



RESEARCH BRIEFING

Number 02537, 9 November 2020

Members' changes of party allegiance in the House of Commons since 1979

Compiled by
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This list notes when a Member has changed allegiance from one political party to another or decided to sit as an independent MP. Instances of Members losing or resigning a party whip are also noted.

Is there a by-election if an MP changes party?

No. By-elections are not automatically triggered if an MP changes his or her party affiliation although a Member may choose to stand down and fight the ensuing by-election under a new party label or as an independent MP.

Role of the Whips' Office

Information on the role of the Government and Opposition whips in the management of parliamentary business can be found in the [Commons Library briefing on the Whips' Office](#).

Members' changes of party allegiance in the House of Commons since 1979

Parliament	Date	Member	Constituency	Party (before)	Party (after)	Notes
1979-1983	01/11/1979	Gerry Fitt	Belfast West	SDLP	Ind Socialist	
1979-1983	20/02/1981	Tom Ellis	Wrexham	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	20/02/1981	Richard Crawshaw	Liverpool Toxteth	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	Tom Bradley	Leicester East	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	John Cartwright	Woolwich East	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	John Horam	Gateshead West	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	Robert Maclennan	Caithness & Sutherland	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	John Roper	Farnworth	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	David Owen	Plymouth, Devonport	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	William Rodgers	Stockton	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	Neville Sandelson	Hayes & Harlington	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	Mike Thomas	Newcastle East	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	02/03/1981	Ian Wrigglesworth	Thornaby	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	16/03/1981	Christopher Brocklebank-	Norfolk North West	Con	SDP	
1979-1983	19/03/1981	Edward Lyons	Bradford West	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	04/07/1981	James Wellbeloved	Erith & Crayford	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	07/09/1981	Michael O'Halloran	Islington North	Lab	SDP	Stood as Independent Labour candidate at 1983 GE
1979-1983	01/10/1981	Dickson Mabon	Greenock	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	05/10/1981	Bob Mitchell	Southampton, Itchen	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	06/10/1981	David Ginsburg	Dewsbury	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	07/10/1981	James Dunn	Liverpool Kirkdale	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	07/10/1981	Tom McNally	Stockport South	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	29/10/1981	Eric Ogden	Liverpool West Derby	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	16/11/1981	John Grant	Islington Central	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	30/11/1981	George Cunningham	Islington South	Lab	Ind Lab	Joined SDP Jun 1982
1979-1983	02/12/1981	Ronald Brown	Hackney South	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	11/12/1981	Bruce Douglas-Mann	Mitcham	Lab	Ind SDP	Resigned his seat and lost by-election June 1982
1979-1983	11/12/1981	Jeffrey Thomas	Abertillery	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	22/12/1981	Ednyfed Hudson Davies	Caerphilly	Lab	SDP	
1979-1983	22/01/1982	Bryan Magee	Leyton	Lab	Ind Lab	Joined SDP Mar 1982
1979-1983	02/08/1982	Robert Mellish	Bermondsey	Lab	Ind Lab	
1983-1987	31/01/1987	John Ryman	Blyth Valley	Lab	Ind	

