



HOUSE OF LORDS

Library Note

Regional Representation in the House of Lords

Following the introduction and subsequent withdrawal in 2012 of the Government's Bill to introduce elections to the House of Lords, there has been renewed interest in the membership of the Upper Chamber. This Library Note provides statistics relating to the regions with which current Members have connections. It does this by presenting information about the regions of Members' main residences, but also by analysing the places that make up part of a significant number of Members' titles. The Note concludes with consideration of the regions (previously) represented by Members as holders of elected office at local, regional, national and European levels.

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I. Introduction

In September 2012, Nick Clegg, the Deputy Prime Minister, announced to MPs that the Government had decided “not to proceed with the House of Lords Reform Bill during this Parliament”. This was in response to suggestions that the Government would be unable to secure enough support at that time for its programme motion, which would set out the timetable for the Bill’s progress through the House of Commons. Mr Clegg said the Government had withdrawn its Bill.¹ Reform of the House of Lords has been a manifesto commitment of successive Governments since 1997.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 Members 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.² 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 fully elected House was also presented as an option.³ A Joint Committee of both Houses was appointed to consider the proposals put forward in the draft Bill, with the Committee reporting its response on 23 April 2012.⁴ The Government introduced the [House of Lords Reform Bill](#) to the House of Commons on 27 June 2012, with second reading taking place over the course of two days on 9 and 10 July. The Bill received its second reading by a large margin—462 votes to 124⁵—but it made no further progress and was withdrawn.

With major reform of the House of Lords now unlikely to be revisited before 2015, there remains interest in the House of Lords as presently constituted. Following announcement in August 2013 of the appointment of 30 new Members⁶, the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee issued a report in which it examined the “desirability, practicality and effectiveness of a range of small-scale reforms to reduce the size of the House of Lords”.⁷ Following the withdrawal of its own reform proposals, the Government has since indicated its support for a private member’s bill containing proposals relating to retirement mechanisms and introducing further disciplinary powers, which echoed those previously proposed by Lord Steel of Aikwood.⁸ Responding to the debate in the House of Commons at second reading on the [House of Lords Reform \(No 2\) Bill](#), introduced by Dan Byles (Conservative MP for North Warwickshire and Bedworth), Greg Clark, Minister of State at the Cabinet Office, said the Bill contained “modest proposals” the Government was “prepared to support”.⁹ He added that there was “a clear consensus, after five attempts in the House of Lords, on the need to describe some arrangements that constitute incremental but nevertheless practical changes”.

¹ HC *Hansard*, 3 September 2012, [cols 35–7](#).

² House of Lords Library, *House of Lords Reform: Chronology 1900–2010*, 21 July 2011, [LLN 2011/025](#).

³ Cabinet Office, *House of Lords Reform Draft Bill*, May 2011, [Cm 8077](#).

⁴ Joint Committee on the Draft House of Lords Reform Bill, [Draft House of Lords Reform Bill](#), 23 April 2012, HL Paper 284–I of session 2010–12.

⁵ HC *Hansard*, 10 July 2012, [col 274](#).

⁶ Prime Minister’s Office press release: [‘Working Peerages Announced’](#), 1 August 2013.

⁷ House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee, [House of Lords Reform: What Next?](#), 17 October 2013, HC 251 of session 2013–14, p 3.

⁸ House of Lords Library, [Lord Steel of Aikwood’s Private Member’s Bills on the House of Lords Reform](#), 11 May 2012, LLN 2012/017.

⁹ HC *Hansard*, 18 October 2013, [col 1011](#).

Since the majority of hereditary Members left the House in 1999, Meg Russell, Reader in British and Comparative Politics and Deputy Director of the Constitution Unit at UCL, has monitored the behaviour of the House, its effect on legislation and prospects for future reform. In 2005, in a paper written with Maria Sciara, Dr Russell considered the representativeness of the House and the impact of appointments on the balance between the parties. Taking a number of factors together, the authors noted that there had been a change in perceptions: “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”.¹⁰ Dr Russell has since argued that “it would be plainly wrong to claim the Lords is fully representative in the descriptive sense; the chamber falls well short of being a ‘microcosm of the nation’”.¹¹ She pointed out that nonetheless the Lords now contained the same proportion of women as the elected House of Commons and “substantially more Members from ethnic minority groups and with disabilities”.

