



HOUSE OF LORDS

Library Note

Regional Representation in the House of Lords

This Library Note provides a number of statistics about the connections members of the House of Lords have with the regions of the United Kingdom. Part one sets out the context of this issue. Part two presents collated information about members' main residences. The Note concludes with charts showing the regions (previously) represented by members as holders of selected public office in part three.

Matthew Purvis
6 March 2012
LLN 2012/007

House of Lords Library Notes are compiled for the benefit of Members of Parliament and their personal staff. Authors are available to discuss the contents of the Notes with the Members and their staff but cannot advise members of the general public.

Any comments on Library Notes should be sent to the Head of Research Services, House of Lords Library, London SW1A 0PW or emailed to brocklehursta@parliament.uk.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Peers' Main Residences and UK Nations and Regions	3
3. Regions Represented by Peers as Holders of Selected Public Office.....	6
3.1 Members of Parliament (MPs)	6
3.2 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).....	7
3.3 Local Government: Councillors	8
3.4 Devolved Legislatures.....	8
3.5 Lord-Lieutenants and Deputy Lieutenants.....	9
4. Select Bibliography.....	10

1. Introduction

Reform of the House of Lords has been a manifesto commitment of successive Governments since 1997. In 1999 the then Labour Government legislated to remove all but 92 hereditary peers as the first stage of plans to change the composition of the House. Following the House of Lords Act 1999 a number of white papers were published proposing further reform to the then 'interim' House. No legislation was brought forward to enact these changes (see House of Lords Library Note, *House of Lords Reform: Chronology 1900–2010*, 21 July 2011, [LLN 2011/025](#)). On 17 May 2011, the current Government published a white paper and draft Bill on reforming the House of Lords, containing proposals for a reformed House of 300 members, 80 percent of whom would be elected using the single transferable vote, with the transition to the new House staggered over three electoral cycles beginning in 2015. A 100 percent elected House was also presented as an option (Cabinet Office, *House of Lords Reform Draft Bill*, May 2011, [Cm 8077](#)).

Notwithstanding these potential changes, a number of academics and commentators have sought to assess the House as currently constituted. Meg Russell, of UCL's Constitution Unit, has monitored the behaviour of the House since 1999, its effect on legislation and prospects for future reform. One paper, written with Maria Sciara, looked at the representativeness of the House and considered the impact of appointments on the balance between the parties. The authors noted:

Despite being unelected, the notion that the House of Lords is now a 'representative' chamber—perhaps even more representative than the House of Commons—has thus grown in currency.

(Meg Russell and Maria Sciara, *The House of Lords in 2005: A More Representative and Assertive Chamber?*, UCL Constitution Unit, February 2006, [p 8](#))

The possibility that the current House of Lords—seen by some as a transitional House awaiting full reform—could be representative whilst still unelected has been the subject of evaluation by some commentators. For example, Alexandra Kelso considered this in a paper that analysed the meaning of representation, democracy and legitimacy in a Lords context ('Reforming the House of Lords: Navigating Representation, Democracy and Legitimacy at Westminster', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2006, vol 59, [pp 563–81](#)). More recently Hugh Bochel and Andrew Defty have assessed how the current House of Lords provides representation in the context of a broad understanding of the concept ('"A More Representative Chamber": Representation and the House of Lords', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, vol 18, March 2012, [pp 82–97](#)).

Others have sought to establish the degree of one aspect of 'representativeness' in the House of Lords, that of regional representativeness. In 2008 the New Local Government Network (NLGN) published a report [Lords of our manor? How a reformed House of Lords can better represent the UK](#). The authors used information available about members' main residences (provided by members for the purposes of claiming allowances and expenses) to show the proportions of members from each of the regions of the UK. This information was available for 545 members (as at March 2007, minus those who had ceased to be members) and the residences were categorised into either a region of England, or Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. The authors found that the regions where most Peers lived were London (22.57 percent) and the South East (18.35 percent) with the fewest Peers living in the North East (2.02 percent) and East Midlands (2.94 percent).

