



# Hansard Society Ltd

Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Company Number: 04332105

Charity Number: 1091364





**Photo credit**

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP delivering the Hansard Society's inaugural Churchill–Attlee Democracy Lecture, 14 May 2024

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# Administrative and legal information

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## Charity registration number

1091364

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## Chair's foreword

2024 was a landmark year for the Hansard Society as we celebrated our 80th anniversary. Eight decades ago our founder, Stephen King-Hall MP, brought together Winston Churchill and Clement Attlee, political rivals but also champions of parliamentary democracy, as the Society's first members. Since then, we have remained Parliament's "critical friend": promoting public understanding of its work, scrutinising its effectiveness, and championing its central role in our national life.



We marked this anniversary with the launch of the Churchill–Attlee Democracy Lecture and welcomed the former Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Theresa May MP, as our inaugural lecturer. Her reflections on the fragility and value of democracy, the responsibilities of MPs, and the importance of standards in public life could not have been timelier. The lecture brought together parliamentarians, scholars, and school pupils in a shared moment of reflection on how democracy can be renewed for the future.

The year was also shaped by the general election in July, which returned one of the most significant turnovers of MPs in modern times, with more than half the House newly elected. At such a critical juncture, the Society once again proved its value. Within days of the new Parliament assembling, our Back to Business guide provided indispensable insight into procedures, pageantry and practicalities. Its impact was striking: downloaded over 26,000 times in the first week, it was a trusted resource not only for new MPs and their staff but also for journalists and the wider public seeking to understand Parliament's inner workings.

Supporting new MPs and their teams will remain central to our work in the months ahead, through practical resources like the Parliament Matters podcast and our new Parliament Matters Bulletin as well as our continuing contributions to debates on parliamentary reform. In an era when democratic institutions face pressure from polarisation, distrust and disengagement, strengthening Parliament's effectiveness is more vital than ever.

Equally important is our commitment to nurturing the next generation of citizens. Our long-standing Mock Elections programme once again gave tens of thousands of pupils the chance to experience democracy first-hand. More than 39,000 young people from over 100 schools took part in 2024, learning how elections work and discovering the responsibilities of candidates, campaigners, and voters alike. For many, it was their first taste of the democratic process – and, we hope, the start of a lifetime of civic participation.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank our Director, our staff, our members, and our many supporters. As we look back on this anniversary year, we are proud of what the Society has achieved. From convening distinguished voices to offering practical guidance, from supporting MPs to educating schoolchildren, we have worked to uphold our founders' vision: a democracy that is better understood today, and resilient enough to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Baroness Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

The Rt Hon the Baroness Taylor of Bolton

# Acknowledgements

The Trustees extend their sincere thanks to all our members, supporters, and partners who have worked with us throughout 2024. We are especially grateful to the following organisations for their generous project grant funding:

- the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust;
- the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust; and
- the Legal Education Foundation.

Our thanks also go to the Society's dedicated staff team. In particular, we acknowledge the contribution of Luke Boga Mitchell, who left early in 2024 for a new role after a decade of committed service.

We remain indebted to the co-editors of our journal *Parliamentary Affairs* – Professor Alistair Clark and Dr Louise Thompson – for their exceptional stewardship throughout the year, and to the production team at Oxford University Press, who ensure the journal reaches readers every quarter.

Our *Parliament Matters* podcast has thrived thanks to the expertise and energy of co-host and editor Mark D'Arcy, supported by producers Richard Townsend and Gareth Jones.

We are profoundly grateful to the many MPs, Peers, parliamentary staff, academics, consultants and partner organisations who generously shared their time and expertise with us throughout the year. We also acknowledge the invaluable support of others, particularly at Westminster, at the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Senedd and the Northern Ireland Assembly, whose names cannot be published. To each of them we extend our sincere thanks for their advice and insight.

Lord Arbuthnot of Edrom	Ian Dunt	Rt Hon the Baroness May of Maidenhead
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Dr John Cooper	Alicia Kearns MP	Dr James Strong
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Professor Philip Cowley	Rt Hon David Laws	Dr Mari Takayanagi
Michael Crick	Professor Cristina Leston-Bandeira	Alison Thewliss
Sir Wayne David	Paul Masterton	Adam Wagner KC
Rt Hon Philip Dunne		William Wragg

# Trustees' report

The Trustees, who are also the Directors of the Charity for the purposes of company law, present their annual report (pages 8-32) and accounts (pages 34-48) for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The Trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the Charity comply with current statutory requirements, those of the governing documents, and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities'.

The Trustees confirm they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance, 'Charities and Public Benefit'. The Trustees review the activities of the Charity on an ongoing basis and are satisfied that they continue to be directly related to the Society's core mission and objectives.



# The inaugural Churchill–Attlee Democracy Lecture

14 May 2024, Westminster Central Hall

To mark the Society's 80th anniversary, we launched a new tradition: the Churchill–Attlee Democracy Lecture, created in honour of our first members, Winston Churchill and Clement Attlee.

The inaugural lecture took place on 14 May 2024 at Westminster Central Hall, where an audience of 200 people, including members of the Society, distinguished guests, and groups of pupils from two local secondary schools, gathered to reflect on the future of British democracy. The event was chaired by our Trustee, Jackie Ashley.

We were honoured to welcome former Prime Minister the Rt Hon Theresa May MP as our first lecturer. With 27 years in Parliament, serving on the backbenches, in ministerial office, and at the very top as Prime Minister, she brought unmatched experience to the occasion.

In her recent book *The Abuse of Power*, she called for political reform, and at our lecture she expanded on her ideas, offering reflections on her time in public life, the health of our democracy, and how it can be strengthened for the future.