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 other observers. For example, Alexandra Kelso considered this in a paper that analysed the meaning of representation, democracy and legitimacy in a Lords context.¹² Hugh Bochel and Andrew Defty assessed how the current House of Lords provided representation in the context of a broad understanding of the concept.¹³ During deliberations on the House of Lords Reform Bill, some commentators considered how the Lords was, and could be more, representative.¹⁴

Regional representativeness was considered by the New Local Government Network (NLGN) in its analysis published in 2008.¹⁵ It 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 Members lived were London (22.57 percent) and the South East (18.35 percent) with the fewest Members living in the North East (2.02 percent), Northern Ireland (2.57 percent) and East Midlands (2.94 percent). The report’s authors concluded that:

The information we have suggests that many major British cities such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Bristol and Belfast have little or no voice within the Lords. A significant north/south divide is apparent, with areas in the South enjoying far greater representation than those in the North. London has more Members than the East Midlands, West Midlands, Wales, Northern Ireland, North East England and Yorkshire

¹⁰ Meg Russell and Maria Sciara, [The House of Lords in 2005: A More Representative and Assertive Chamber](#), UCL Constitution Unit, February 2006, p 8.

¹¹ Meg Russell, *The Contemporary House of Lords: Westminster Bicameralism Revisited*, 2013, pp 286–7.

¹² Alexandra Kelso, [‘Reforming the House of Lords: Navigating Representation, Democracy and Legitimacy at Westminster’](#), *Parliamentary Affairs*, 2006, vol 59, pp 563–81.

¹³ Hugh Bochel and Andrew Defty, [‘A More Representative Chamber’: Representation and the House of Lords’](#), *Journal of Legislative Studies*, vol 18, March 2012, pp 82–97.

¹⁴ For example ResPublica, [Our House: Reflections on Representation and Reform in the House of Lords](#), 2012.

¹⁵ New Local Government Network, [Lords of our Manor? How a Reformed House of Lords can Better Represent the UK](#), 1 September 2008, p 11.

and the Humber put together. London aside, there also seems to be an incoherent bias towards lesser-populated rural areas than heavily-populated urban ones.¹⁶

In 2010, Meg Russell and Meghan Benton produced a paper commissioned by the House of Lords Appointments Commission.¹⁷ The methodology of this differed from the NLGN as, rather than analysing published data, the authors invited Members to indicate in a questionnaire the region of their primary (and secondary, if applicable) residence, in order to give a fuller idea of where Members lived. The picture produced by this sample of 455 Members, the authors thought, was that:

Excluding London (which is clearly a special case), the only regions which appear somewhat overrepresented are the Eastern region, South East and South West. This may also be explained to some extent by commuting distances, as there are clearly a large number of Members who do not have a home base in London... The regions which are most evidently underrepresented are the North West, Yorkshire and the Humber, the East Midlands and the North East. In comparison representation of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland seems relatively good.¹⁸

The remainder of this Library Note present a number of indicators to show the connections Members have with regions across the UK. Part two provides a profile of the regions Members of the House of Lords live by tabulating the areas given by 601 Members as their main residence (as at August 2013) into the relevant administrative [English regions](#) and nations of the UK. It presents this information in a number of tables and charts. It also provides data showing attendance of Members by the region of their main residence. This, therefore, updates the information provided in a previous Library Note [Regional Representation in the House of Lords](#) (6 March 2012, LLN 2012/007), which used the same methodology as the NLGN in its work.

Part three of the Note explores further the regional connections Members of the House of Lords have by analysing the places that form part of their titles. In addition, the Note recognises that many Members of the House arrive with connections to places through having previously represented that area. In light of this, the Note provides charts to show the regions Members of the House are linked with as a result of holding elected public office. Drawn from widely-available biographical sources, part four of the Note provides information about the range of regions Members 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.

¹⁶ *ibid*, p 15.

¹⁷ Meg Russell and Meghan Benton, [Analysis of Existing Data on the Breadth of Expertise and Experience in the House of Lords: Report to the House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), March 2010, pp 49–53.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p 49.

2. Members' Main Residences and UK Nations and Regions

Tables 1 and 2 set out the number of Members of the House of Lords from each nation and region of the UK. The data is collated from the [details of main residences](#) (as at August 2013) provided for the purpose of claiming allowances. Charts 1 and 2 present this information as percentages (of the UK and of England respectively). Table 3 provides information on attendance by Members, broken down by region, for the 2012–13 session.