This Library Note provides an updated snapshot of the regional backgrounds of members of the House of Lords. It does this by using the same methodology: tabulating the areas given by 614 members as their main residence into the relevant [English regions](#) and nations of the UK. In addition the Note recognises that many members of the House arrive with connections to places where they do not necessarily live. In light of this, the Note provides further indicators to show the regions members of the House are linked with as a result of representing an area within the region as the holder of a public office. Drawn from widely-available biographical sources, part 3 of the Note provides information about the range of regions Peers have represented as: Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), local councillors and members of the devolved institutions in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and in London. It also presents data for the regions represented by Peers as Lord-Lieutenants and Deputy Lieutenants.

The information in part 3 of the Note is collected from sources such as *Dod's Parliamentary Companion*, and may not be comprehensive. Consequently, the data in this Note must be considered as indicative. Additionally, in presenting the data this Note does not provide any analysis or interpretation of the information. A bibliography of further sources of information about this subject is included in part 4.

2. Peers' Main Residences and UK Nations and Regions

Tables 1 and 2 set out the number of Peers from each nation and region of the UK. The data is collated from the [details of main residences](#) (as at September 2011) provided for the purpose of claiming allowances. Charts 1 and 2 present this information as percentages (of the UK and of England respectively).

The data presented does not include Peers who have chosen not to publicly disclose their main residence so when reading these tables it is important to note it does not represent the total membership of the House of Lords. The data also excludes Peers who have subsequently died and the Lords Spiritual (who usually live in their diocese—further information is available in the House of Lords Library Note *House of Lords: Religious Representation*, 25 November 2011, [LLN 2011/036](#)).

Table 1: Number of Peers by Affiliation and UK Nation of Main Residence

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	Overseas
Conservative	141	16	2	2	2
Crossbench	114	12	5	7	0
Labour	162	22	10	0	3
Liberal Democrat	61	7	5	1	1
Other Parties					
Conservative Independent	1	0	0	0	0
Democratic Unionist	0	0	0	3	0
Independent Labour	1	0	0	0	0
Labour Independent	1	0	0	0	0
Plaid Cymru	0	0	1	0	0
UK Independence Party	1	1	0	0	0
Ulster Unionist Party	0	0	0	4	0
Non-affiliated*	11	1	1	0	0
Other**	13	2	0	0	0
Total	506	61	24	17	6

*Includes Lords Office Holders such as the Lord Speaker and also those Peers unaffiliated to a party/party whip

** Includes those on leave of absence

(Source: House of Lords, '[House of Lords Publication of Financial Support for Members: 1–30 September 2011](#)', February 2012)

Table 2: Number of Peers by Affiliation and English Region of Main Residence

	East of England	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire & Humber
Conservative	17	5	31	3	7	42	22	6	8
Crossbench	16	1	43	3	3	27	10	6	5
Labour	22	7	52	7	17	30	8	10	9
Liberal Democrat	6	1	15	3	4	14	13	0	5
Other Parties									
Conservative Independent	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Independent Labour	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Labour Independent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
UKIP	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Non-affiliated*	2	0	6	0	0	3	0	0	0
Other**	4	1	6	0	0	2	0	0	0
Total	67	15	154	16	31	119	54	23	27

* Includes Lords Office Holders such as the Lord Speaker and also those Peers unaffiliated to a party/party whip

** Includes those on leave of absence

(Source: House of Lords, '[House of Lords Publication of Financial Support for Members: 1–30 September 2011](#)', February 2012)

Chart 1: UK Nations of Peers' Main Residences (%)