Looking back to Churchill and Attlee, Theresa May reminded us that both leaders were deeply committed to Parliament as the representative forum of the nation, and to the primacy of the Commons as the elected chamber. Significantly, both chose to remain active in political life after leaving Downing Street. "I am proud," she said, "to have followed in that tradition."

She also placed today's democratic challenges in a broader historical perspective, emphasising that democracy is both fragile and precious. Democracy, she argued, has been the platform for extraordinary human progress: longer lives, medical breakthroughs, rights for women and minorities, access to education, rising living



Westminster Central Hall, 14 May 2024  
Credit: Hansard Society / Roger Harris



standards, and the technological revolution. None of this, she suggested, would have been possible in closed societies where freedom of thought and innovation were stifled.

"Less democracy," she cautioned, "means less freedom, less control over our lives, and fewer opportunities for generations to come."

Theresa May's reflections were also rooted in her own experience of parliamentary life. She spoke passionately about the bond between MPs and their constituencies, the "bedrock of our parliamentary democracy."

In today's world, she argued, it is no longer enough for MPs simply to cast votes in Westminster. Constituents rightly expect their representatives to be visible in communities, to fight their corner, and to act in their interest. "We work in the service of others," she said, "and we should be accountable to our voters."

Another theme of the lecture was the vital importance of standards in public life and the need to protect public trust in politics. To rebuild that trust, parties must recruit diverse, capable candidates who recognise the responsibilities of public service.

From the expenses scandal to the rule-breaking of the Covid-19 era, she reminded the audience that perceptions of exceptionalism and double standards strike at the heart of public trust. Upholding the Nolan Principles, the seven principles of public life, is not optional, she argued, but essential if democracy is to be credible.

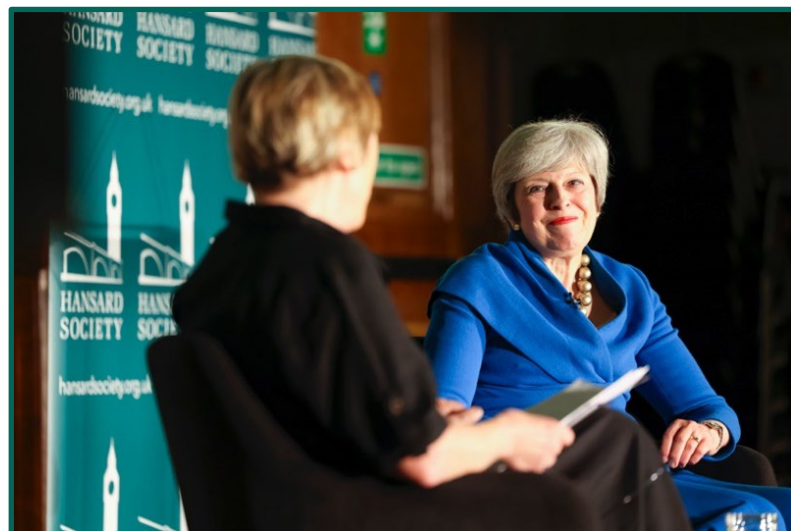
Picking up themes that resonate with the Society's work, the former Prime Minister also urged reforms to strengthen Parliament itself: better training for new MPs, more scrutiny of legislation (particularly delegated legislation) and a more systematic approach to post-legislative review.

She argued that Parliament's ability to hold the executive to account has weakened over recent decades, and that strengthening this scrutiny is crucial to a healthy democracy.

A key theme of the lecture was the danger of extremism and polarisation in politics. She

**"We owe democracy a great debt. And to ensure our values endure for generations to come, we must therefore cherish it and conserve it. If we fail in that endeavour, we will all pay the price. But we must be honest with ourselves. Democracy is in trouble here in the UK and around the world."**

described how an absolutist, winner-takes-all approach corrodes public debate, weakens democratic institutions, and plays into the hands of global adversaries, such as Russian President Vladimir Putin, who exploit divisions to undermine western democracies.



Theresa May MP in conversation with Jackie Ashley. Credit: Hansard Society / Roger Harris

Against this backdrop, she urged cohesion and co-operation: "The best long-term solutions arise from the politics of moderation. We should bring people together, not create a society of warring cultural tribes." Progress in a democracy depends on compromise – not as weakness, but as the essence of practical governance. "Being prepared to make compromises in order to make progress," she said, "does not mean compromising on our values."

## The new Parliament

With over half of MPs newly elected in July 2024, we provided timely guidance and analysis and renewed our work on parliamentary reform, ensuring MPs, their staff, journalists and the wider public could navigate the challenges of a changing Commons.

### Back to Business guide

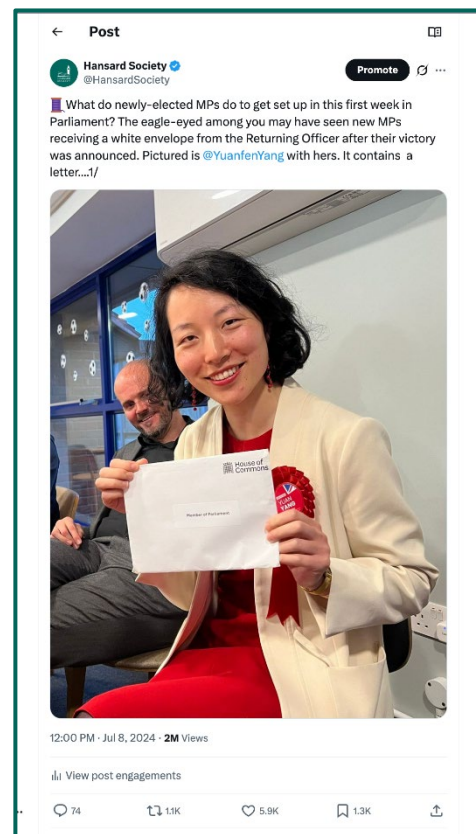
On Tuesday 9 July 2024, just five days after the general election, the new Parliament assembled. With 335 newly elected MPs – more than half the House of Commons – Parliament faced a significant logistical challenge, as many Members and their staff navigated parliamentary procedures for the very first time.

