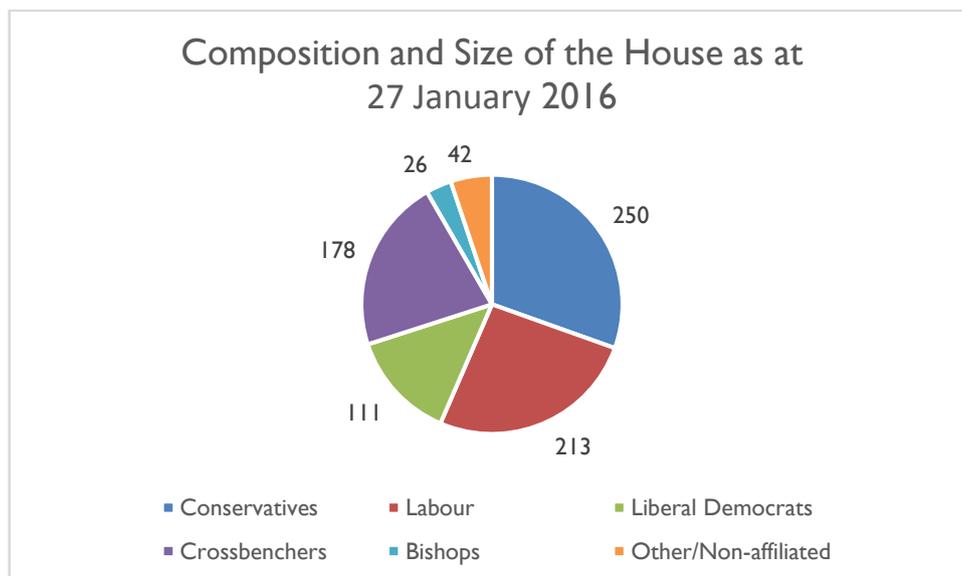




Library Note

Size of the House of Lords

As at 27 January 2016, the total membership of the House of Lords was 859. However, excluding those currently ineligible to sit (such as Members on leave of absence or those holding particular posts) the 'actual' membership was 820. The average attendance of the House of Lords in the 2014–15 session was 483 and the current average age of the House is 69. The current composition and size of the 'actual' membership is set out in the following graph:



This Lords Library briefing contains information and statistics on the changing membership of the House of Lords, and covers some of the recent discussions and debates over the House's size. It also briefly outlines the changes made by the House of Lords Reform Act 2014 and highlights a number of proposals that have been put forward to limit the size of the House.

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I. Introduction

As stated in a memorandum produced by the Clerk of the Parliaments, David Beamish, the ‘size’ of the House of Lords may be interpreted in two ways:

It can refer simply to the number of Members eligible to participate in proceedings, or it can refer to those Members who do in practice attend sittings. Measures to remove from membership those Members who play no significant part will reduce the size of the House in the first sense but will have no impact on crowding in the Chamber, pressure on facilities or costs.¹

This briefing summarises information and proposals relating to both these definitions. In particular, section two of this paper contains statistics on the size of the House and its average attendance; section three considers some of the concerns over the present and projected size of the House; and section four discusses the recent reforms brought about by the House of Lords Reform Act 2014. Section five outlines some of the recent proposals put forward to limit numbers and participation, including the recent Lords debate on the size of the House held on 15 September 2015 and analysis of any potential retirement age being applied. This briefing does not, however, consider party reports on reform of the House of Lords, such as the report of the Labour Peers’ Working Group, or wider constitutional reforms.²

First, this briefing examines some of the existing factors which may impact upon the House’s ‘absolute’ and its ‘actual’ membership. The absolute membership of the House includes all Members that may, at a point, exercise their right to sit in the House. Following the passing of the House of Lords Reform Act 2014 and the House of Lords (Expulsion and Suspension) Act 2015, there are now five ways Members could leave the membership of the House:

- Death
- Resignation
- Non-attendance for an entire session (subject to certain exceptions)
- If convicted of a serious offence resulting in a custodial sentence of a year or more
- Upon the House exercising its powers to expel a Member for a breach of the code of conduct that arose or came to light after the passing of the House of Lords (Expulsion and Suspension) Act 2015

The provisions of the House of Lords Reform Act 2014 are considered in further detail in section four of this Briefing.³ Prior to this Act, Members could only leave the absolute

¹ [Memorandum submitted by David Beamish, Clerk of the Parliaments](#), to the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee, June 2013, para 4.

² Labour Peers’ Working Group, [A Programme for Progress](#), March 2014. This report was debated in the House of Lords on 19 June 2014 ([HL Hansard, 19 June 2014, cols 923–92](#)).

³ The House of Lords (Expulsion and Suspension) Act 2015 is not considered further, as it was not passed with the intention of reducing the size of the House and, as at 25 January 2016, no Members had been expelled under its provisions.

membership through death, or through the House's voluntary retirement scheme.⁴ However, in practice, the retirement scheme prior to the 2014 would not stop a Member changing their mind about their retirement if they so wished, as they continued to receive a writ of summons in each new parliament. Those retiring under the 2014 provisions do so on a statutory basis, and no longer receive their writ of summons to attend. At the time of writing, 40 Members of the House had retired under one of these two systems⁵, and two more had announced their retirement for a future date.⁶ No Members have yet left the House through non-attendance, conviction of a serious offence or through being expelled.

The actual membership of the House excludes Members who have taken leave of absence, or who are currently disqualified from sitting. In most cases, Members are disqualified from sitting due to holding a particular judicial post or as a Member of the European Parliament.⁷ Leave of absence was strengthened in 2013 (upon recommendation of the Leader's Group on Members Leaving the House)⁸ so that the Clerk of the Parliaments will now write to Members at the beginning of a new session if they have only attended infrequently during the previous session, inviting them to apply for a leave of absence.⁹ In addition, on 16 December 2015, the House agreed to a recommendation by the Sub-Committee on Leave of Absence and the Procedure Committee that Members should be encouraged to retire rather than go on leave of absence if they were unsure they would return:

Under the proposed changes, a Member applying for leave of absence would be required to state that they reasonably expected to take a regular active part in the House again in the future. If they could not state this, the House could refuse to grant leave of absence. In addition, new guidance in the Companion would encourage Members who could not commit to returning as an active Member in the future to agree to retire.¹⁰

Although these exclusions preclude a Member from immediately participating in sittings of the House, they would only (in theory) be temporary exclusions. For example, Members on leave of absence may apply to return to the House following a three month notice period, and those disqualified for holding a particular office are able to participate in the House once their position has been relinquished.

In terms of joining the House, there are four main avenues to becoming a Member in the House of Lords:¹¹

- Through recommendation by the House of Lords Appointments Commission.¹²

⁴ House of Lords, [Companion to the Standing Orders and Guide to the Proceedings of the House of Lords](#), 2015, para 1.41.

⁵ Parliament.uk, '[Retired Lords](#)', accessed 27 January 2016.

⁶ Baroness Williams of Crosby (11 February 2016) and Baroness Linklater of Butterstone (12 February 2016).

⁷ House of Lords, [Companion to the Standing Orders and Guide to the Proceedings of the House of Lords, 2015](#), para 1.02.