The data presented does not include Members who have chosen not to publicly disclose their main residence (and some do not claim expenses but may provide residency location) so when reading these tables it is important to note it does not represent the total membership of the House of Lords. The data excludes Members who have subsequently died and the Lords Spiritual, who usually live in their diocese.¹⁹ Meg Russell and Meghan Benton have also stressed a further consideration when interpreting information about residency. They wrote: “many Members have a London home, but this does not in itself indicate that the House is ‘London centric’”. They argued that it was “of course sensible for most Members who are active to maintain a base in the capital, particularly if they can afford to maintain more than one home”.²⁰

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

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	Overseas
Conservative	135	15	2	2	2
Crossbench	108	14	5	6	0
Labour	147	18	9	0	3
Liberal Democrat	60	7	5	1	1
Other Affiliations/Parties					
Democratic Unionist	0	0	0	1	0
Independent Labour	1	0	0	0	0
Independent Liberal Democrat	1	0	0	0	0
Independent Ulster Unionist	0	0	0	1	0
Liberal Democrat Independent	1	0	0	0	0
Plaid Cymru	0	0	1	0	0
UK Independence Party	2	1	0	0	0
Ulster Unionist Party	0	0	0	2	0
Non-affiliated*	13	2	0	0	0
Other**	24	5	2	4	0
Total	492	62	24	17	6

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

** Includes Members on leave of absence, disqualified from sitting and Members currently suspended from the service of the House

¹⁹ House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Religious Representation](#), 25 November 2011, LLN 2011/036.

²⁰ Meg Russell and Meghan Benton, [Analysis of Existing Data on the Breadth of Expertise and Experience in the House of Lords: Report to the House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), March 2010, p 49.

Table 2: Number of Members 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	16	4	30	7	3	39	22	6	8
Crossbench	15	0	41	5	2	26	8	5	6
Labour	20	7	49	5	14	28	8	11	5
Liberal Democrat	6	1	17	3	4	11	13	0	5
Other Parties									
Independent Labour	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Independent Liberal Democrat	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Liberal Democrat Independent	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
UKIP	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Non-affiliated*	2	0	6	0	0	3	1	0	1
Other**	4	2	7	1	1	5	1	1	2
Total	63	14	152	21	24	114	54	23	27

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

** Includes Members on leave of absence, disqualified from sitting and Members currently suspended from the service of the House.

Chart 1: UK Region of Members' Main Residences (percentage of total)