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1987-1992	March 1988	Robert Maclennan	Caithness & Sutherland	SDP	Lib Dem	
1987-1992	March 1988	Charles Kennedy	Ross, Cromarty & Skye	SDP	Lib Dem	
1987-1992	19/05/1988	Ron Brown*	Leith	Lab	Ind Lab	Whip withdrawn for 3 months
1987-1992	14/03/1990	Dick Douglas	Dunfermline West	Lab	Ind Lab	
1987-1992	04/10/1990	Dick Douglas	Dunfermline West	Ind Lab	SNP	
1987-1992	25/09/1991	Dave Nellist*	Coventry South East	Lab	-	
1987-1992	25/09/1991	Terry Fields*	Broad Green	Lab	-	
1987-1992	13/03/1992	John Browne*	Winchester	Con	Ind Con	
1992-1997	23/07/1993	Rupert Allason	Torbay	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Jul 1994
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Teresa Gorman*	Billericay	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Nicholas Budgen*	Wolverhampton South West	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Michael Cartiss*	Great Yarmouth	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Christopher Gill*	Ludlow	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Richard Shepherd*	Aldridge-Brownhills	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Antony Marlow*	Northampton North	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Sir Richard Taylor*	Southend East	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	John Wilkinson*	Ruislip-Northwood	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored Apr 1995
1992-1997	29/11/1994	Sir Richard Body #	Holland with Boston	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored 17 Jan 1996
1992-1997	08/10/1995	Alan Howarth	Stratford-on-Avon	Con	Lab	
1992-1997	30/12/1995	Emma Nicholson	Torridge and West Devon	Con	Lib Dem	
1992-1997	24/02/1996	Peter Thurnham	Bolton North East	Con	Ind	
1992-1997	12/10/1996	Peter Thurnham	Bolton North East	Ind	Lib Dem	
1992-1997	Nov 1996	Sir John Gorst	Hendon North	Con	Ind Con	
1992-1997	08/03/1997	Sir George Gardiner	Reigate	Con	Ref	
1997-2001	21/11/1997	Peter Temple-Morris	Leominster	Con	Ind	
1997-2001	21/06/1998	Peter Temple-Morris	Leominster	Ind	Lab	
1997-2001	29/06/1997	Robert Wareing*	Liverpool West Derby	Lab	Ind Lab	Whip suspended till Nov 1997
1997-2001	29/06/1997	Mohammed Sarwar*	Glasgow, Govan	Lab	Ind Lab	Whip restored March 1999
1997-2001	09/09/1998	Tommy Graham	Renfrewshire West	Lab	Ind (Scottish Lab)	
1997-2001	26/03/1999	Dennis Canavan*	Falkirk West	Lab	Ind	
1997-2001	18/12/1999	Shaun Woodward	Witney	Con	Lab	
1997-2001	06/03/2000	Ken Livingstone*	Brent East	Lab	Ind	
1997-2001	11/04/2001	Charles Wardle*	Bexhill and Battle	Con	Ind	

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2001-2005	10/12/2001	Paul Marsden	Shrewsbury	Lab	Lib Dem	Rejoined Labour Apr 2005
2001-2005	02/10/2002	Andrew Hunter	Basingstoke	Con	Ind Con	Joined the DUP Parliamentary Group 10 Dec 2002 (DUP)
2001-2005	23/06/2003	Jeffrey Donaldson	Lagan Valley	UUP	Ind Unionist	Joined the DUP 5 Jan 2004
2001-2005	23/06/2003	David Burnside #	South Antrim	UUP	Ind Unionist	Whip restored 9 Jan 2004
2001-2005	23/06/2003	Rev. Martin Smyth #	Belfast South	UUP	Ind Unionist	Whip restored 9 Jan 2004
2001-2005	23/10/2003	George Galloway	Glasgow, Kelvin	Lab	Ind	Formed the Respect Party - The Unity Coalition 25 Jan 2004
2001-2005	25/02/2004	Ann Winterton*	Congleton	Con	Ind	Whip restored 31 Mar 2004
2001-2005	15/01/2005	Robert Jackson	Wantage	Con	Lab	
2001-2005	07/02/2005	Jonathan Sayeed*	Mid Bedfordshire	Con	Ind Con	Whip restored 7 Mar 2005
2001-2005	25/03/2005	Howard Flight*	Arundel & South Downs	Con	Ind Con	
2005-2010	20/10/2006	Clare Short	Birmingham Ladywood	Lab	Ind Lab	
2005-2010	26/06/2007	Quentin Davies	Grantham & Stamford	Con	Lab	
2005-2010	16/09/2007	Robert Wareing	Liverpool, West Derby	Lab	Ind	Suspended (1 week) and deselected by local party
2005-2010	26/09/2007	Andrew Pelling*	Croydon Central	Con	Ind	
2005-2010	29/01/2008	Derek Conway*	Old Bexley & Sidcup	Con	Ind Con	
2005-2010	12/03/2008	Bob Spink	Castle Point	Con	Ind (UKIP)	UKIP Apr-Nov 2008
2005-2010	09/01/2010	Iris Robinson*	Strangford	DUP	-	
2005-2010	14/05/2009	Elliot Morley*	Scunthorpe	Lab	Ind	
2005-2010	16/05/2009	David Chaytor*	Bury North	Lab	Ind	
2005-2010	16/06/2009	Jim Devine*	Livingston	Lab	Ind	
2005-2010	22/03/2010	Stephen Byers*	North Tyneside	Lab	-	
2005-2010	22/03/2010	Patricia Hewitt*	Leicester West	Lab	-	
2005-2010	22/03/2010	Geoff Hoon*	Ashfield	Lab	-	
2005-2010	22/03/2010	Margaret Moran*	Luton South	Lab	-	
2005-2010	25/03/2010	Lady Sylvia Hermon #	North Down	UUP	Ind	Re-elected for the same seat at 2010 General Election as an Independent MP
2010-2015	19/05/2010	Eric Illsley*	Barnsley Central	Lab	-	
2010-2015	14/10/2010	Denis MacShane*	Rotherham	Lab	-	
2010-2015	23/02/2012	Eric Joyce*	Falkirk	Lab	Ind	
2010-2015	02/11/2012	Denis MacShane*	Rotherham	Lab	-	Resigned seat 2 Nov 2012
2010-2015	06/11/2012	Nadine Dorries*	Mid Bedfordshire	Con	Ind	Whip restored 8 May 2012
2010-2015	31/05/2013	Patrick Mercer #	Newark	Con	Ind	Resigned seat Apr 2014 after being suspended from the Commons (6months)