To help smooth this transition, we published our Back to Business guide, setting out the ceremonial, legislative, organisational, and procedural steps that mark the start of a new Parliament. It also examined the particular challenges that follow a general election held in July – from disruptions to the parliamentary calendar to the Government's early legislation and financial plans.

The response was immediate: in its first week the guide was downloaded more than 26,700 times. Our 26-post social media thread, outlining what MPs would experience in their first week, reached two million views, with 1,100 reposts, 5,900 likes and 1,300 bookmarks.

One of the most popular sections of the guide explored the pageantry and process of the State Opening of Parliament and the King's Speech. Our Director, Ruth Fox, brought those insights to a

broader audience with live commentary on the ceremony for BBC Radio 5 Live and later that day analysed the constitutional dimensions of the King's Speech on LBC's Andrew Marr show.



### Parliament Matters Bulletin

At the start of the new Parliament, we also launched the Parliament Matters Bulletin – a weekly analysis of forthcoming business in the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Developed in response to feedback from new MPs and their teams who told us they were struggling to navigate the Order Paper, track down parliamentary documents, and make sense of proceedings, the Bulletin serves as a practical procedural guide. It helps both new and experienced parliamentarians stay focused

and informed about the week ahead, complementing our popular *Parliament Matters* podcast, with clear, accessible insights in a written format.

Beyond Westminster, the Bulletin has attracted strong interest from civil servants, journalists, campaigners, public affairs professionals, lawyers, academics and teachers, underscoring its value as a trusted guide to parliamentary business.

## Parliamentary reform

The need for reform to make Parliament a more effective institution has been a central theme of our work since the general election. Through our blogs, briefings and evidence submissions to parliamentary select committees, we have sought to highlight both the challenges and opportunities facing the House of Commons as it adapts to a changing political environment.

In *A House more divided: Practice and procedure in a multipolar Parliament*, Paul Evans, a former Commons Clerk and member of the Society, explored how the composition of the opposition today looks markedly different from that of recent decades. Unlike the period following the Labour landslide of 1997, the House of Commons operates in a new era of multi-party opposition.

This shift has important implications for parliamentary practice and procedure: it raises questions about how effectively the House can scrutinise government when opposition voices are more fragmented, and how the rules and conventions of the Chamber might need to evolve in response.

We also contributed directly to the House of Commons Modernisation Committee's call for evidence on its strategic priorities.



In our submission, we argued that modernisation must go beyond surface-level changes and tackle some of the deeper structural weaknesses in the way the Commons conducts its business.

We recommended reforms to strengthen legislative scrutiny, particularly of the delegated legislation system; to enhance financial scrutiny of the Budget and the Estimates process; to address long-standing strategic gaps in parliamentary oversight in areas such as treaties; and to ensure that parliamentary time is used more effectively. We also urged a review of the Standing Orders, as well as the language and rituals of the House, to ensure that they remain relevant and accessible.

## Case study: E-Petitions

Beyond voting, signing a petition remains the form of democratic activity that the public are most likely to engage in. We published *What's the Point of Petitions?*, a study by researchers from the Universities of Durham, Leeds and Liverpool, which explores why petitions have endured as a popular and resilient tool of political participation. The report traces the evolution of petitioning over the 20th century – from a practice rooted in Parliament and other political institutions to a widely accessible means of mass campaigning, capable of capturing public and media attention. It also challenges the idea that petitions are ineffective, showing that petitioners often have a sophisticated understanding of 'success', valuing not only policy change but also the ability to raise awareness, shape debate, and give voice to public concerns.





## Reform of delegated legislation

Reform of the delegated legislation system remains the Society's most important area of work. The year saw us continue to highlight how Statutory Instruments and other forms of delegated legislation are increasingly being used to make significant policy changes with limited parliamentary scrutiny.

## General election rules and regulations

In April 2024, we published *General election rules and regulations: what has changed?*, a comprehensive briefing on the extensive reforms to electoral law introduced via Statutory Instrument ahead of the general election. Covering voter ID, postal voting, overseas voters, party spending limits, and the regulation of digital campaigning and marketing, the briefing drew attention to the inconsistent levels of scrutiny applied to these changes. It also provided a one-stop shop for journalists, campaigners and practitioners seeking to understand the new rules.



A man in jeans walks towards the entrance of a polling station.  
Credit: Greg Sayer / Adobe Stock

## Legislative briefings

During the year we produced a series of targeted briefings on the use of delegated powers in current legislation. *Creeping ministerial powers: the example of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill* examined how precedents from earlier laws are now being used to expand executive authority. *How delegated legislation is being used to tackle the prisons crisis* explored emergency measures in the justice system, while *Puberty blockers legislation: has the parliamentary calendar undermined accountability?* highlighted the risks to

democratic oversight when scheduling constraints curtail scrutiny.

We also published contributions from parliamentarians and experts to stimulate wider debate. In a blogpost for the Society, the Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP, the then Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee, examined how Parliament should approach scrutiny of Carbon Budget Orders. The accompanying explainer video attracted more than 3,200 views on YouTube, reflecting interest in what otherwise

might be seen as a niche procedural issue with significant environmental implications.