⁸ Leader's Group on Members Leaving the House, [Members Leaving the House](#), 13 January 2011, HL Paper 83 of session 2010–11, para 26.

⁹ House of Lords, [Companion to the Standing Orders and Guide to the Proceedings of the House of Lords, 2013](#), paras 1.36–40.

¹⁰ [HL Hansard, 16 December 2015, col 2080](#). See also: House of Lords Procedure Committee, [Changes to the Leave of Absence Scheme, Ballot for Oral Question Slots During Recesses, Status of Interpreted or Translated Evidence to Select Committees](#), 30 November 2015, HL Paper 62 of session 2015–16.

¹¹ Constitution Unit, [House Full: Time to Get a Grip on Lords Appointments](#), April 2011, pp 12–14.

- Prime Ministerial appointments (including non-party political appointments, resignation honours, dissolution honours, ministerial appointments and lists of new working Peers).¹³
- Appointment to the House as an Archbishop or Bishop.¹⁴
- Election (through a by-election process) to replace a deceased excepted hereditary Peer.¹⁵

However, in terms of the size of the House, the latter two have little practical effect, as all appointments in this manner are on the basis that they are replacing a Member who has left. For example, there are currently 26 seats available in the House for Archbishops or Bishops, consisting of five seats automatically granted to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of London, Durham and Winchester, and 21 seats granted on the basis of seniority.¹⁶ When a vacancy arises in one of the remaining 21 seats (eg through retirement or death) it was practice for the most senior Bishop from outside the House to take the vacant seat (Bishops are required to retire at 70.) However, following the enactment of the [Lords Spiritual \(Women\) Act 2015](#), eligible women Bishops are now given preference for these seats up until May 2025.¹⁷

In addition, following the House of Lords Act 1999, 92 hereditary Peers are also granted a seat in the House of Lords.¹⁸ Two of these seats are for the holders of the offices of the Earl Marshal and the Lord Great Chamberlain. When one of the remaining 90 seats becomes available (through the death of an incumbent), the Member is replaced following a by-election.¹⁹

2. Information and Statistics on the Size of the House of Lords

As at 27 January 2016, there were 820 Members eligible to sit in the House of Lords (the ‘actual membership’). This included 705 Life Peers, 89 ‘excepted hereditary’ Peers and 26 Bishops.²⁰ There were also 39 Members ‘ineligible’ to sit, taking the overall potential size of the membership (the ‘absolute membership’) to 859.²¹ Ineligible Members include those disqualified from sitting due to holding a specified office (eg certain judicial positions and Members of the European Parliament, as detailed above) and those on leave of absence. At the time of writing, there were eight Members disqualified from sitting due to holding a particular office and 31 members on leave of absence (this included three excepted hereditary Peers).

¹² In practice, new Members recommended by the Appointments Commission then need to be put forward by the Prime Minister for appointment by the Queen, see: House of Lords Library, [House of Lords Appointments Commission](#), 9 May 2012.

¹³ Constitution Unit, [House Full: Time to Get a Grip on Lords Appointments](#), April 2011, pp 12–13.

¹⁴ House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Religious Representation](#), 25 November 2011.

¹⁵ Meg Russell, *The Contemporary House of Lords*, 2013, pp 72–3.

¹⁶ House of Lords Library, [House of Lords: Religious Representation](#), 25 November 2011, p 1.

¹⁷ House of Lords Library, [Lords Spiritual \(Women\) Bill \(HL Bill 87 of 2014–15\)](#), 3 February 2015. To date, two women Bishops have taken seats under this provision: the Bishop of Gloucester (Rachel Treweek) and the Bishop of Newcastle (Christine Hardman).

¹⁸ House of Lords, [Companion to the Standing Orders and Guide to the Proceedings of the House of Lords](#), 2013, paras 1.03–1.06.

¹⁹ House of Lords, [Hereditary Peers in the House of Lords Since 1999](#), 26 March 2014.

²⁰ Parliament.uk, [Lords by Party, Type of Peerage and Gender](#), accessed 28 January 2016.

²¹ Parliament.uk, [Ineligible Members of the House of Lords](#), accessed 28 January 2016.

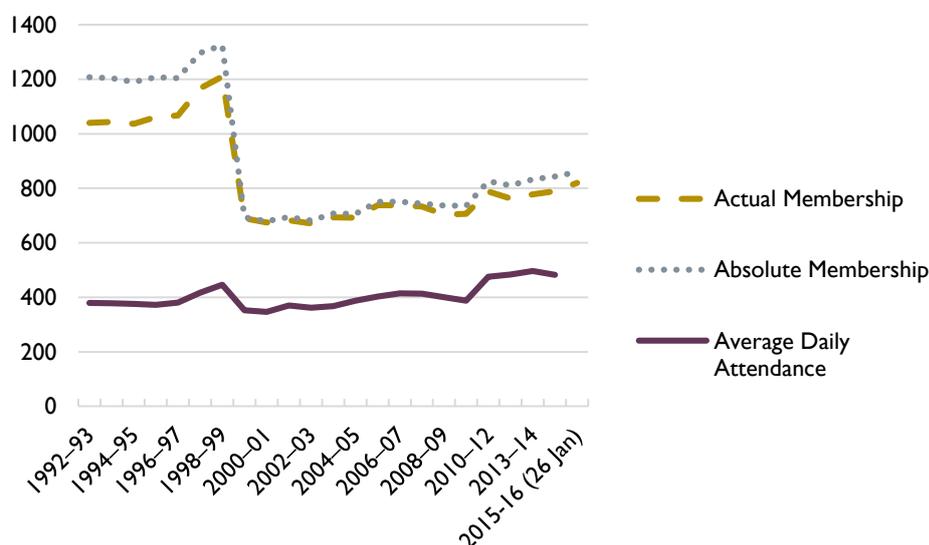
The following table shows the number of Members eligible to sit in the House of Lords, alongside party affiliation, as at 27 January 2016:²²

Table 1: Composition of the ‘Actual’ Membership of the House of Lords (27 January 2016)

Party/Group	Life Peers	Hereditary Peers	Bishops (Lords Spiritual)	Total
Bishops	0	0	26	26
Conservative	201	49	0	250
Crossbench	147	31	0	178
Labour	209	4	0	213
Liberal Democrat	107	4	0	111
Non-affiliated	25	0	0	25
Other parties	16	1	0	17
Total	705	89	26	820

The average daily attendance of the House of Lords in the 2014–15 session was 483.²³ The average daily attendance of the House since 1992–93, alongside actual membership and absolute membership figures, is displayed in the following graph (the full table containing this information is available in the Appendix to this Note):²⁴

Figure 1: Average Daily Attendance, Absolute Membership and Actual Membership Since 1992–93



The graph shows that up to the House of Lords Act 1999 (which removed a large proportion of the hereditary Peers²⁵), the actual and absolute membership of the House of Lords was over 1,000. The average daily attendance at this time ranged between 350 and 450. Following the

²² Parliament.uk, ‘[Lords by Party, Type of Peerage and Gender](#)’, accessed 28 January 2016.