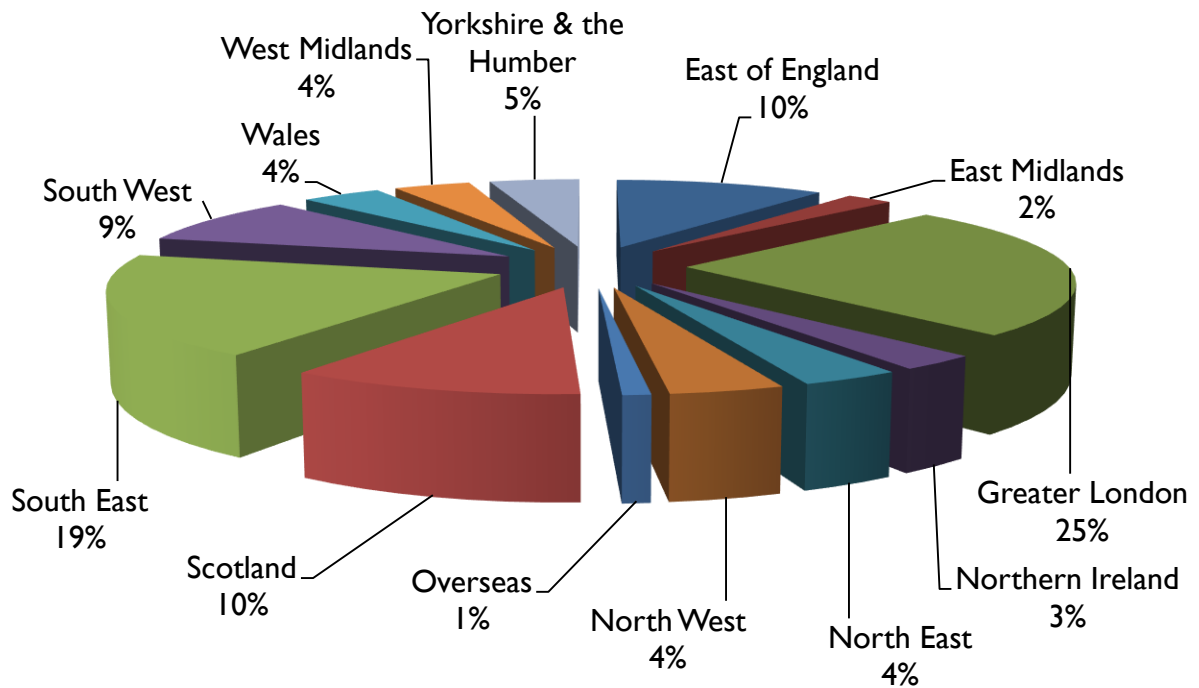


Chart 2: English Regions of Members' Main Residences (percentage of total)

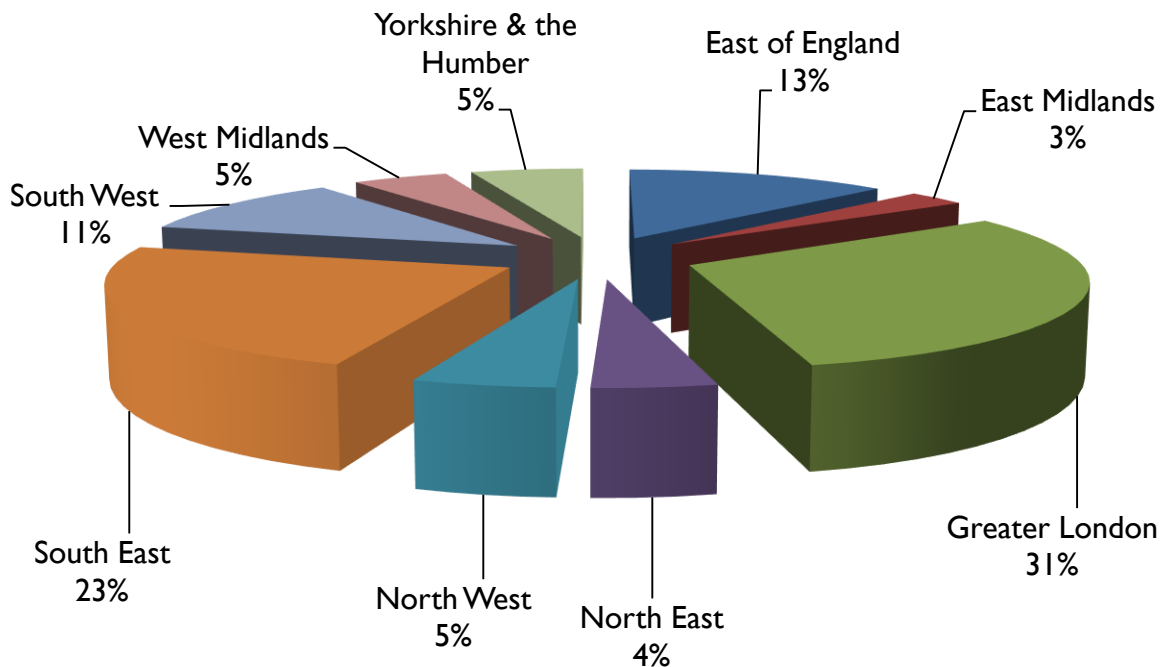


Table 3: Members Who Attended 50 Percent or More Sittings of the House, by Region (session 2012–13)

Region of Members' main residence	Count of Members who attended 50 percent or more of sittings in 2012–13	Approximate percentage of total attendance by known region
England	352	82
East	48	11
East Midlands	9	2
Greater London	101	23.5
North East	10	2
North West	24	6
South East	80	19.5
South West	42	10
West Midlands	19	4
Yorkshire & Humber	19	4
Northern Ireland	10	2
Scotland	46	11
Wales	19	4
Overseas	5	1
Total	432	100
Residence unknown	85	