Beyond Westminster, our Director served as an independent Commissioner on the Bingham Centre's Independent Commission on Emergency Health Powers. Drawing on lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic, she contributed

research and expertise on delegated legislation to the Commission's examination of how emergency powers are designed, scrutinised and constrained. The Commission's final report, published in May 2024, set out recommendations to preserve a balance between executive power and parliamentary oversight.

## Legislative monitoring: Statutory Instrument Tracker® app

A large share of the UK's legislative and regulatory changes are introduced not through Acts of Parliament but via Statutory Instruments (SIs). Yet the SI process is often complex, opaque and difficult to understand.

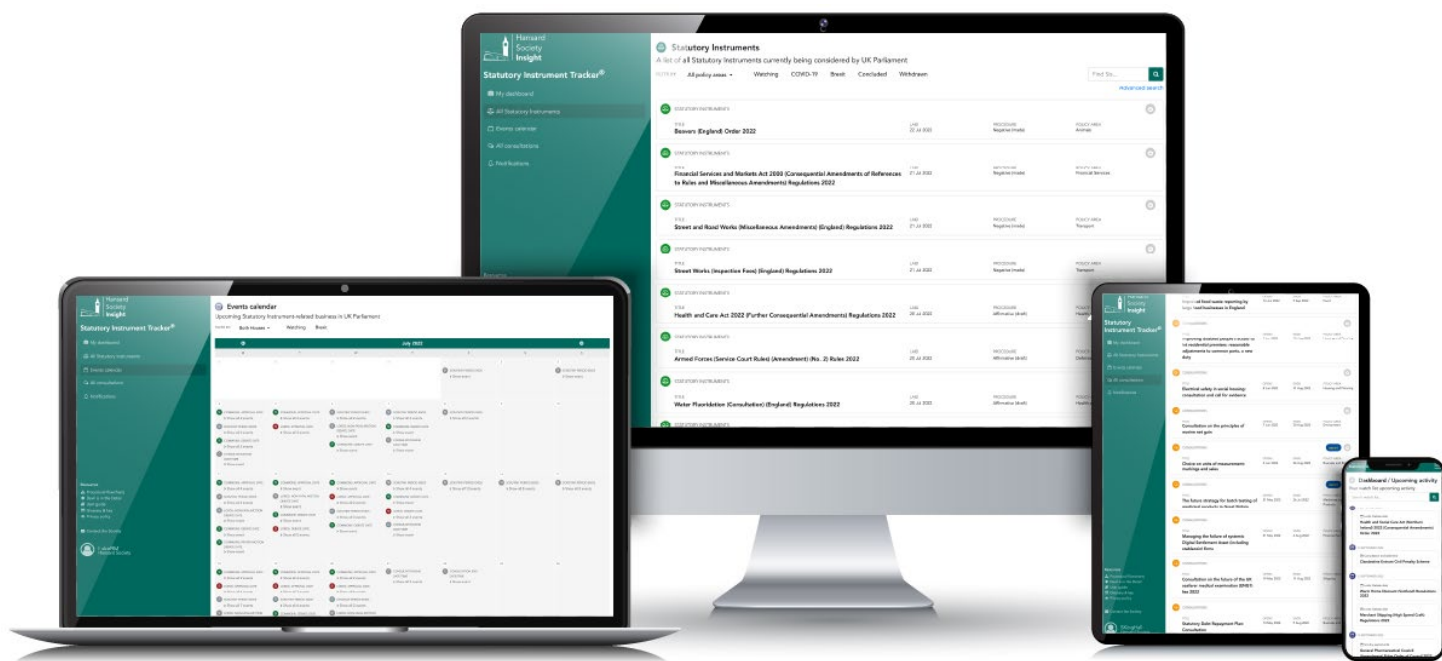
To address this, we developed the Statutory Instrument Tracker®, an online monitoring tool that draws on our long-standing research into delegated legislation. Since the start of the 2017 Session, it has provided comprehensive tracking of every SI laid before Parliament and every government consultation that could lead to the creation of new delegated legislation.

By making this information accessible and transparent, the Tracker continues to be an invaluable resource for parliamentarians, journalists, researchers, and campaigners seeking to navigate the world of delegated legislation.

In 2024, the number of Statutory Instruments was lower than in previous years due to the general election and dissolution of Parliament.

Nonetheless, during the year we tracked the progress of:

**690 Statutory Instruments**  
and **932 consultations**



Our Statutory Instrument Tracker® app

## Case study: The assisted dying bill

The Private Member's Bill to legalise assisted dying, properly known as The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, is one of the most sensitive and high-profile pieces of legislation to come before Parliament in decades.

It has attracted widespread public interest and intense parliamentary debate, but the procedures governing its passage – as a Private Member's Bill – are complicated and often poorly understood. With complex moral, ethical and constitutional questions at stake, it is essential that MPs, Peers, campaigners, the media and the wider public understand the process and procedures that will shape the Bill's passage.

To support this, the Society produced a suite of resources explaining the mechanics of the legislative process. In the run-up to the Bill's publication, we produced a guide to the Private Member's Bill process, giving parliamentarians and observers alike a roadmap to understand

in the Bill, our specialist briefing on this issue was cited by MPs and directly informed the line of questioning and scrutiny applied to the delegated powers in the Bill.

Alongside these written resources, we convened an online webinar shortly before the Second Reading debate, featuring former Clerk of the House of Commons Sir David Natzler and academic expert Dr Daniel Gover. This event offered parliamentarians, practitioners, and interested members of the public expert insight into the rules, risks and opportunities of the Private Member's Bill process. This event not only demystified the Private Members' Bill process but also helped those engaging with the debate to focus on where influence could realistically be exercised.