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2010-2015	04/06/2013	Mike Hancock*	Portsmouth South	Lib Dem	Ind	
2010-2015	19/07/2013	David Ward*	Bradford East	Lib Dem	Ind	Whip suspended until 14 Sep
2010-2015	10/09/2013	Nigel Evans #	Ribble Valley	Deputy Speaker	Ind	Whip restored 28 Apr 2014
2010-2015	29/08/2014	Douglas Carswell	Clacton	Con	UKIP	Resigned seat 29 Aug 2014 triggering by-election on 9 Oct 2014 - re-elected as UKIP MP
2010-2015	27/09/2014	Mark Reckless	Rochester and Strood	Con	UKIP	Resigned seat 27 Sep 2014 triggering by-election on 20 Nov 2014 - re-elected as UKIP MP
2015-2017	29/09/2015	Michelle Thomson #	Edinburgh West	SNP	Ind	
2015-2017	23/11/2015	Natalie McGarry #	Glasgow East	SNP	Ind	
2015-2017	31/12/2015	Simon Danczuk*	Rochdale	Lab	Ind	
2015-2017	27/04/2016	Naz Shah*	Bradford West	Lab	Ind	Whip restored 5 Jul 2016
2017-2019	10/07/2017	Anne Marie Morris*	Newton Abbot	Con	Ind	Whip restored 12 Dec 2017
2017	25/10/2017	Jared O'Mara*	Sheffield Hallam	Lab	Ind	Whip restored 3 Jul 2018, resigned from Labour Party 12 Jul 2018
2017	02/11/2017	Kelvin Hopkins*	Luton North	Lab	Ind	
2017	03/11/2017	Charlie Elphicke*	Dover and Deal	Con	Ind	Whip restored 12 Dec 2018
2017	23/11/2017	Ivan Lewis*	Bury South	Lab	Ind	
2017	08/01/2018	Barry McElduff	West Tyrone	SF	Ind	Suspended for 3 months; resigned 16 Jan 2018
2017	30/04/2018	John Woodcock*	Barrow and Furness	Lab	Ind	Resigned from Labour Party 18 July 2018
2017	14/07/2018	Andrew Griffiths*	Burton	Con	Ind	Whip restored 12 Dec 2018
2017	24/07/2018	Ian Paisley*	North Antrim	DUP	Ind	Whip restored 18 Sep 2018
2017	30/08/2018	Frank Field #	Birkenhead	Lab	Ind	
2017	06/12/2018	Stephen Lloyd #	Eastbourne	Lib Dem	Ind	Whip restored 29 Oct 2019
2017	19/12/2018	Fiona Onasanya*	Peterborough	Lab	Ind	
2017	18/02/2019	Luciana Berger #	Liverpool Wavertree	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019
2017	18/02/2019	Ann Coffey #	Stockport	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019; TIGC from 5 Jul 2019
2017	18/02/2019	Mike Gapes #	Ilford South	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019; TIGC from 5 Jul 2019
2017	18/02/2019	Chris Leslie #	Nottingham East	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019; TIGC from 5 Jul 2019
2017	18/02/2019	Gavin Shuker #	Luton South	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019
2017	18/02/2019	Angela Smith #	Penistone and Stocksbridge	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019
2017	18/02/2019	Chuka Umunna #	Streatham	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019
2017	19/02/2019	Joan Ryan #	Enfield North	Lab	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019; TIGC from 5 Jul 2019
2017	20/02/2019	Heidi Allen #	South Cambridgeshire	Con	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019
2017	20/02/2019	Anna Soubry #	Broxtowe	Con	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019; TIGC from 5 Jul 2019
2017	20/02/2019	Sarah Wollaston #	Totnes	Con	Ind	CUK from 18 Apr 2019