3. Members' Titles and Geographical Representation

The connection between peerage and place is a close one. As Sir Colin Cole, Garter Principal King of Arms between 1978 and 1992, noted a Peer's title comprises two elements: "the *Nomen Dignitatis*, the title actually used, and the *Territorial Designation*, which indicates a place in the United Kingdom with which the peer and hence his Barony has a reasonably close association".²¹ The connections between place and person are often remarked upon by Members in contributions to debates. Usually references are made during maiden speeches. Two recent examples are provided below:

Lord Sherbourne of Didsbury (Conservative): I chose as part of my title Didsbury in the City of Manchester because that is where I was born, brought up and educated. I chose it also for a second, somewhat paradoxical reason—paradoxical because I have spent most of my working life in London. But I am conscious of the metropolitan bubble that so many of the commentariat seem to inhabit [...] Didsbury will be, for me, a constant reminder that London is not the centre of the universe.²²

Baroness Kennedy of Cradley (Labour): I was delighted when it was agreed that I could use Cradley as my territorial title. It is a town rich in history. For hundreds of years, ironwork—nail-making and chain-making—was the staple industry of Cradley and its surrounding towns. Right up until I went to university, I lived in Cradley, in the same

²¹ Sir Colin Cole, 'Introduction of Members to the House of Lords' in Smith's Peerage, *The House of Lords: A Thousand Years of British Tradition*, 1994, pp 132–3.

²² HL Hansard, 5 December 2013, [col 371](#).

house and in the same street—and it is where my father still lives today. Since at least 1830, my ancestors' livelihoods relied on the nail and chain industries in Cradley and the surrounding towns.²³

The following maps provide an indication of the range of areas represented by the titles of current Members of the House of Lords. Map 1 shows these places pinpointed on a map of the UK. Map 2 presents this information as a heatmap, highlighting those areas (in degrees of red) that have a concentration of peerages connected to them within a 20 mile radius. These have been created by matching each location with an example post code for that area.

It should be noted that the information used has been drawn only from those 387 Members with a place as a part of their primary title. This approach was chosen because, although every peerage has a place (or territorial designation), analysing the peerages of every current member would create methodological difficulties. These difficulties include that a number of peerages refer to more than one place (for example Lord Ribeiro's peerage is Baron Ribeiro, of Achimota in the Republic of Ghana and of Ovington in the County of Hampshire. Lord Mandelson's included two places, one the place of a former home, the other the constituency he represented as an MP).²⁴ Also excluded are titles including places outside the United Kingdom. As Sir Colin Cole noted in his essay, a peerage's territorial designation can be connected to places outside the United Kingdom, though these in practice are rare. Exceptions have been made for those who produced a military victory, for example Viscount Montgomery of Alamein (Egypt) and Viscount Allenby of Megiddo (Israel).²⁵ There have also been non-military examples, for example Baroness Ryder of Warsaw (Poland). A handful of current Members also have titles that refer to places outside the United Kingdom. These include: Baroness Gardner of Parkes (Australia)²⁶, Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon (Jamaica)²⁷ and Baroness Howells of St Davids (Grenada).

As a consequence of these issues, and for simplicity, only those Members that have a place within the United Kingdom and Ireland as part of their title are included, whether a life or hereditary peerage (for example Lord Aberdare or Baroness Linklater of Butterstone).

²³ HL Hansard, 21 November 2013, [cols 1086](#).

²⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 'Arise Lord Mandy of Foy (and Hartlepool)', 11 October 2008.

²⁵ Sir Colin Cole, 'Introduction of Members to the House of Lords' in Smith's Peerage, *The House of Lords: A Thousand Years of British Tradition*, 1994, pp 132–3.