Kim Leadbeater MP queues behind the Speaker's Chair to present her Private Member's Bill on assisted dying for its First Reading, 16 October 2024. Credit: House of Commons

the unique hurdles facing the legislation. We also launched a rolling news page to track each key procedural development as the Bill progressed, logging 24 updates by the end of the year. Once the Bill was introduced, we followed up with a briefing on the amendment process in Public Bill Committee. When debate in Committee turned to the delegated powers

By providing timely, accessible analysis and expert commentary, we have helped to equip MPs, the media and the public with the tools to understand the often-complex rules governing the Bill's progress. Our outputs turned technical parliamentary procedure into practical knowledge, directly influencing the scrutiny process and strengthening the debate.



# Mock Elections

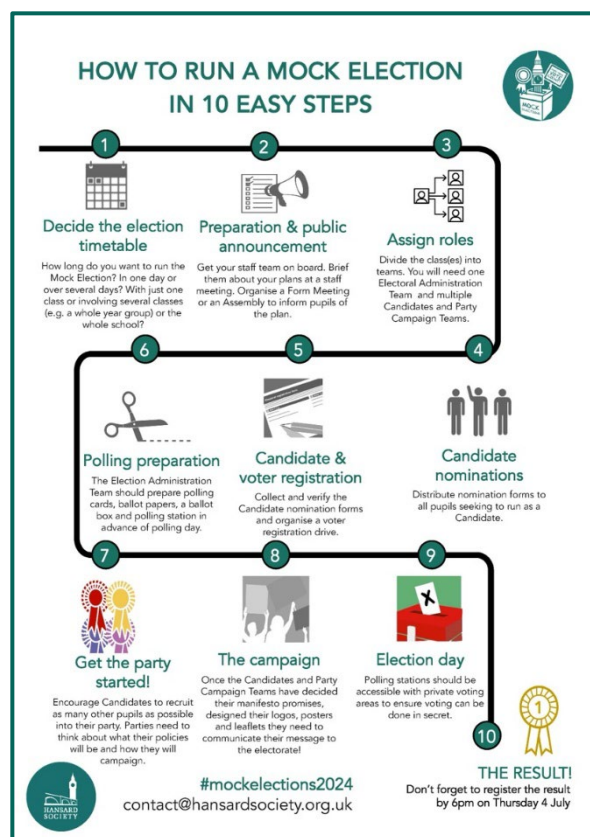
39,312 pupils from 111 schools across the country took part in our nationwide Mock Elections campaign – giving many their first taste of voting and a hands-on lesson in how our democracy works.

Run by the Hansard Society at every general election for more than 50 years, Mock Elections is one of the world's oldest and most enduring civic education projects. Our Mock Election resource pack enables teachers to recreate the excitement and drama of a real election in schools, engaging pupils of all ages with the democratic process and showing how politics shapes their everyday lives.

This year the resources for teachers and pupils included:

- **A toolkit for teachers** – a step-by-step guide to recreating the excitement of a real election in schools, adaptable for any timetable or class size.
- **Cue cards** – helping pupils explore different election roles, from candidates and campaigners to electoral administrators and vote counters.
- **A templates pack** – ready-to-use materials such as ballot papers, nomination forms, posters, rosettes, and even draft press releases.

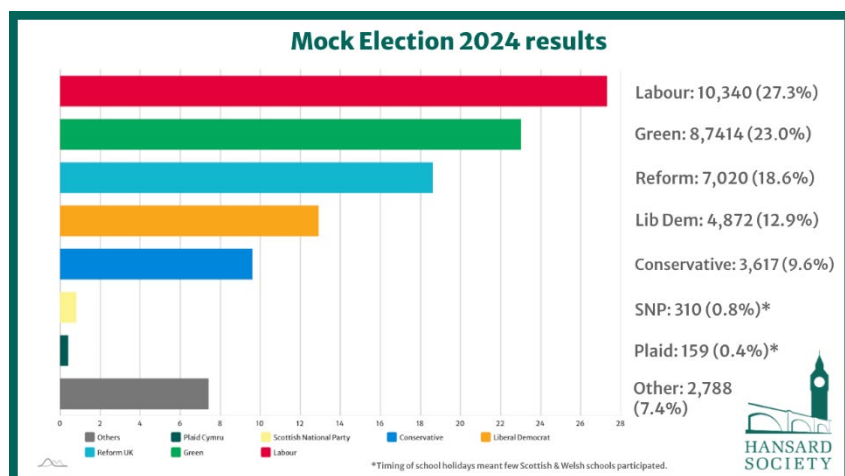
Pupils gain hands-on experience of democracy in action: standing as candidates, writing manifestos, canvassing for support, designing campaign materials, and ultimately casting their votes. Others take responsibility for running the election itself – registering voters, managing the



polling station and counting the ballot papers – ensuring the process is free and fair.

Mock Elections is more than a classroom exercise: it brings democracy to life. It equips young people with the knowledge and skills to participate fully in future elections and fosters critical thinking, research, debate, and the ability to weigh evidence and evaluate different perspectives.

Research shows its long-term impact: young people who take part in citizenship activities such as Mock Elections are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward political participation and to remain engaged in politics as adults – even when factors like education level are taken into account.





## Parliament Matters podcast

Our weekly podcast has been a key part of our work throughout the year, with 51 episodes released during 2024.

Presented by former BBC parliamentary correspondent Mark D’Arcy and the Society’s Director, Ruth Fox, and produced by former BBC radio producer Richard Townsend, our aim is for the podcast to inform, educate and entertain in keeping with the Society’s historic role as Parliament’s ‘critical friend’. We want to help people understand how Westminster works, and how it could be better, explaining not just the political headlines but also the rules, procedures, history and traditions that shape parliamentary life.