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2017	22/02/2019	Ian Austin #	Dudley North	Lab	Ind	
2017	27/02/2019	Chris Williamson*	Derby North	Lab	Ind	Whip restored 26 Jun 2019
2017	01/04/2019	Nick Boles #	Saffron Waldon	Con	Ind	
2017	28/06/2019	Chris Williamson*	Derby North	Lab	Ind	
2017	22/07/2019	Charlie Elphicke*	Dover and Deal	Con	Ind	
2017	04/06/2019	Heidi Allen #	South Cambridgeshire	CUK	Ind	
2017	04/06/2019	Luciana Berger #	Liverpool Wavertree	CUK	Ind	
2017	04/06/2019	Gavin Shuker #	Luton South	CUK	Ind	
2017	04/06/2019	Angela Smith #	Penistone and Stocksbridge	CUK	Ind	
2017	04/06/2019	Chuka Umunna #	Streatham	CUK	Ind	
2017	04/06/2019	Sarah Wollaston #	Totnes	CUK	Ind	
2017	13/06/2019	Chuka Umunna	Streatham	Ind	Lib Dem	
2017	15/08/2019	Sarah Wollaston	Totnes	Ind	Lib Dem	
2017	03/09/2019	Phillip Lee #	Bracknell	Con	Lib Dem	
2017	03/09/2019	Rory Stewart*	Penrith and The Border	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Guto Bebb*	Aberconwy	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Richard Benyon*	Newbury	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Alistair Burt*	North East Bedfordshire	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Steve Brine*	Winchester	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Greg Clark*	Tunbridge Wells	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Ken Clarke*	Rushcliffe	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	David Gauke*	South West Hertfordshire	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Justine Greening*	Putney	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Dominic Grieve*	Beaconsfield	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Sam Gyimah*	East Surrey	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Philip Hammond*	Runnymede and Weybridge	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Stephen Hammond*	Wimbledon	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Richard Harrington*	Watford	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Margot James*	Stourbridge	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Oliver Letwin*	West Dorset	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Anne Milton*	Guildford	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Caroline Nokes*	Romsey and Southampton North	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Antoinette Sandbach*	Eddisbury	Con	Ind	
2017	04/09/2019	Nicholas Soames*	Mid Sussex	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019
2017	04/09/2019	Edward Vaizey*	Wantage	Con	Ind	Whip restored 30 Oct 2019

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2017	05/09/2019	Luciana Berger	Liverpool Wavertree	Ind	Lib Dem	
2017	07/09/2019	Amber Rudd #	Hastings and Rye	Con	Ind	
2017	07/09/2019	Angela Smith	Penistone and Stocksbridge	Ind	Lib Dem	
2017	14/09/2019	Sam Gyimah	East Surrey	Ind	Lib Dem	
2017	22/09/2019	Mike Hill*	Hartlepool	Lab	Ind	Whip restored 17 Oct 2019
2017	07/10/2019	Stephen Hepburn*	Jarrow	Lab	Ind	
2017	07/10/2019	Heidi Allen	South Cambridgeshire	Ind	Lib Dem	
2017	16/10/2019	Dame Louise Ellman #	Liverpool, Riverside	Lab (Co-op)	Ind	
2017	31/10/2019	Antoinette Sandbach	Eddisbury	Ind	Lib Dem	
2019	23/05/2020	Jonathan Edwards*	Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	PC	Ind	
2019	29/05/2020	Neale Hanvey*	Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath	Ind	SNP	Readmitted to party following six month suspension
2019	15/07/2020	Dr Julian Lewis*	New Forest East	Con	Ind	
2019	28/09/2020	Claudia Webbe*	Leicester East	Lab	Ind	
2019	01/10/2020	Margaret Ferrier*	Rutherglen and Hamilton West	SNP	Ind	
2019	29/10/2020	Jeremy Corbyn*	Islington North	Lab	Ind	

Key:

Con	Conservative
CUK	Change UK - The Independent Group
Dem Lab	Democratic Lab
DUP	Democratic
Ind	Independent
Lab	Labour Party
Lab (Co-op)	Labour and Co-operative Party
Lib Dem	Liberal
Ref	Referendum
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SDP	Social
SNP	Scottish National
TIGC	The Independent Group for Change
UUP	Ulster Unionist
UKIP	UK

Notes:

* Lost party whip for disciplinary reasons

Resigned party whip

~ See [by-elections page on parliament website](#)

Sources: David Butler and Gareth Butler, Twentieth Century British Political Facts, Palgrave MacMillan, 2011; Members Database; Hansard; Press reports

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