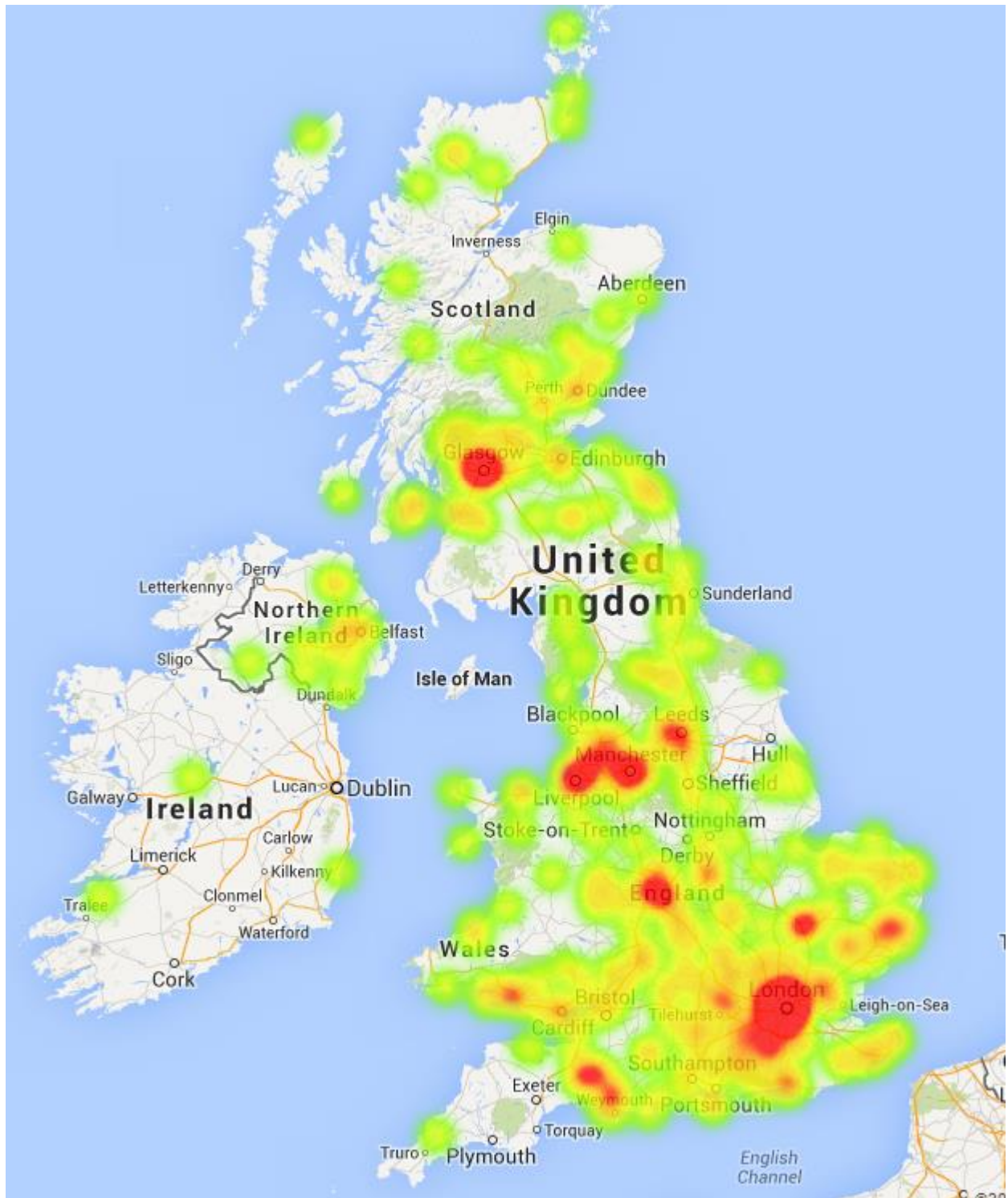
²⁶ *London Gazette*, 24 June 1981, issue 48661, p [8445](#).

²⁷ *London Gazette*, 11 September 2013, issue 60624, p [17949](#).