Over the year, we had 44 guests, including 10 MPs, one former MP, five members of the House of Lords, two former parliamentary officials and 14 academics. We strive for balance and politicians appearing included members of the Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, and Scottish National Parties, as well as one Independent Social Democrat (Lord Owen) and the non-partisan Convenor of the Crossbench Peers (the Earl of Kinnoull) in the House of Lords.

### January

We opened the year with a special episode on how Parliament makes laws, before looking ahead to what promised to be a momentous election year. In the wake of ITV’s *Mr Bates vs The Post Office* drama, we interviewed long-time campaigner Lord Arbuthnot of Eddom, who shared his anger at the injustice faced by wrongly convicted sub-postmasters. Journalist Ian Dunt offered his diagnosis of Westminster’s problems, while Dr James Strong discussed war powers and the Commons’ role in decisions on armed intervention. We also examined accountability and scrutiny: Dame Karen Bradley MP, Chair of the Procedure Committee, reflected on how ministers in the Lords – including the newly appointed Foreign Secretary, Lord Cameron of Chipping Norton – can be held to account, and barrister Alexander Horne explained the growing significance of treaty scrutiny in light of the Lords’ vote on the UK–Rwanda asylum treaty.

### February

In *A potty-mouthed Parliament?* we explored MPs’ use of foul language in the Commons and the Speaker’s efforts to keep order. Theo Clarke MP gave a powerful interview about her cross-party campaign on birth trauma, drawing on her own personal experience and her work co-chairing an All Party Parliamentary Group.

Our “Urgent Questions” episodes tackled listener queries on e-petitions, party whipping,

and Sinn Féin MPs’ refusal to take their seats.

We also analysed the turmoil when Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle angered MPs with his handling of a Scottish National Party Opposition Day motion, later apologising in the Chamber. And Rob Burley, a key figure in political broadcasting, reflected on the decline of the political interview and what it means for democratic accountability.

### March

In March we focused on civility, accountability, and the balance of power in Parliament. Lord Coaker and Baroness Bertin spoke about their cross-party leadership of the Jo Cox Civility Commission, while Alicia Kearns MP offered revealing insights into her role as Chair of the Commons Foreign Affairs Committee.



In conversation with Alicia Kearns MP, Chair of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee

During Budget week, Baroness Morgan of Cotes and Professor Henry Midgley explored how Parliament scrutinises the nation's finances, while David Howarth, law professor and former Liberal Democrat MP, addressed the role of controversial "Henry VIII powers" in legislation. We also hosted William Wragg MP, who candidly explained his loss of confidence in Speaker Hoyle and his work chairing the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee. And Wayne David MP discussed his Private Member's Bill aimed at stopping 'SLAPPs' – legal tactics used to silence critics and stifle free speech.

## April

April's episodes shone a light on hidden corners of parliamentary life and wider threats to democracy. We unravelled the mystery of the vanishing All-Party Parliamentary Groups. We interviewed Lord Owen shortly before his retirement from the Lords, reflecting on his pivotal role in reshaping British politics when he broke from Labour to found the SDP. Alison Thewliss MP gave us an insider's account of the little-known *Reasons Committee*, which became the stage for a dramatic procedural ambush during the passage of the Rwanda Bill. And Chris Morris, CEO of Full Fact, warned of the challenges that artificial intelligence poses to truth and trust in democratic debate.

## May

We returned to the subject of the Post Office Horizon scandal with Justice Committee Chair Sir Bob Neill MP, before asking whether the Conservative Party was "falling apart" with historian Professor Tim Bale. We dissected former Prime Minister Theresa May's Churchill–Attlee Democracy Lecture and her stark warning that democracy is "in danger", while Wendy Chamberlain MP described her knife-edge success in passing an amendment to exclude MPs arrested for serious crimes from the parliamentary estate.

As Rishi Sunak called a rain-soaked general election, we examined the frantic "wash-up" period that sees Bills rushed through or abandoned before dissolution.

With regional devolution expanding, Dr Jack Newman discussed how MPs can hold powerful Metro Mayors to account. And Adam Wagner, a barrister and public law expert, reflected on lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic and the chaotic waves of emergency legislation that even police and prosecutors often struggled to interpret following publication of the final report of the Bingham Centre's Commission on UK Public Health Emergency Powers.

## June

In anticipation of the general election, our focus turned to what would happen to the political landscape if the Labour Party returned to government. Professor Meg Russell of UCL's Constitution Unit and the Earl of Kinnoull, Convenor of the Crossbench Peers, reflected on the opportunities and risks for parliamentary reform. A follow-up episode explored the implications if Labour won a so-called *supermajority* – and the challenges that would face a weakened Conservative Party if it had to adjust to life in opposition.

## July

With a new Parliament in place, we asked: who will be its rising stars? Veteran journalist Michael Crick shared insights from his *Tomorrow's MPs* project, which tracked candidates before the election. Ahead of the State Opening, parliamentary historian Daniel Brittain explained why the ceremony still matters, while former Conservative MP Paul Masterton offered candid advice to newly unseated MPs, reflecting on his own 2019 defeat.



We also spoke with Professor Philip Cowley, renowned for his work on parliamentary rebellions, about the paradoxes of governing with a mega-majority. And following the King's Speech debate, we examined Labour's early mini-rebellion, its impact on dissenting MPs, and accusations that the Government had overreacted.

## August

As Parliament entered its Summer recess, we looked back on a turbulent week in which new Chancellor Rachel Reeves faced criticism over flawed departmental budgets pushed through the Commons Estimates process. Max Freedman, former chair of the Parliamentary Staff branch of Unite, joined us to reflect on the realities of working in Parliament – the pressures, pitfalls, and rewards of serving behind the scenes.