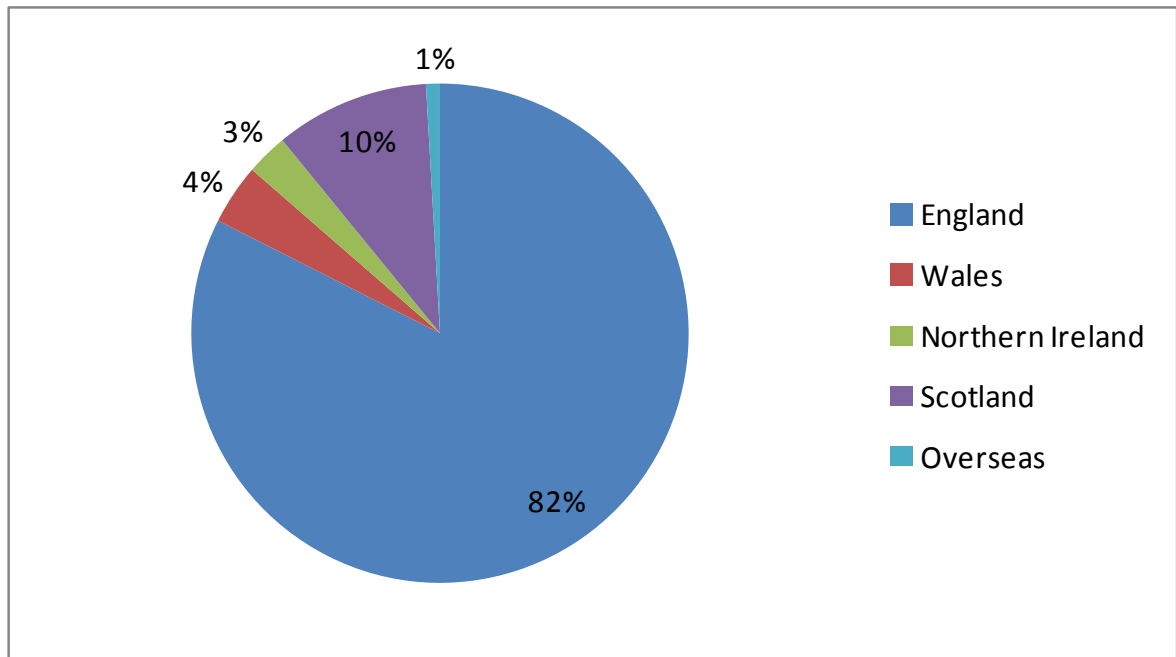
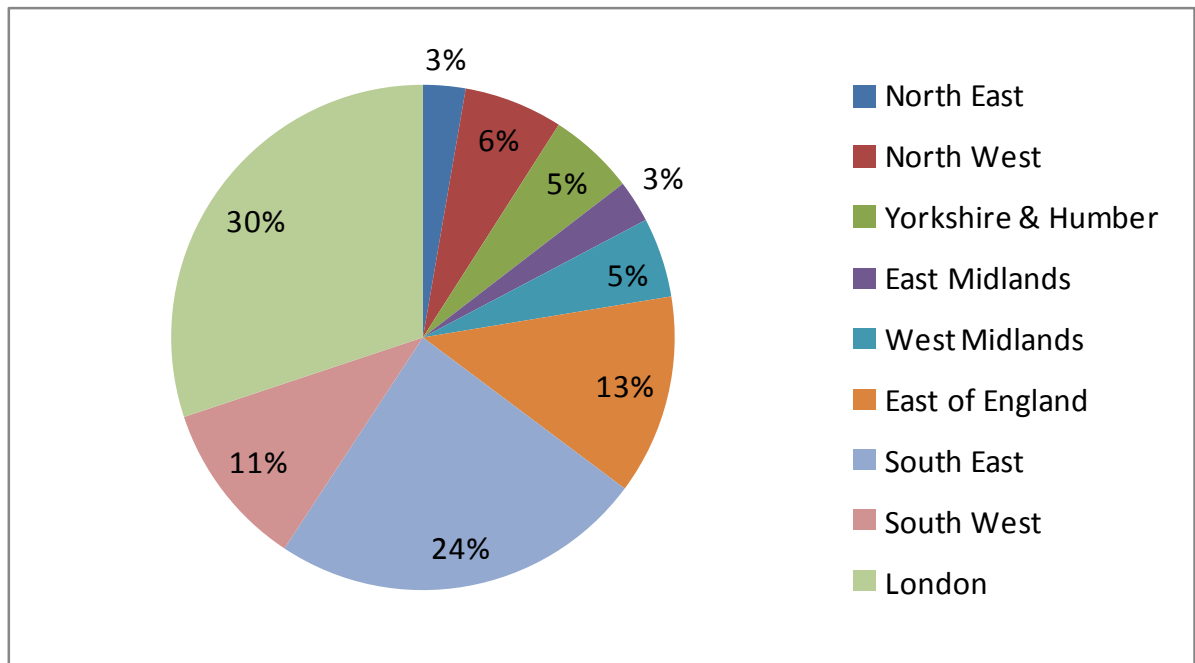