²³ House of Lords, *Sessional Statistics on Business and Membership 2014–15*, 2015

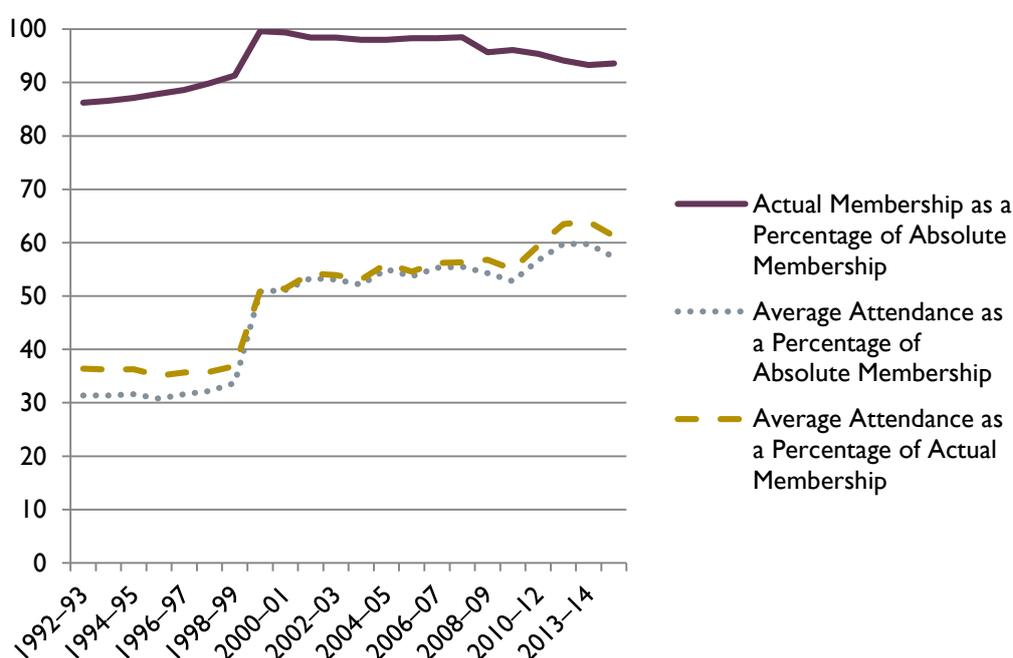
²⁴ Source: House of Lords Library.

²⁵ House of Lords Library, *The Weatherill Amendment: Elected Hereditary Peers*, 23 October 2009.

reduction in membership that resulted from the 1999 Act, the last decade has seen a general increase in the membership of the House—both in actual and in absolute terms. In addition, the average daily attendance recorded in the last four sessions (figures are not yet available for the current session) were at their highest rate over the last 20 years. However, average daily attendance did decrease slightly over the last two sessions, dropping from 497 in session 2013–14 to 483 in session 2014–15.

The next graph presents actual membership as a percentage of absolute membership, and average attendance figures as a percentage of both absolute and average membership up to the end of the 2014–15 session (a full table is available in the Appendix to this Note).²⁶

Figure 2: Percentage Attendance for Actual and Absolute Membership and Actual Membership as a Percentage of Absolute Membership



The figures demonstrate that average attendance, as a percentage of both actual and absolute membership, has increased over the last 20 years. Not only did this figure increase fairly substantially following the House of Lords Act 1999, but it has also increased since then from the low 50s to around 60 percent (both as a percentage of actual and absolute membership). In addition, the percentage of Members who make up the ‘actual’ membership rose by over 10 percent between 1992 and 2008, and has declined slightly since. This would indicate that, as a percentage, there are now more Members who are “ineligible” to sit in the House of Lords than there were around six years ago.

In 2015, there were 63 new Members of the House of Lords, and 51 Members who ceased being permanent Members of the House (this included 18 Members who passed away, and 33 who retired under the statutory retirement provisions contained in the House of Lords Reform Act 2014).²⁷ The average age of these new Members was 59, and the average age of

²⁶ Source: House of Lords Library.

²⁷ Source: House of Lords Library. This excludes Lords Spiritual.

those that ceased to be a Member was 84.²⁸ The average age for the House as a whole is currently 69.

The following table details the number of Members joining or leaving (either through death or retirements) the absolute membership of the House of Lords since 2000 (not including Bishops).²⁹

Table 2: Number of Members Joining and Leaving the House Annually Since 2000

Year	Members Joining the House	Members Leaving the House	Net Change in Membership
2000	42	17	+25
2001	45	25	+20
2002	3	19	-16
2003	5	21	-16
2004	51	24	+27
2005	45	21	+24
2006	37	17	+20
2007	20	18	+2
2008	11	18	-7
2009	11	19	-8
2010	82	24	+58
2011	47	13	+34
2012	4	21	-17
2013	39	12	+27
2014	31	20	+11
2015	63	51	+12
Total	472	289	+196

This table does not include Members who took leave of absence or became disqualified from sitting (or vice versa); it only includes Members joining or leaving the absolute membership of the House.

Further information on the composition and work of the House can be found in the following Lords Library briefings:

- [House of Lords: Party and Group Strengths and Voting](#), 23 July 2015
- [House of Lords: Profile of Membership](#), 2 June 2015

²⁸ Source: House of Lords Library.

²⁹ Source: House of Lords Library.

3. Observations on the Size of the House of Lords

3.1 Constitution Unit: *Enough is Enough* Report

In the 2010 Coalition Agreement, the then Conservative-Liberal Democrat Government set out its intention to reform the House of Lords.³⁰ However, in the interim, the agreement stated that “Lords appointments will be made with the objective of creating a second chamber that is reflective of the share of the vote secured by the political parties in the last general election”. This principle, alongside that of prime ministerial patronage more generally, was criticised by the Constitution Unit, who, in its February 2015 report, *Enough is Enough: Regulating Prime Ministerial Appointments to the Lords*, stated:

Currently there is no regulation of prime ministerial appointments at all (except vetting for propriety), and prime ministers can thus choose both how many peers to create, and the party balance between them. Successive premiers have used this power to advantage their own side through appointments, which creates a ratchet effect upwards on the size of the chamber. It also demonstrates how party balance in the Lords can be readily manipulated [...]

Our analysis confirms that the formula in the 2010 coalition agreement of achieving proportionality across the chamber in relation to general election vote shares is unworkable and unsustainable. It would require the chamber to grow post-2015 to between 941 and 1340 members. By 2025, numbers would be between 1354 and 2207.³¹

The authors of the paper, Meg Russell and Tom Semlyen, noted that the House of Lords was the largest second chamber in the world, and the second-largest parliamentary chamber (after the Chinese People’s Congress).³² As well as highlighting the potential negative publicity that the increasing size of the House of Lords could attract, the report criticised the Prime Minister’s power to appoint new Members, stating: “this unregulated power gives the executive a remarkable degree of control over the composition of parliament”.³³ The authors argued that the method of Members joining the House, as well as the options for how Members leave, needed to be addressed to effectively control the House’s size:

Reforming how members depart the chamber without regulating how they arrive is doomed to be ineffective; without a transparent formula for sharing future appointments between the parties (and Crossbenchers) most peers will not retire for fear of weakening their group. The next urgent small-scale reform is thus regulating the way into the chamber and limiting prime ministerial patronage powers. This requires a clear formula for sharing seats between the parties, and a maximum agreed size for the chamber.

