for further improvements for women experiencing menopause.



**Age:** 57

**Constituency:**  
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch  
& Strathspey

**First elected:**  
2015 General Election

**Majority:** 10,440

SNP

## Drew Hendry MP

Before contesting and subsequently winning a seat that Danny Alexander had held for ten years, Drew Hendry served as the Leader of the Highland Council and a Councillor for Aird and Loch Ness. He became involved in politics with the aspiration of securing greater powers for Scotland, which he has remained true to ever since.

Chairing the APPG on Terminal Illness, Hendry recently succeeded in campaigning against the Government to allow terminally ill people to access critical support if they are expected to die within twelve months, rather than six. In relation, he has also applied significant pressure on the Government to fast-track benefits applications for those who have a terminal diagnosis.

If his snatching of the mace in the House to oppose the UK Internal Market Bill is any sign of his future as a backbencher, it's one of persistent vocal opposition and an expected ascendancy within the SNP ranks.



**Age:** 34

**Constituency:**  
Rutland and Melton

**First elected:**  
2019 General Election

**Majority:** 26,924

CONSERVATIVE

## Alicia Kearns MP

Despite only being elected to Parliament in 2019, Alicia Kearns has built up a strong reputation in the Foreign Office. This has included a vocal approach and close collaboration with Canada on responding to the Uyghur genocide in Xinxiang, gaining membership to both the Foreign Affairs Select Committee and Joint Committee on National Security, whilst successfully pushing the Government to create a sub-unit within the recently unveiled Conflict Centre that will focus on atrocity prevention across the globe.

Within the UK, she successfully led the Lone Births Campaign which sought to allow partners to attend both scans and any other appointments prior to the birth of their child. By garnering widespread publicity and cross-party support, the ban was successfully lifted, and Kearns continues to pressure the remaining NHS Trusts that haven't yet followed suit.

Yet another successful campaign that she has led during her short time in Parliament was the LGBTQ+ Conversion Therapy Ban. Working with advocacy groups, meeting with individual Cabinet members, boosting media coverage, and securing the Prime Minister's support, the ban was subsequently included in the Queen's Speech this year.

A tireless campaigner on both constituency and national issues, Alicia Kearns is a compelling, rising backbencher worth keeping an eye on.



## Kim Leadbeater MP

**Age:** 45  
**Constituency:** Batley and Spen  
**First elected:** 2021 Batley and Spen  
**First elected:** 2021 By-election  
**Majority:** 1,276

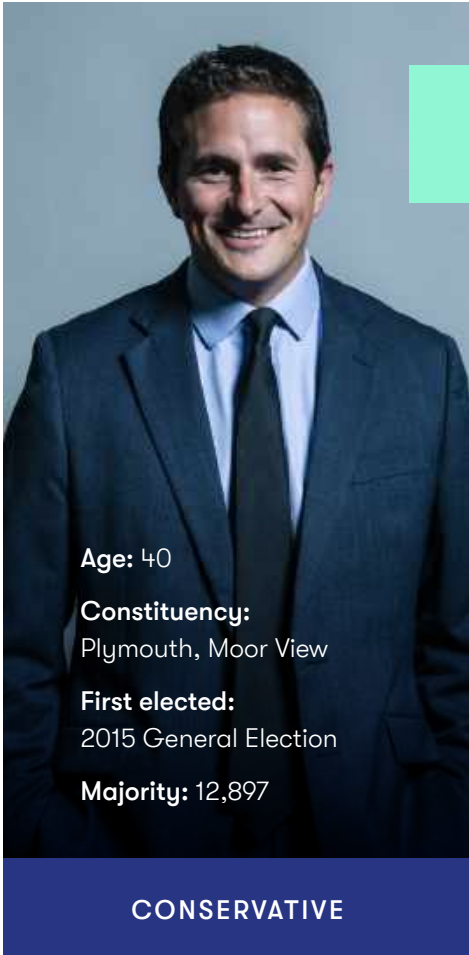
**LABOUR**

**Having re-joined the Labour Party shortly before the Batley and Spen by-election to contest her late sister Jo Cox’s seat, Kim Leadbeater diverted her career as a lecturer and personal trainer to become a local campaigner with the aim of uniting her constituency in the wake of her sister’s tragic murder.**