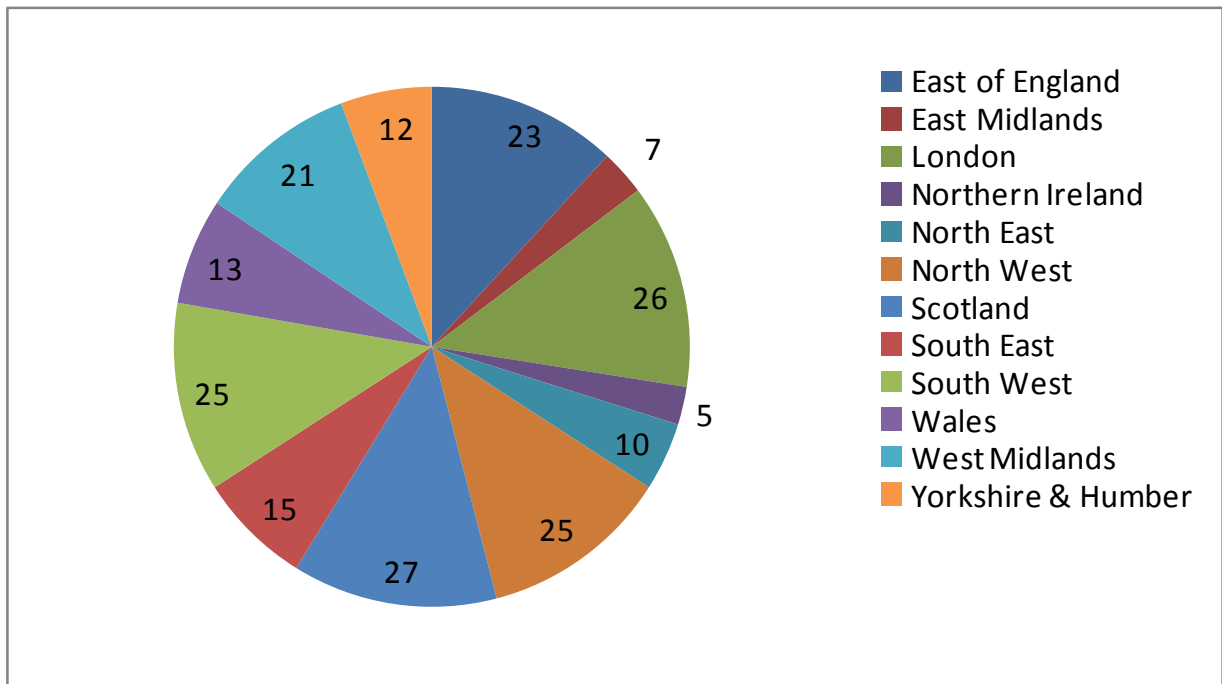
Chart 2: English Regions of Peers' Main Residences (%)