A workable formula must meet three criteria: providing transparent fairness between the parties (and Crossbenchers); allowing the size of the chamber to be controlled (and ideally managed down); and allowing all main groups in the chamber adequate renewal.³⁴

³⁰ HM Government, [The Coalition: Our Programme for Government](#), May 2010, p 27.

³¹ Constitution Unit (UCL), [Enough is Enough: Regulating Prime Ministerial Appointments to the Lords](#), February 2015, p 4.

³² *ibid*, p 11.

³³ *ibid*, p 9.

³⁴ *ibid*, p 5.

The report considered a number of potential options for appointments, and recommended a formula whereby each new round of appointments would be based on general election vote share (rather than appointments being made in pursuit of overall proportionality within the House), with 20 percent of all appointments being reserved for Crossbenchers.³⁵ The authors suggested this be operated in conjunction with a one-in-two-out approach (for the first ten years at least), with a pre-agreed size cap of 550 or 600 Members to be worked towards and then maintained, and that the scheme be monitored by the House of Lords Appointments Commission.³⁶ The report called on political agreement to make the change, or for the scheme to be pushed through by the House of Lords itself.³⁷

3.2 Developments Since the 2015 General Election

In its 2015 general election manifesto, the Conservative Party stated that wholesale reform of the House of Lords was not a priority in this Parliament, but that: “we have already allowed for expulsion of members for poor conduct and will ensure the House of Lords continues to work well by addressing issues such as the size of the chamber and the retirement of peers”.³⁸ In contrast, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrat Party manifestos both advocated larger reforms, with Labour stating that it would replace the House of Lords with an elected ‘Senate of the Nations and the Regions’³⁹ and the Liberal Democrats signalling reforms in line with the 2012 [House of Lords Reform Bill](#) (which would have seen the size of the House reduced to 450 Members).⁴⁰

On 27 August 2015, the Prime Minister, David Cameron, announced 45 new life Peers as part of his Dissolution List.⁴¹ This was made up of 26 new Conservative Peers, eleven Liberal Democrat Peers and eight Labour Peers. Reacting to the announcement, Meg Russell, Professor of British and Comparative Politics and Director of the Constitution Unit, highlighted the negative media coverage the appointments had received, and stated: “this is a serious crisis for the Lords, and demands serious action”.⁴² Professor Russell again called for action from within the House of Lords itself (through the Constitution Committee, for example) to resolve the issue, and also stated:

David Cameron’s excessive appointments to the Lords have already been widely criticised for inflating the size of the chamber, increasing its costs, and at the same time reducing its effectiveness. The Lords has an important role in holding government to account and scrutinising its legislation. Repeated new appointments severely damage its reputation, and increasingly undermine its ability to do its job.⁴³

The Government’s stance on reforms to the House of Lords was subsequently set out by the Prime Minister in answer to a written question on 14 September 2015, which stated: “we have already supported changes allowing for the expulsion of members for poor conduct and will

³⁵ Constitution Unit (UCL), [Enough is Enough: Regulating Prime Ministerial Appointments to the Lords](#), February 2015, p 4.

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ *ibid* p 6.

³⁸ Conservative Party, [Conservative Party Manifesto 2015](#), April 2015, p 49.

³⁹ Labour Party, [Labour Party Manifesto 2015](#), April 2015, p 64.

⁴⁰ Liberal Democrat Party, [Manifesto 2015](#), March 2015, p 132.

⁴¹ Prime Minister’s Office, [‘Dissolution Peerages 2015’](#), 27 August 2015.

⁴² Constitution Unit (UCL), [‘Blog: Is David Cameron Actually Seeking to Destroy the Lords?’](#), 28 August 2015.

⁴³ Constitution Unit (UCL), [‘Press Release: New Appointments to the Lords Have ‘No Justification’ and Urgent Change is Needed Says Expert’](#), 27 August 2015.

work to ensure the House of Lords continues to function well by looking, with others, at issues such as the size of the chamber and the retirement of peers”.⁴⁴

3.3 Concerns Raised by the House

The House of Lords has had a number of debates on the size and composition of the House, the most recent of which was held on 15 September 2015 and is considered in section 5.5 of this Note.

Parliamentary Question on the Size of the House

On 19 November 2013, Lord Foulkes of Cumnock (Labour), tabled a question asking the then-Government what representations it had received about the increase in the size of the House of Lords.⁴⁵ Asking the question on behalf of Lord Foulkes, Lord Dubs (Labour), argued that “there is virtually no support on the Benches behind [the Minister]—or anywhere else in the House—for further increases in the size of this House”.⁴⁶ Responding for the Government, Lord Hill of Oareford, then Leader of the House of Lords, stated that it was important to “keep refreshing the House with new and young membership” and that the majority of the representations that the Government had received on the subject lent support to further increases.⁴⁷

Lord Laming (Crossbench) defended the work of the House regardless of the issue of size, stating that “whatever the issues may be, it is important to recognise that this House holds the Government to account to a very high standard, scrutinises legislation to a great degree and promotes debates that are of great concern to our fellow citizens. The House actually functions well”.⁴⁸ In relation to fears of overcrowding, Baroness Seccombe (Conservative) noted that the average daily attendance was 450, and suggested that, compared to the House of Commons, the House of Lords was “rather well served in the ratio of seat to Peer”.⁴⁹ However, Lord Steel of Aikwood (Liberal Democrat) raised the possibility of introducing provisions for the retirement or exclusion of Members.⁵⁰ These provisions were subsequently brought into force by the House of Lords Reform Act 2014, and will be discussed in section four of this Note.

A supplementary question from Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Labour) highlighted concerns over the principle of increasing the membership of the House of Lords through appointing new Members in an attempt to represent the main political parties’ share of votes from the previous general election.⁵¹ In response, Lord Hill of Oareford, stated that the Government was showing “restraint” in the amount of Members appointed to the House, but added:

In terms of the future, I cannot give any different undertaking from that which I am sure all my predecessors would have given: namely, that patronage rests in the hands of the Prime Minister. However I shall certainly ensure, as I continually do, that the views of

⁴⁴ [House of Commons, written question: House of Lords: Reform, 14 September 2015, 9202](#)

⁴⁵ [HL Hansard, 19 November 2013, cols 849–52.](#)

⁴⁶ [ibid, col 850.](#)

⁴⁷ [ibid, cols 849–50.](#)

⁴⁸ [ibid, col 851.](#)

⁴⁹ [ibid.](#)

⁵⁰ [ibid.](#)

⁵¹ [ibid.](#)

your Lordships' House are brought before all those who are concerned with these decisions.⁵²

Leader's Group on Members Leaving the House

Other issues that have been raised concerning the size of the House of Lords relate to its reputation, and to the potential financial implications of its increasing membership. For example, on 13 January 2011, the Leader's Group on Members Leaving the House of Lords published its final report on the issue of the House's membership.⁵³ In addition to concerns over the difficulties of conducting business effectively and the increased pressure on resources (which the Group also predicted could lead to greater financial costs), the report stated that "hitherto the administration has contained costs by means of efficiency improvements, but rising numbers of active Members will inevitably eventually have consequences either for standards of service or for costs".⁵⁴ Turning to reputational risk, the report stressed that "the standing of the House as a serious parliamentary forum is compromised by its apparently unchecked growth and by a lack of understanding of the reasons for further new appointments".⁵⁵

4. The House of Lords Reform Act 2014

Introduced as a private member's bill sponsored by Dan Byles (Conservative MP for North Warwickshire) and Lord Steel of Aikwood (Liberal Democrat), the House of Lords Reform Act 2014 received royal assent on 14 May 2014. The Act contains the following provisions relating to Members leaving the House of Lords:

- Statutory basis for Members to permanently retire (s 1).
- Cessation of membership following a session where a Member does not attend (s 2).
- Cessation of membership if a Member commits a serious offence (s 3).
- Details regarding the effects of "ceasing to be a Member", eg they would no longer receive a writ of summons and would be disqualified from attending House proceedings (s 4).