Map 1: Members' Titles in the United Kingdom and Ireland



Map 2: Concentration of Places in Members' Titles in United Kingdom and Ireland



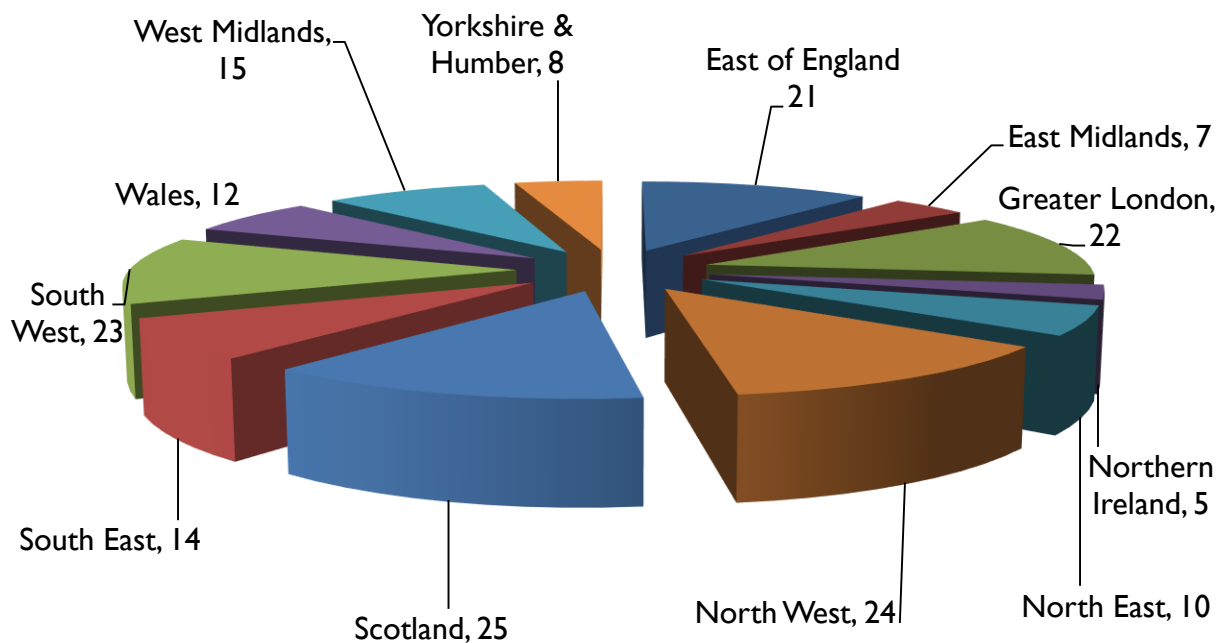
4. Regions Represented by Members as Holders of Selected Public Office

The information in this part the Note has been collected from a variety of sources, such as *Dod's Parliamentary Companion* and the parliament website.

4.1 Former Members of Parliament (MPs)

This chart shows the nations and regions previously represented by the 185 former MPs who now sit in the House of Lords.²⁸ The total count exceeds the number of former MPs, as some Members represented more than one seat in their Commons career. Those which were in different regions have been counted separately.

Chart 3: Regions Represented by Current Members as MPs (Number of Members)