In a special episode, Nikki da Costa, former Director of Legislative Affairs at No. 10 under Theresa May and Boris Johnson, gave a rare insider's perspective on the King's Speech and the fierce competition between departments for coveted legislative slots.

## September

Back from the Summer recess, attention turned to the Private Members' Bill ballot. Dr Daniel Gover explained the value of these bills and what to look out for in the months ahead. We also spoke with select committee specialist Dr Marc Geddes, who unpacked the politically charged elections for committee chairs.

## October

As MPs returned from the Conference recess, we looked at the processes for electing party leaders: who should decide? And we previewed the assisted dying bill, which was set to be debated in the weeks ahead.

We also turned our attention to the House of Lords and Labour's plans to expel the remaining hereditary peers as MPs gave the Hereditary Peers Bill its Second Reading.

In advance of Labour's first Budget in 14 years, we took a frank look at the influence that MPs have over public finances. And the new Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee, Liberal Democrat MP Layla Moran, gave us an insight

into the challenge of leading a committee where most of the members were only elected a few months ago.

## November

We returned to the increasingly common theme of ministers making policy announcements outside the House of Commons, as Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle condemned the Budget leaks. Former Lib Dem MP and Coalition minister David Laws reflected on a century of fraught relations between his party and Labour.

In another "Urgent Questions" edition, we tackled listener queries on parliamentary etiquette, the history of the Private Members' Bill ballot, and the role of select committees in scrutinising Northern Ireland under the post-Brexit Windsor Framework.

Building on this, Professor David Phinnemore analysed the Northern Ireland Assembly's upcoming consent vote, while political historian Dr Nigel Fletcher discussed the role of the Leader of the Opposition in shaping parliamentary debate.



Discussing the challenges facing the Leader of the Opposition with historian Dr Nigel Fletcher



## December

We closed the year with a rich mix of history, insight, and behind-the-scenes perspectives. Kacper Surdy (@ringwiss), a UK student and Hansard Society member renowned for his expertise on the US Congress, shared how his online following has made him a transatlantic procedural authority.

At the 60th anniversary conference of the Study of Parliament Group, Ruth and Mark recorded a live episode with regular guest Paul Evans, the former Commons Clerk, on the quirks of parliamentary procedure.

As the assisted dying bill moved into Committee stage, we discussed its membership with our researcher Matthew England, while also reviewing the new Intelligence and Security Committee lineup and the Liaison Committee's first opportunity to question Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer.

For the festive season, we explored Parliament's hidden past: Dr Mari Takayanagi discussed her new book *Necessary Women: The Untold Story of Parliament's Working Women*, while Dr John Cooper revealed how a royal chapel became the House of Commons in *The Lost Chapel of Westminster*.

Sam Freedman, a former ministerial adviser and now senior fellow at the Institute for Government, spoke about the erosion of parliamentary scrutiny, a theme of his bestselling book *Failed State*. We ended 2024 with the launch of *Whipping Yarns*, a new series of candid interviews about life in the whips' offices, beginning with Alistair Carmichael MP, who reflected on his time as Deputy Chief Whip during the 2010–2015 coalition government.

In conversation with historian and parliamentary archivist Dr Mari Takayanagi about her book *Necessary Women: The Untold Story of Parliament's Working Women*



## Parliamentary Affairs Journal

In 2024, we published 39 articles across the four quarterly print editions of the Journal and 44 articles online in partnership with Oxford University Press.

Readership was strong, with over a quarter of a million article access requests recorded online during the year.

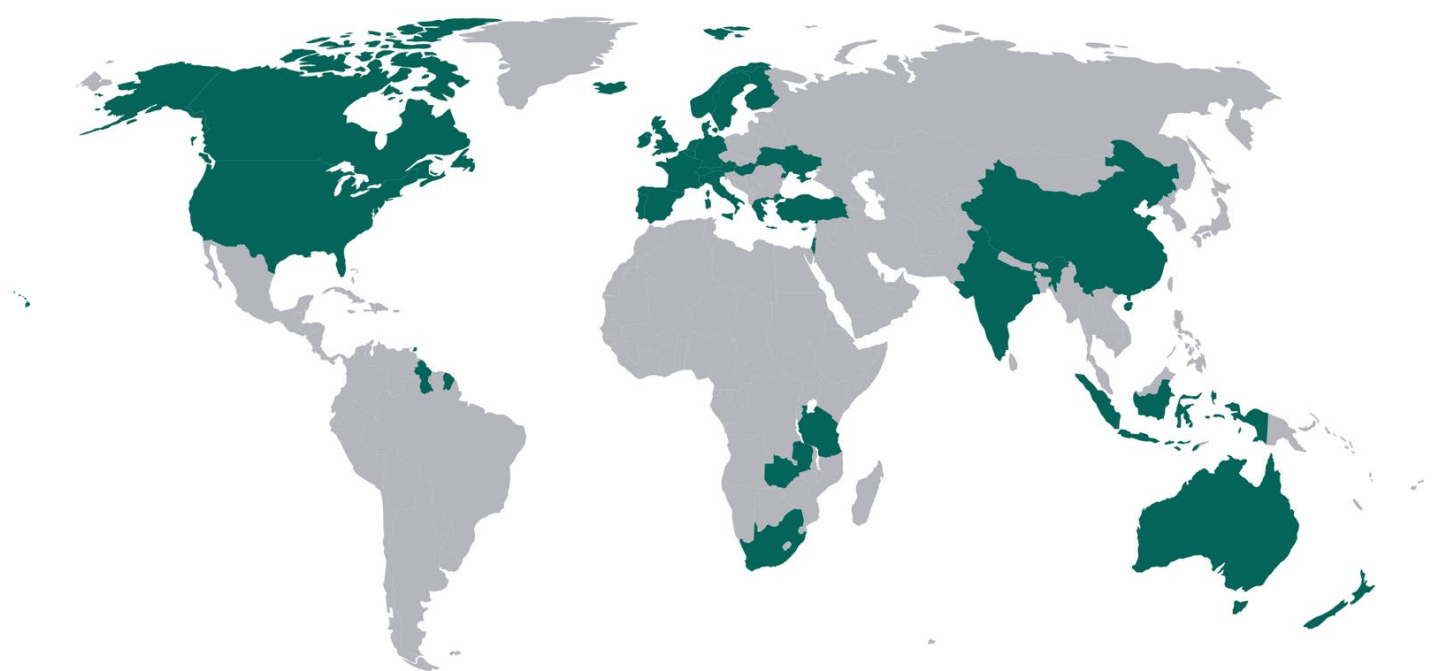
Journal rankings play an important role for researchers, university libraries and funding bodies in shaping publication choices, acquisitions and research support.