3. Regions Represented by Peers as Holders of Selected Public Office

3.1 Members of Parliament (MPs)

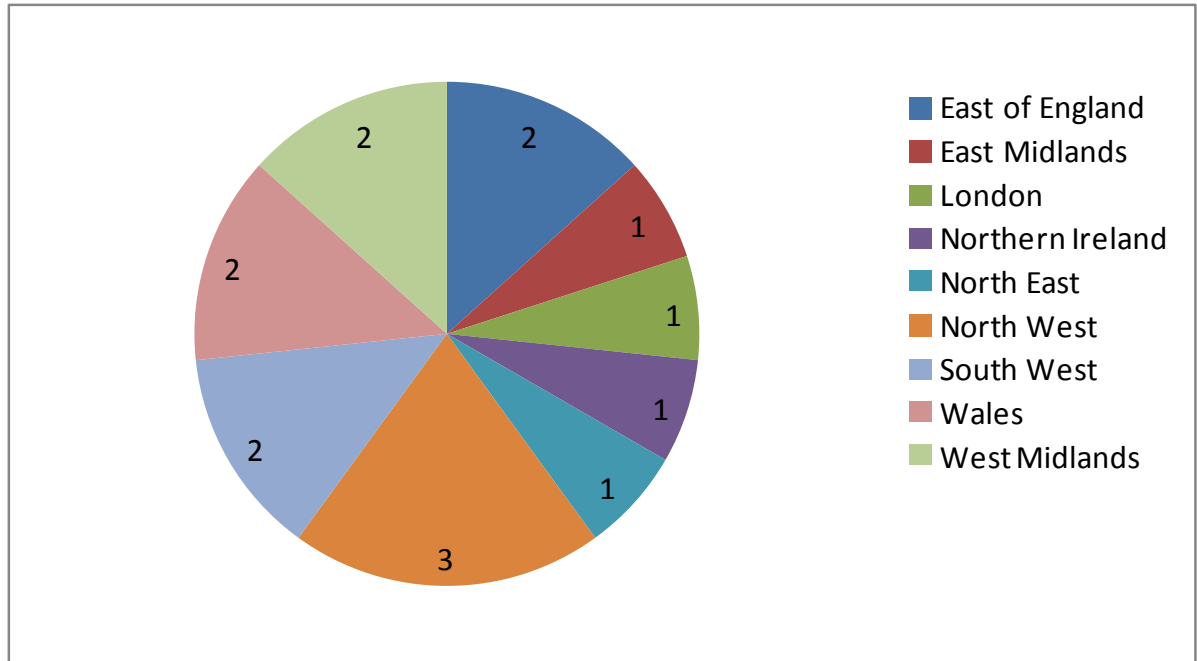
This chart shows the nations and regions previously represented by the 197 former MPs who now sit in the House of Lords (Parliament website, '[Members of the House of Lords who were once MPs](#)', accessed 5 March 2012). The total count exceeds the number of former MPs, as some Peers represented more than one seat in their Commons career. Those which were in different regions have been counted separately.



(Source: *Dod's Parliamentary Companion 2012*)

3.2 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

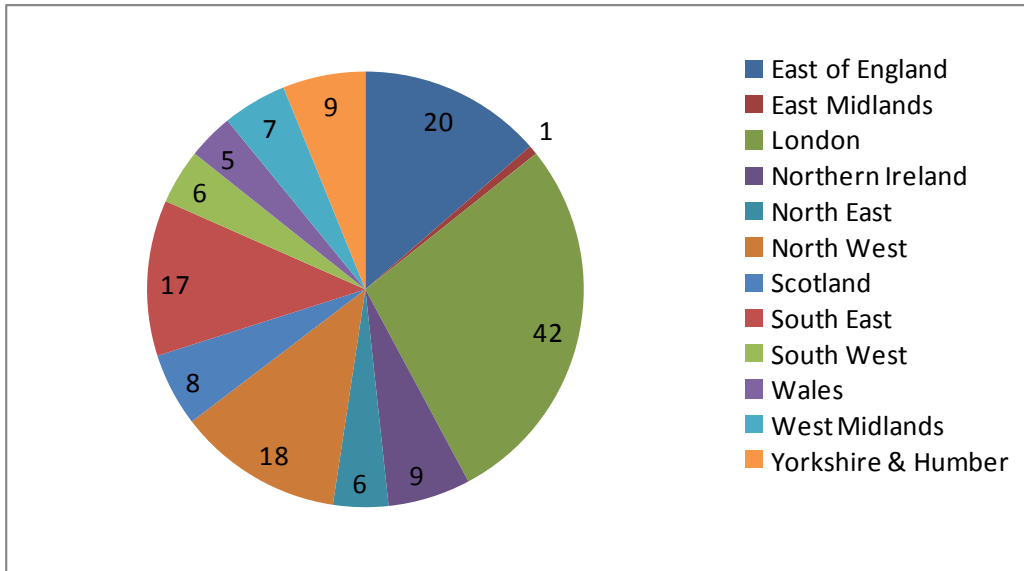
This chart shows the nations and regions represented by those Peers who have been members of the European Parliament. The numbers include Baroness Ludford, who is presently disqualified from sitting in the House of Lords as a current MEP, but exclude those Peers who were members of the European Parliament before direct elections were introduced in 1979.