The measures on retirement provided for by the Act replace the previous voluntary retirement scheme,⁵⁶ and place retirement of Members on a permanent and statutory basis. In practice, the retirement scheme prior to 2014 would not stop a Member changing their mind about their retirement if they so wished, as they would continue to receive a writ of summons in each new parliament. The new provisions came into force in August 2014 and the previous voluntary retirement scheme has now been discontinued. At the time of writing, 40 Members had retired from the House under these schemes.

⁵² [HL Hansard, 19 November 2013, col 851](#).

⁵³ Leader's Group on Members Leaving the House, [Members Leaving the House](#), 13 January 2011, HL Paper 83 of session 2010–12.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, [para 17](#).

⁵⁵ *ibid*, [para 15](#).

⁵⁶ House of Lords, [Companion to the Standing Orders and Guide to the Proceedings of the House of Lords](#), 2015, para 1.41.

With regard to the cessation of a Peer's membership following a session of non-attendance, the House agreed that the Clerk of the Parliaments should "continue to write to Members who attended infrequently in the previous session inviting those Members to take Leave of Absence. This system should be used to ensure that all Members are aware of the provisions of section 2 of the House of Lords Reform Act 2014".⁵⁷ This section of the Act came into force in August 2014, but would only apply in respect of attendance during the next session and beyond (s 2(6)). Therefore, the current session (2015–16) is the first in which the non-attendance provision could be applied. Currently, as at 27 January 2016, eleven Members from the current 'actual' membership, who have been able to attend all sittings in the 2015–16 session, have yet to attend this session.⁵⁸

The House of Lords Reform Act 2014 was largely welcomed by Members of the House of Lords, although many did state that it should only be the first step to further reforms and believed it would not greatly reduce numbers in the House. For example, introducing the Bill, Lord Steel of Aikwood (Liberal Democrat) stated that:

[T]his is a limited reform Bill, adding to the record of incremental reforms to our House passed over the years. It does not, in any way, cut across a large variety of possible future reforms.⁵⁹

Similarly, Lord Jay of Ewelme (Crossbench) stated his hope that "this Bill—for which we owe a huge amount, as others have said, to the tenacity of the noble Lord, Lord Steel—will be followed by a more substantive reform Bill, or Bills, over time".⁶⁰ In support of this view, Lord Jay referenced the important work done by the House of Lords, and expressed his concerns that this may be negatively affected by the increasing size of the House. Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Labour) also called for wider reforms, and questioned the then Government's appointment policy.⁶¹ Responding for the Government, the then Leader of the House of Lords, Lord Hill of Oareford, praised the provisions in the Bill and declared it "a modest Bill, perhaps more modest than those on both wings of the debate might like. Nevertheless, it is a sensible Bill".⁶² Lord Hill also stated his opposition to Members receiving any form of financial incentive or compensation to encourage retirement, preferring instead that the House focused on marking the contributions of retiring Members.⁶³ Following on from the retirement provisions introduced by the 2014 Act, the House of Lords agreed recommendations of the Procedure Committee that the Lord Speaker should inform the House of any retirements before oral questions, and that Members should be able to make a valedictory speech.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ House of Lords Procedure Committee, [House of Lords Reform Act 2014: Consequential Changes to the Procedures of the House, Recess Tabling of Written Questions, Legislative Consent Motions](#), 8 July 2014, HL Paper 20 of session 2014–15. The House has also recently approved the new recommendations on leave of absence set out in the report of the House of Lords Procedure Committee, [Changes to the Leave of Absence Scheme, Ballot for Oral Question Slots During Recesses, Status of Interpreted or Translated Evidence to Select Committees](#), 30 November 2015, HL Paper 62 of session 2015–16.

⁵⁸ Source: House of Lords Library.

⁵⁹ [HL Hansard, 28 March 2014, col 703](#).

⁶⁰ [ibid, col 708](#).

⁶¹ [ibid, cols 732–4](#).

⁶² [ibid, col 735](#).

⁶³ [ibid, col 736](#).

⁶⁴ House of Lords Procedure Committee, [House of Lords Reform Act 2014: Further Consequential Changes, Questions for Short Debate, Queen's and Prince of Wales' Consents](#), 15 October 2014, HL Paper 50 of session 2014–15, p 3.

5. Other Parliamentary Proposals and Debates on the Size of the House of Lords

5.1 Legislation

Introduced in the House of Commons in June 2012, the then Government's [House of Lords Reform Bill](#) included provision to reduce the size of the House of Lords to around 450. This would have comprised of 360 elected Members, 90 appointed Members, up to twelve Lords Spiritual (Bishops) and any ministerial appointments. The Bill would also have placed limits on the length of membership, with Members (whether appointed, elected or ministerial) only able to serve three electoral terms. The Bill received its second reading in the House of Commons on 9 and 10 July 2012,⁶⁵ but was withdrawn in September 2012 before reaching committee stage.⁶⁶

5.2 House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee

In its 2013 report, *House of Lords Reform: What Next?*,⁶⁷ the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee discussed the need to implement many of the measures subsequently contained in the House of Lords Reform Act 2014 (eg cessation of membership for non-attendance, or upon committing a serious offence). In addition, the report recommended proposals to end the replacement of hereditary Peers. The Committee believed this “would also serve to reduce the reputational risk to the House” which, it suggested, resulted from the practice.⁶⁸ However, the Committee recognised that this change was unlikely to have a significant impact on the current size of the House.

The committee report considered the role of the House of Lords Appointments Commission in the process, particularly as to whether the Commission should be placed on a statutory basis or given exclusive competence over the appointment of new Members to the House.⁶⁹ The report concluded:

In the evidence we received, the case for placing the Appointments Commission on a statutory basis was strong. So, too, were the arguments that the Appointments Commission could play a role in monitoring and overseeing the size and party balance in the Chamber and in extending its locus in terms of political appointments. While we support the idea of placing the current House of Lords Appointments Commission on a statutory footing, we believe that changes to its remit would be best discussed in the context of wider reform of the House of Lords.⁷⁰

The Committee also rejected ideas to place a moratorium on appointments, or to implement a voluntary retirement age.⁷¹ It suggested that both of these measures could have a negative impact on the House due to the potential loss of expertise derived from new or experienced

⁶⁵ [HC Hansard, 9 July 2012, cols 24–132](#); and [HC Hansard, 10 July 2012, cols 188–278](#).