Leadbeater first gained political momentum through her work with the Jo Cox Foundation and the More in Common volunteer group, which sought to create a positive legacy from Jo Cox’s murder by strengthening cross-party cooperation and catalysing local initiatives. In 2018, Leadbeater was awarded the Points of Light award by Prime Minister Theresa May, as well as the ‘Person with Purpose’ Northern Power Women Award, which recognise volunteering and social impact respectively. In 2021, she also received an MBE for services to social cohesion and combatting loneliness during the Covid-19 pandemic.

After five months as an MP, Leadbeater has dedicated herself to a handful of campaigns, such as contesting plans to build an Amazon warehouse on local farmland in Scholes, facilitating stakeholder collaboration with road safety initiatives, and working with local businesses to promote training and re-training for people of all ages.

With a mission to bridge political divides and uphold her sister’s legacy, Leadbeater’s short stint as a backbencher suggests that she could be a rising star of the Party and one to look out for in the years to come.



## Johnny Mercer MP

**Age:** 40  
**Constituency:** Plymouth, Moor View  
**First elected:** 2015 General Election  
**Majority:** 12,897

**CONSERVATIVE**

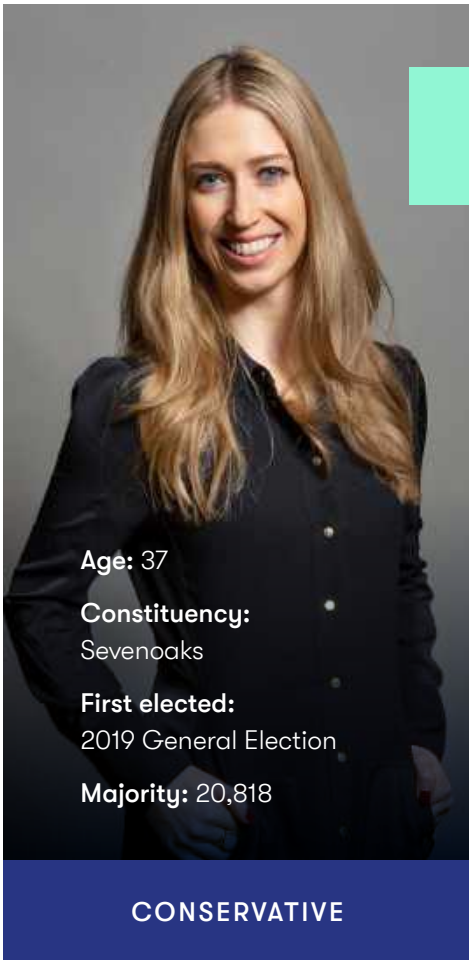
**Despite not taking an interest in politics until he decided to stand for election himself, Johnny Mercer has managed to quickly cultivate an energetic political presence.**

After serving across three tours in Afghanistan, he retired from the army in 2013 with the rank of Captain. Upon entering Parliament, he gave an impassioned maiden speech in which he declared an unapologetic mission to improve the experience of veterans and end perceptions that their rehabilitation is the responsibility of the third sector.

As Junior Minister in the Ministry of Defence in 2019, the UK Government went on to establish an Office for Veterans’ Affairs in the Cabinet Office, which Mercer held joint responsibility for. Although later resigning over disagreements on defence-related legislation, he continues to pursue his agenda through the Select Committee on the Armed Forces Bill.

Mercer has also worked alongside various mental health charities to push through the ‘Breathing Space Amendment’, which gives people receiving mental health crisis treatment an extended protection period from creditor action.