(Source: *Dod's Parliamentary Companion 2012*)

3.3 Local Government: Councillors

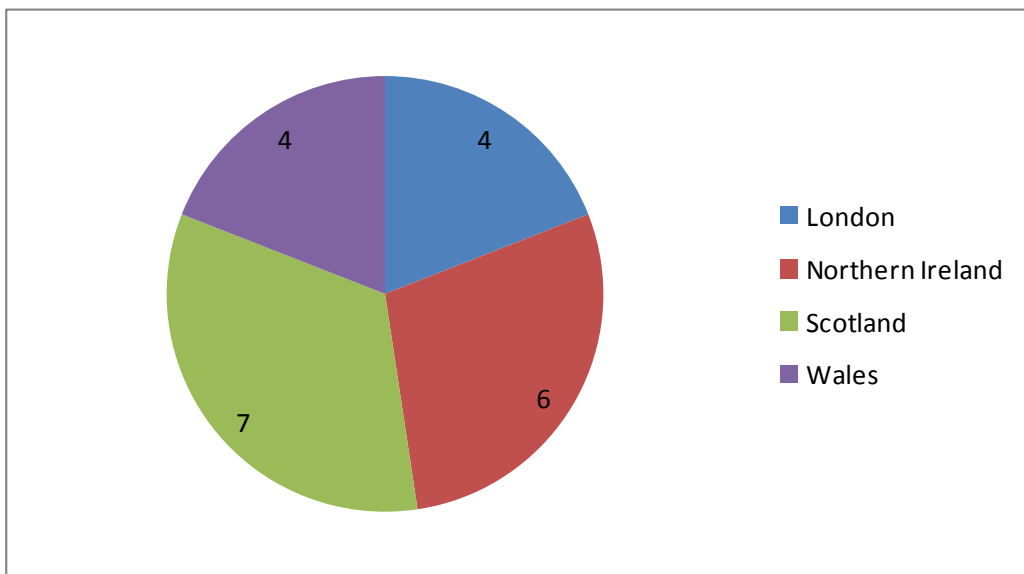
This chart presents the nations and regions represented by the 146 Peers who are former/current local councillors. Some Peers may have been a councillor in more than one region so the figures represent the count of nations and regions represented, rather than the number of Peers who have been councillors.



(Source: *Dod's Parliamentary Companion 2012*)

3.4 Devolved Legislatures

Since 1999 there have been devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, in Northern Ireland since 1998 and in London since 2000. This chart shows the number of Peers who have held seats in these legislatures.