⁶⁶ BBC News website, ‘[Nick Clegg Confirms Lords Reforms Have Been Officially Withdrawn](#)’, 3 September 2012.

⁶⁷ House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee, [House of Lords Reform: What Next?](#), 17 October 2013, HC 251 of session 2013–14.

⁶⁸ *ibid*, para 19.

⁶⁹ *ibid*, pp 27–9.

⁷⁰ *ibid*, p 29.

⁷¹ *ibid*, pp 35–6.

Members. In addition, the Committee suggested that more thought should be given to a non-statutory scheme of fixed appointments (whereby nominees would give an assurance to retire after serving a certain number of years), and the strengthening of the leave of absence and voluntary retirement schemes. When discussing retirement schemes, the Committee considered the appropriateness of providing financial incentives, but suggested that such a proposal carried “little support” due to the potential public reaction.⁷² Instead, the Committee preferred the idea that voluntary retirement could be accompanied by some form of ceremony recognising the Member’s work within the House.⁷³ The Committee also stressed the importance of cross-party co-ordination to ensure Members could be encouraged to retire without feeling it would damage their party’s representation in the House. Commenting further on the importance of addressing the issue of party strengths within the House, the report concluded that:

Agreement on how to determine the relative numerical strengths of the different party groups in the Lords would not only be a valuable end in itself, it would also pave the way for the implementation of the majority of the other small-scale reforms we have discussed in this report. Of all the issues we have discussed it has the most potential to have a positive impact on the size of the House. Inevitably, it is also the most contentious. We have referred in this Report to various suggestions as to how this could be approached. However, the reality is that it is up to the party groups to engage in dialogue with a view to reaching an agreement on the next step forward. We recommend that in its response to this report, the Government sets out its position on this issue. We also encourage the individual party groups and Crossbenchers to provide their views in writing to us with a view to making progress on this issue before the next general election.⁷⁴

5.3 Leader’s Group on Members Leaving the House

Chaired by Lord Hunt of Wirral (Conservative), the Leader’s Group on Members Leaving the House published its final report on 13 January 2011.⁷⁵ Two of the report’s recommendations—the introduction of a voluntary retirement scheme and the strengthening of the leave of absence system—have already been implemented.⁷⁶ Additional proposals considered by the report included compulsory retirement⁷⁷ (which the Committee rejected in favour of voluntary retirement and the strengthening of the leave of absence system) and the introduction of ‘associate’ Members:

[I]t has been suggested that a new category of associate Member should be created, to which Members might opt to belong. The advantage of such a scheme is that it would reduce the overall size of the House, whilst keeping available the expertise of those who have had long experience of the House and have played a significant part in public life but now wish to reduce the scale of their involvement. It could complement a provision

⁷² House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Committee, [House of Lords Reform: What Next?](#), 17 October 2013, HC 251 of session 2013–14, para 49.

⁷³ *ibid.*, para 50.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, para 81.

⁷⁵ Leader’s Group on Members Leaving the House, [Members Leaving the House](#), 13 January 2011, HL Paper 83 of session 2010–12.

⁷⁶ [Memorandum submitted by David Beamish, Clerk of the Parliaments](#), to the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, June 2013, paras 11–12.

⁷⁷ Leader’s Group on Members Leaving the House, [Members Leaving the House](#), 13 January 2011, HL Paper 83 of session 2010–12, p 16.

for voluntary retirement, providing a potentially attractive option for those who are unable to make a full commitment to the work of the House.⁷⁸

The Group envisaged that such Members could have more limited options for participation, such as an exclusion from legislative debates or Chamber debates, and could instead be encouraged to perform more work within select committees or all-party parliamentary groups.⁷⁹ Although the Leader's Group acknowledged that the proposals could not be implemented quickly, and would require legislation, it did view them as viable options to complement voluntary retirement and assist in reducing the numbers in the House.

A further proposal considered by the Leader's Group was that of providing financial provisions to Members who wish to retire.⁸⁰ The Group agreed that it would be "inappropriate for a reduction in the number of Members to occasion any additional cost on the taxpayer",⁸¹ but stressed its view that such a proposal could actually represent an overall saving:

We recommend that a reduction in the number of Members of the House should result in an overall saving to the taxpayer. We recommend that the possibility of offering a modest pension, or payment on retirement, to those who have played an active part in the work of the House over a number of years, should be investigated in detail, though on condition that this should come from within the existing budget for the House and should incur no additional public expenditure. We further recommend that any such payment should be available only to those who choose voluntary retirement within a limited period after its introduction.⁸²

The Leader's Group also addressed the future introduction of new Members, stating:

Whilst we cannot recommend that there should be a moratorium on new appointments to the House—since, while the purpose of the House is to provide expertise, we must ensure that expertise is refreshed and kept up to date—we do urge that restraint should be exercised by all concerned in the recommendation of new appointments to the House, until such time as debate over the size of membership is conclusively determined.⁸³

The report, and its recommendations, were debated in the House of Lords on 28 February 2013.⁸⁴

5.4 Memorandum by the Clerk of the Parliaments and Subsequent Debate

In an updated memorandum submitted as written evidence to the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, the Clerk of the Parliaments, David Beamish, provided further details on what a number of the proposals to limit the size of the House might

⁷⁸ Leader's Group on Members Leaving the House, [Members Leaving the House](#), 13 January 2011, HL Paper 83 of session 2010–12, para 37.

⁷⁹ *ibid*, paras 38–9.

⁸⁰ *ibid*, paras 44–8.

⁸¹ *ibid*, para 44.

⁸² *ibid*, para 47.

⁸³ *ibid*, para 67.

⁸⁴ [HL Hansard, 28 February 2013, cols 1165–85](#).

involve (such as whether they would require legislation).⁸⁵ This included consideration of many of the provisions that went on to form the House of Lords Act 2014. The memorandum also contained further consideration of the Leader's Group's proposals regarding financial provision to Members upon retirement.⁸⁶ The Clerk of the Parliaments suggested that the scheme could potentially operate as follows:

- The amount payable to a retiring Member could be based on the number of times they attended the House over a particular period (eg the last year) and set at £300 per attendance (ie around a year's worth of allowances).
- The scheme could be confined to those over a certain age or who had served a certain amount of time in the House.
- The initial scheme could be time and cost limited (eg Members would only have a limited chance to take advantage of it).
- Informal arrangements could be made between party Whips to ensure that they were all content that the proposed retirements were equally distributed across parties.