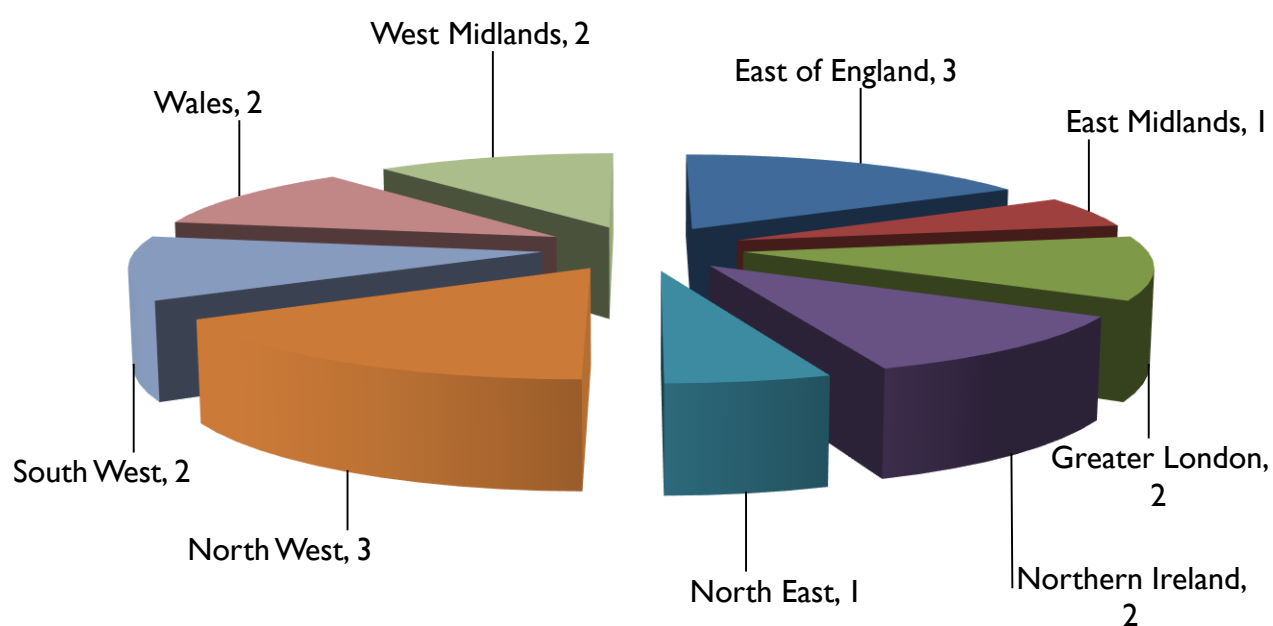


²⁸ Parliament website, '[Members of the House of Lords who were once MPs](#)', accessed 27 January 2014.

4.2 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

This chart shows the nations and regions represented by those Members 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 Members who were Members of the European Parliament before direct elections were introduced in 1979. A list of current Members who were MEPs is available in the House of Lords Library Note, [House of Lords: Profile of Membership](#) (30 October 2013, LLN 2013/030).

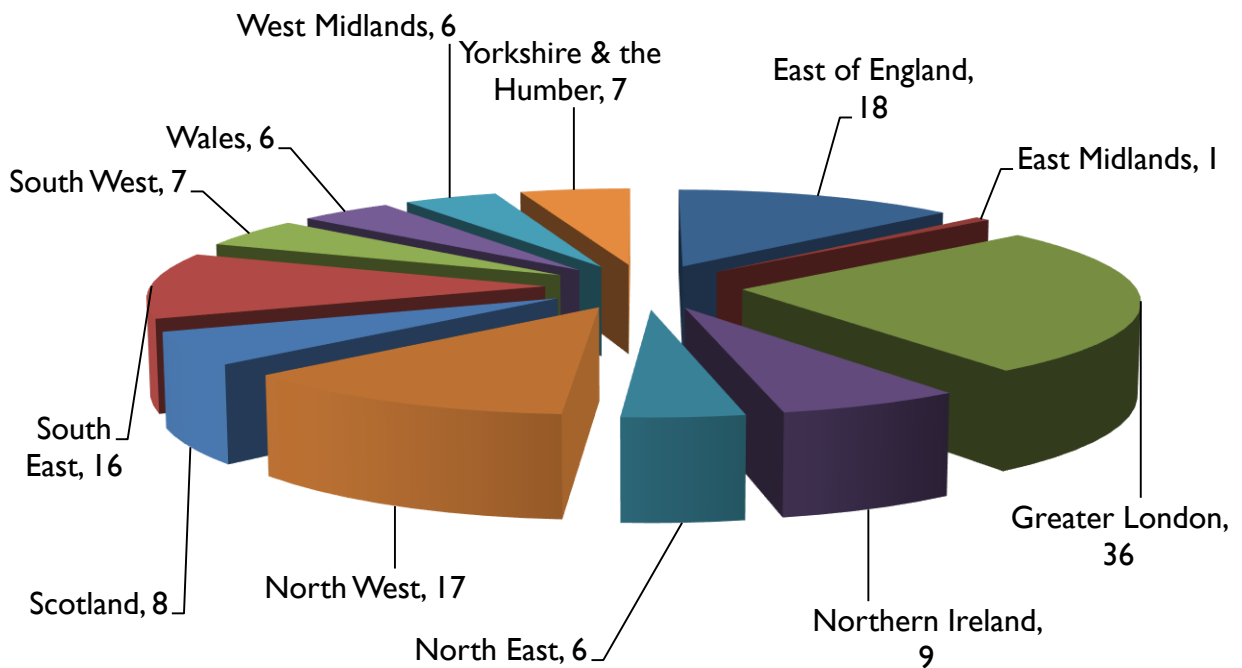
Chart 4: Regions Represented by Members as MEPs (Number of Members)



4.3 Local Government: Councillors

This chart presents the nations and regions represented by the 137 Members who are former/current local councillors. Some Members 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 Members who have been councillors.

Chart 5: Regions Represented by Members as Local Councillors (Number of Members)



4.4 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 Members who have held seats in these legislatures. A list of current Members who have sat in a devolved legislature is available in the House of Lords Library Note, [House of Lords: Profile of Membership](#) (30 October 2013, LLN 2013/030).

Chart 6: Membership of Devolved Legislatures (Number of Members)