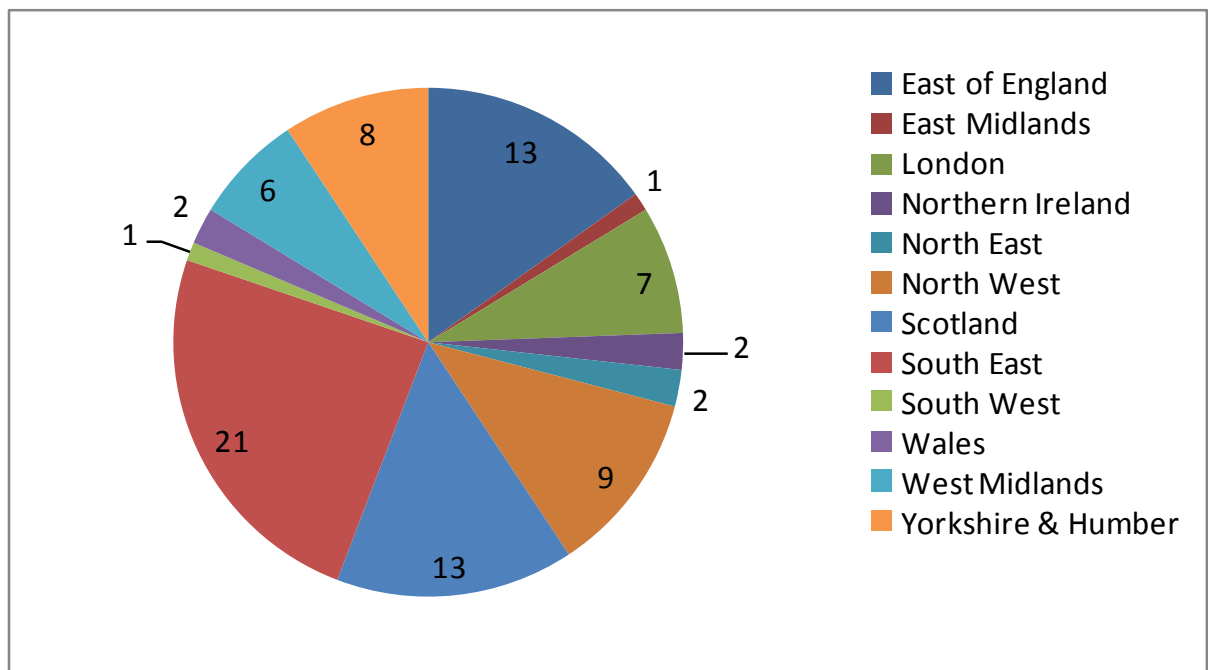


(Source: *Dod's Parliamentary Companion 2012*)

3.5 Lord-Lieutenants and Deputy Lieutenants

Lord-Lieutenants are the representatives of the Crown for each county in the United Kingdom, appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister (in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Lord Provost of each is, by virtue of his office, Lord-Lieutenant). They have a number of responsibilities including the organisation of all official Royal visits to their county (Royal.gov, '[Lord-Lieutenants](#)', accessed 1 March 2012). Deputy Lieutenants are appointed by the Lord-Lieutenants. The Lieutenancies Act 1997 ([s 2](#)) stipulates that to be appointed an individual must have "shown to have rendered appropriate service" and "has a place of residence in, or within seven miles from the boundary of, that county or area".

The following shows the regions represented by the 84 Peers who have served in these roles. One Peer has held positions in two regions.



(Source: *Dod's Parliamentary Companion 2012*)

4. Select Bibliography

The House of Lords Library has published a number of Library Notes about the House of Lords, several of which are connected with the issue of representation in the second chamber:

- *Public Attitudes Towards the House of Lords and House of Lords Reform*, 2 March 2012, [LLN 2012/006](#)
- *Women in the House of Lords*, 28 February 2012, [LLN 2012/005](#)
- *House of Lords: Religious Representation*, 25 November 2011, [LLN 2011/036](#)
- *House of Lords: Party and Group Strengths and Voting*, 21 June 2011, [LLN 2011/022](#)
- *The Life Peerages Act 1958*, 21 April 2008, [LLN 2008/011](#)

A list of the research published by UCL's Constitution Unit about the House of Lords since 1999 can be found at this link:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/research/parliament/house-of-lords>

A number of other articles consider aspects of 'representation' and 'representativeness' in the House of Lords, some of which are listed below:

- Hugh Bochel and Andrew Defty, "A More Representative Chamber": Representation and the House of Lords', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, March 2012, vol 18, [pp 82–97](#)
- Respublica, [Our House: Reflections on Representation and Reform in the House of Lords](#), 2012
- Hugh Bochel and Andrew Defty, 'Power Without Representation? The House of Lords and Social Policy', *Social Policy and Society*, 2010, vol 9, pp 367–77
- Alexandra Kelso, 'Reforming the House of Lords: Navigating Representation, Democracy and Legitimacy at Westminster', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2006, vol 59, [pp 563–81](#)