Analysis of the financial impact of such a scheme was provided by the Finance Director of the House of Lords, and included as an Appendix to the memorandum.⁸⁷ Addressing this analysis, the Clerk of the Parliaments stated that "it is clear that such a scheme could pay for itself quickly".⁸⁸ Other proposals discussed in the memorandum, included:

- The gradual withdrawal of financial support for Members (based on age or term of service).⁸⁹
- Confining certain payments to regular attendees based on a threshold of attendance (although the Clerk of the Parliaments acknowledged that, whereas this may discourage rare attendees, it could also encourage others to attend more).⁹⁰
- Reduced allowances becoming available over a certain threshold of attendance (it was suggested that this could decrease overcrowding in the Chamber and may encourage Members to be more selective about the sittings they attend).⁹¹
- Further promotion of the voluntary retirement scheme by encouraging more high profile Members to retire and by marking the service of retiring Members in the Chamber.⁹²

⁸⁵ [Memorandum submitted by David Beamish, Clerk of the Parliaments](#), to the House of Commons Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, June 2013.

⁸⁶ *ibid*, paras 21–8.

⁸⁷ *ibid*, Appendix D.

⁸⁸ *ibid*, para 28.

⁸⁹ *ibid*, para 31.

⁹⁰ *ibid*, para 32.

⁹¹ *ibid*, para 33.

⁹² *ibid*, paras 35–6.

The memorandum was debated in Grand Committee on 24 October 2013.⁹³ Opening the debate, Lord Higgins (Conservative), highlighted the lack of incentives for Members to retire and, with reference to the discussion of the issue in the memorandum, recommended the introduction of financial incentives:

The Clerk's memorandum makes it absolutely clear that this proposal will be likely to reduce public expenditure. The key policy of the Government is to reduce public expenditure. Therefore, I am sorry that it is not a Treasury Minister who will reply to the debate this afternoon. I do not suggest that the proposal will result in a massive reduction in the deficit. None the less, it is a move in the right direction, and if we do nothing at all with more and more Members being appointed, there will be an increase in public expenditure, which is clearly incompatible with the fundamental economic policy of the present Government. The Clerk of the Parliaments has helpfully pointed out, in fairly concrete mathematical terms, what the savings might be. They are not insignificant, and this points the way forward [...]

One particular point needs to be borne in mind. It is the question of party balance. Clearly, if all the volunteers were from one part of the House, that would give a certain amount of concern to the Whips. We will need to take that into account. Therefore, in organising this, the Whips will need to be involved. None the less, we can make significant progress. I do not believe that it is something which is impossible to sell to the public at large. The argument that we will reduce public expenditure is very strong indeed.⁹⁴

This proposal was supported by Lord Norton of Louth (Conservative), who, addressing the Government's previous opposition to spending "taxpayers' money" on financial incentives, queried the Government's stance in light of the use of similar financial incentives in the House of Commons, and the use of public funds to facilitate the creation of new peerages.⁹⁵ Lord Steel of Aikwood (Liberal Democrat) also highlighted the potential savings noted in the Clerk of the Parliaments' memorandum, and emphasised his backing for the retirement provisions that were passed in the form of the House of Lords Reform Act 2014.⁹⁶

Baroness Hayman (Crossbench) raised the issue of appointing Members in pursuit of party-political balance:

I want to take up the theme of party-political balance in the House. We have no agreement about what the relative strengths of parties in the House should be. However, we do have agreement, I think, that much legislation that comes to this House is badly drafted, inadequately scrutinised or not scrutinised at all, because of timetabling in the other place. Given those circumstances, I ask the Government to think very carefully about increasing by large numbers the proportion of party-political Peers in the House. Second Chambers exist to ask first Chambers to have second thoughts. We need to do our job of pressure-testing legislation, both for policy and for drafting, and to ask the Commons to think again when appropriate. The joy of our present system, and the reason why many of us oppose an elected House of Lords, is

⁹³ [HL Hansard, 24 October 2013, cols GC425–39.](#)

⁹⁴ [ibid, cols GC426–7.](#)

⁹⁵ [ibid, cols GC433–4.](#)

⁹⁶ [ibid, cols GC428–9.](#)

because democratic power, accountability and legitimacy lie with the Commons, which always in the end gets its way.⁹⁷

This point was supported by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Labour), who stressed the importance of the House's role as a revising Chamber, and expressed his concerns that—due to the policy set out in the Coalition Agreement—this function would soon be depreciated by the potential size of the Government majority in the House:

Our estimate is that the Government will shortly have a political majority in the Chamber of more than 100. What is the point of it? We are a revising Chamber; if the Government cannot be defeated, revisions cannot take place.⁹⁸

Responding for the Government, Lord Wallace of Saltaire (Liberal Democrat) reaffirmed the Government's commitment not to introduce financial incentives:

Service in this House is a privilege which we should not expect to have to be bought out of. That is the view which I and a number of others hold. The Government remain unconvinced that we should attempt to buy older Peers out.⁹⁹

However, Lord Wallace did indicate his backing for “a scheme that encourages retirement” and suggested that further consideration would be given to the proposal of recognising a Member's service when retiring.¹⁰⁰ He also stated that, due to the participation of Crossbench Members, the Government did not have an overall majority in the House:

[T]his is for the first time a coalition Government and part of the issue is whether you count the entire coalition of both parties as one or as two. The Government do not have an overall majority in this House because we have a large number of Crossbenchers. If I may say so, one of the first things I learnt when I entered this House was that if you want to defeat the Government, what you need is a speaker from each of the four main groups, because at that point the Government will recognise that they are about to lose.¹⁰¹

5.5 Debate on the Size of the House of Lords

The most recent debate on the size of the House of Lords, which was the first since the new Conservative Government came to power following the 2015 general election, took place on 15 September 2015, and was in relation to a motion moved by the Leader of the House, Baroness Stowell of Beeston, that:

[T]his House takes note of the case for further incremental reform of the House of Lords to address the size of the House.¹⁰²

The motion was debated alongside three other motions, moved by Lord Pearson of Rannoch, Lord Steel of Aikwood and Lord Lea of Crondall, relating—respectively—to:¹⁰³

⁹⁷ [HL Hansard, 24 October 2013, col GC439.](#)

⁹⁸ [ibid, col GC435.](#)

⁹⁹ [ibid, col GC439.](#)

¹⁰⁰ [ibid, col GC438.](#)

¹⁰¹ [ibid, col GC437.](#)

¹⁰² [HL Hansard, 15 September 2015, col I748.](#)

¹⁰³ [ibid, cols I837–8.](#)

- the political composition of new appointments;
- the potential introduction of a scheme whereby the majority of Members who are aged 80 or over at each dissolution of parliament should resign; and
- for the House to work alongside the Appointments Commission to ensure that new appointments enhance the reputation of the House and achieve appropriate balance between political parties.

Introducing the debate, Baroness Stowell defended the work of the House and indicated a preference for smaller scale solutions to tackle any issues with its size:

As I said at the outset, this Government are clear that the House cannot keep growing indefinitely. However, to focus only on our headline size is to misunderstand the nature of this House. Like many other Chambers with which we are compared, the vast majority of our Members do not attend all the time, nor are they salaried. Many Peers balance professional lives outside the House with work within it, and their experience adds so much to our proceedings. However, we must recognise that the gap between our headline size and our average attendance adds to some of the misunderstandings about our work and gets in the way of our demonstrating to the world outside the value of what we do. As Leader I am conscious of our responsibility to examine and address the question of our size. It is a responsibility I want us to uphold and I want to work together with Members from across the House to find the right way forward [...]