Consecutive boosts to Mercer’s parliamentary majority show a clear support for his unwavering approach. Having built up a strong profile for his campaigns thus far, Mercer will no doubt be influential in any other areas he pursues.



**Age:** 37

**Constituency:**  
Sevenoaks

**First elected:**  
2019 General Election

**Majority:** 20,818

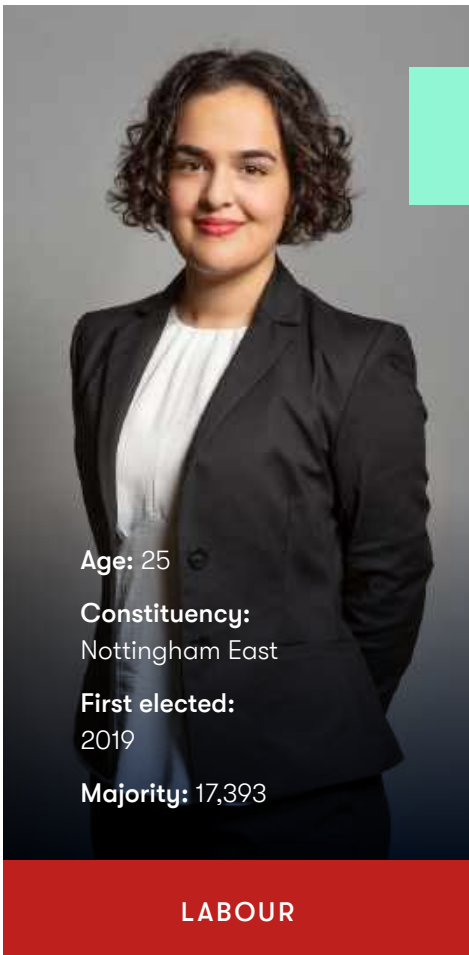
CONSERVATIVE

## Laura Trott MP

Having previously served as a councillor, a political adviser in the Number 10 Policy Unit, and as Director of Strategic Communications under David Cameron, Laura Trott's election in 2019 brings with it a range of policy and communications experience, setting the stage for an influential start to her career as a backbencher.

Within a year she had introduced a Private Members Bill titled "Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (Children) Bill", which sought to ban under 18s from being able to receive cosmetic Botox or fillers. The Bill was ultimately successful and gained Royal Assent in April this year.

Currently sitting on the Health and Social Care Committee, Trott is a vocal advocate for social mobility and women's issues. Trott's ten years of experience in policy and communications is also likely to strengthen whichever campaign she dedicates herself to.



**Age:** 25

**Constituency:**  
Nottingham East

**First elected:**  
2019

**Majority:** 17,393

LABOUR

## Nadia Whittome MP

Parliament's youngest MP, elected aged just 23, Nadia Whittome has already made a name for herself, garnering respect across all wings of the Labour Party.

Prior to entering Parliament, she worked in the social care sector whilst simultaneously studying for an LLB. On being elected, she promised that she would take home "a worker's wage" of £35,000, donating the remainder to charities in her constituency.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, she drew plaudits from across the political spectrum and the media, for answering then-Health Secretary Matt Hancock's call for those with experience in the health and social care sector to return to those jobs. She then donated her salary at Lark Hill retirement village to a local Covid-19 support fund.

Breaking the Whip to vote against the Overseas Operations Bill, she made a pragmatic case for doing so, saying that abstention was "the wrong move."

Following the release of the EHRC report into anti-Semitism in Labour last year and Jeremy Corbyn's subsequent suspension, she was alone among Socialist Campaign Group MPs in not criticising the decision that day.

As well as in her official role as a member of the Environmental Audit Committee, she wields considerable influence on social media, having garnered 75,000 followers on Twitter in less than two years as an MP.

**Thank you for taking the time to read  
about those MPs who we believe are  
the real powerbrokers in Parliament.**

If you want to know more about the work that we do,  
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