At the same time, it is worth me being clear with the House that I am more cautious about approaches that introduce too much complexity into what we are trying to do, not least because the experience of recent incremental reforms shows that we have been able to make progress when we have focused on simple steps that are readily understood, including by those who may have to scrutinise them in the other place.¹⁰⁴

Stating that she hoped the debate to be the first stage in a process of discussion over the subject, Baroness Stowell then stated that she would be leading discussions over the next few months with the leaders of the other groups in the Lords as to how any attempts to address the size of the House could progress.¹⁰⁵

In his speech, Lord Steel of Aikwood (Liberal Democrat), discussed his proposals for addressing the size of the House,¹⁰⁶ in line with the motion he had tabled:

That this House considers it desirable that on the Dissolution of each Parliament those members of the House aged 80 or over should retire from the House under section 1 of the House of Lords Reform Act 2014, save that such members should elect 12 of their number to remain as members of the House for the following Parliament.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ [HL Hansard, 15 September 2015, cols 1749–50.](#)

¹⁰⁵ [ibid, col 1750.](#)

¹⁰⁶ [ibid, cols 1753–5.](#)

¹⁰⁷ [ibid, col 1838.](#)

Describing it as a potentially crude, yet effective, measure, Lord Steel reasoned that the cut-off “would enable the House to be refreshed after each election without the numbers becoming excessive”.¹⁰⁸

The potential effect of this, if the cut-off was applied at the estimated date of dissolution in 2020 (to those Members aged 75 or 80 currently in the ‘actual membership’ (excluding Bishops or hereditary Peers), is considered in the following table by affiliation:

Table 3: Effect Upon Current Actual Membership of a Compulsory Retirement Age Being Applied at the Expected Date of the 2020 Dissolution of Parliament¹⁰⁹

	Current Numbers	Retirement at 75	Retirement at 80
Conservatives	201	104 (-97)	141 (-60)
Labour	209	94 (-115)	146 (-63)
Liberal Democrats	107	65 (-42)	88 (-19)
Crossbench	147	66 (-81)	93 (-54)
Other	41	16 (-25)	31 (-10)
Total	705	345 (-360)	499 (-206)

Some of the other potential options for reducing the size of the House, and their merits and demerits, were raised by Lord Cormack (Conservative).¹¹⁰ For example, in addition to discussing the potential age cap raised by Lord Steel, Lord Cormack also suggested that consideration should be given to: Members’ attendance and voting records; introducing a size cap (eg 600) and voting within parties to elect their allocation of Members; and limiting life peerages to a period of 15 or 20 years.¹¹¹

Baroness Hayman (Crossbench) expressed a number of concerns about the size of the House and stressed the importance of considering the effect of any potential solution (such as an age cap) upon party political balance:

The number of appointments, the seemingly random nature of how we decide the size of the House and the continued use of the prerogative are causing great damage to the reputation of the House. [...] You have only to look at the truncation of speeches in debates and the inability of people who are often world experts to get in at Question Time to see that having more and more people does not make us more and more productive. It is tremendously important that we tackle the size of the House.

What is more difficult, and on which we also need political agreement, are the implications for party strength within the House. If we come up with a formula for retirement at 80, for example, it disadvantages one party against another—it is a non-starter. It will never happen. The more difficult task of deciding where we are and how we will accommodate the reduction within the groups is the most important thing that group could do.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ [HL Hansard, 15 September 2015, cols 1754–5.](#)

¹⁰⁹ Source: House of Lords Library.

¹¹⁰ [HL Hansard, 15 September 2015, cols 1778–80.](#)

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

¹¹² [ibid, col 1785.](#)

In addition, she argued that real consideration needed to be applied to the extent of prime ministerial patronage and how general elections results should impact upon proportionality in the House.¹¹³

The importance of considering the effect of any proposed solution on party balance was echoed by the Shadow Deputy Leader of the House of Lords, Lord Hunt of King's Heath (Labour), who stated:

Agreement on a scheme to reduce the number of Members will have to be predicated on an agreement on the appropriate balance between the different parties and the Cross Benches, plus the level of discretion to be given to any Prime Minister after a general election. If you look at all the options proposed for reducing the size of the House—whether it is age retirement, activity level, length of service, election or a combination of all those—the question of balance cannot be ignored.¹¹⁴

However, he concluded by also emphasising the importance of addressing the size of the House of Lords in the face of the potentially damaging effect it can have on its reputation, despite the House's achievements:

I end by saying that I am very proud to be a Member of this House. I am proud of what it does. I am proud of the fact that we improve legislation. I have no doubt whatever that we safeguard the public interest. [...] Size is much less important than function, of course, but size is harming the way people look at us. It is part of what my noble friend Lord Soley called the perfect storm. It is upon us. The ball appears to have been put into our own court. Surely we should now accept the challenge and run with it.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ [HL Hansard, 15 September 2015, cols 1785–6.](#)

¹¹⁴ [ibid, col 1829.](#)

¹¹⁵ [ibid, col 1830.](#)

Appendix: Statistical Tables on Lords Membership

Table 4: Actual Membership, Absolute Membership and Average Daily Attendance from 1992–93

Session	Actual Membership	Absolute Membership	Average Daily Attendance
1992–93	1040	1207	379
1993–94	1043	1204	378
1994–95	1037	1190	376
1995–96	1061	1207	372
1996–97	1067	1204	381
1997–98	1166	1297	417
1998–99	1210	1325	446
1999–00	690	693	352
2000–01	675	679	347
2001–02	683	694	370
2002–03	671	682	362
2003–04	693	707	368
2004–05	692	706	388
2005–06	738	751	403
2006–07	738	751	415
2007–08	733	744	413
2008–09	704	736	400
2009–10	706	735	388
2010–12	788	826	468
2012–13	762	810	484
2013–14	778	833	497
2014–15	789	843	483
2015–16 ¹¹⁶	820	859	—

¹¹⁶ As at 27 January 2016.

Table 5: Actual Membership as a Percentage of Absolute Membership, and Average Daily Attendance as a Percentage of Absolute and Actual Membership Dating Back to Session 1992–93

Session	Actual Membership as a Percentage of Absolute Membership	Average Attendance as a Percentage of Absolute Membership	Average Attendance as a Percentage of Actual Membership
1992–93	86.2	31.4	36.4
1993–94	86.6	31.4	36.2
1994–95	87.1	31.6	36.3
1995–96	87.9	30.8	35.1
1996–97	88.6	31.6	35.7
1997–98	89.9	32.2	35.8
1998–99	91.3	33.7	36.9
1999–00	99.6	50.8	51.0
2000–01	99.4	51.1	51.4
2001–02	98.4	53.3	54.2
2002–03	98.4	53.1	53.9
2003–04	98.0	52.1	53.1
2004–05	98.0	55.0	56.1
2005–06	98.3	53.7	54.6
2006–07	98.3	55.3	56.2
2007–08	98.5	55.5	56.3
2008–09	95.7	54.3	56.8
2009–10	96.1	52.8	55.0
2010–12	95.4	56.7	59.4
2012–13	94.1	59.8	63.5
2013–14	93.3	59.7	63.9
2014–15	93.6	57.3	61.2

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