Thanks to the commitment of our editors – Professor Alistair Clark and Dr Louise Thompson – and the strength of their publishing strategy, *Parliamentary Affairs* continues to rise in international standing.

The Journal's Impact Factor has risen to its highest level in more than five years, ranking 92nd of 322 journals in political science.

The Journal's Cite Score also achieved its strongest performance in recent years, placing in the top 10% of law journals worldwide.

*87 authors contributed to the print editions, covering the political and parliamentary landscape of 39 countries*



Among the many distinguished contributors, we were honoured to publish an article by Professor Pippa Norris (Harvard University), one of the world's most influential and most cited political scientists. Her piece, *Big Little Election Lies: Cynical and Credulous Evaluations of Electoral*

*Fraud*, examined how citizens' judgements about election integrity are shaped by their information environment and political institutions, drawing on over a decade of data from the World Values Survey.

Four articles stand out for readership and impact during the year.

The most-viewed article, originally published in 2021, examined the case for lowering the voting age to 16 – a debate brought sharply into focus by the new Labour Government’s pledge to legislate on the issue.

The article with the highest Altmetric attention score (measuring online engagement across news, policy and social media) was published in December and produced by the research team leading the British Election Study. It analysed the implications of the Elections Act 2022, with a particular focus on the introduction of voter identification for UK elections.

Among the most-cited articles contributing to our improved Impact Factor ranking was Professor Matthew Flinders’ *Democracy and the Politics of Coronavirus: Trust, Blame and Understanding*, which argued that the pandemic should not be understood solely as a public health crisis but also as a profound socio-political challenge.

A second highly cited article was authored by Professor Sarah Childs, a Hansard Society member, who examined the creation of the Women and Equalities Committee – a landmark development in parliamentary oversight and gender equality.

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## The 2024 general election

In response to the announcement of the general election, we curated a special online collection of articles examining how election campaign strategies have evolved over the last 15 years and how they continue to shape today’s electoral and political landscape. The collection also highlighted the increasing sophistication and personalisation of both national and constituency-level campaigns. It also explored how political parties target key voter groups, use leader visits to constituencies for maximum electoral impact, and place growing reliance on digital campaigning.

Following the general election, where many of the country’s pressing economic and social challenges were not discussed in detail by the main political parties, we published a special issue on ‘Instability and inequality in the British state’, guest-edited by Professor Patrick Diamond and Dr Jack Newman. The collection argues that the growing political instability of the past decade stems in part from the failure of British politics to confront deep-rooted structural inequalities, whether widening economic and regional divides or polarising debates over social justice. The articles highlight key dimensions of inequality in the UK,

including gender, intersectional and geographical disparities, and call for meaningful political and policy reform to address them.

Work is now underway on the next edition of *Britain Votes*, our flagship general election special, which will appear in both journal and book form in 2025. We are delighted that it will feature contributions from an outstanding group of leading scholars, including Professors Tim Bale, Sir John Curtice, Philip Cowley, Rachel Gibson, Eunice Goes, James Mitchell, and Jonathan Tonge. This edition will chart how the Conservative Party squandered its political capital and how Labour regained electability. It will examine the record-breaking nature of the 2024 general election, highlighting both the volatility of the electorate and the far-reaching institutional changes preceding the vote, from constituency boundary reforms to new electoral and funding rules. The collection will provide in-depth analysis of the election results, rival party campaigns, and regional variations in competition and outcomes. It will also offer expert insight into key campaign themes, including women’s representation, ethnic minority voters, the role of social and mainstream media, party finance, and the realities of the campaign trail.

# Our plans for the future

We are focused on securing reform of Parliament to make it a more effective institution, particularly in relation to how it makes laws and scrutinises the raising and spending of public money.

## Our current priorities

### 1. Improve the way we make laws and regulations

We are tackling one of the most urgent constitutional challenges facing the UK: the steady growth of government by diktat, fuelled by excessive reliance on delegated legislation. This problem – starkly exposed during both Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic – allows ministers to make significant policy and legal changes with minimal parliamentary scrutiny.

Through our Delegated Legislation Review, we have developed a clear, workable, cross-party solution to restore democratic oversight. Our plan would introduce more robust scrutiny procedures, address the democratic deficit and ensure Parliament can hold the Government to account for the regulations it proposes to make.

With our final recommendations and a comprehensive implementation plan in hand, our priority now, with so many new MPs in Parliament, is to build a fresh cross-party coalition of support to push for change.

We are working with parliamentarians from all sides, as well as civil society organisations, to maintain pressure on the Government and ensure that reform of delegated legislation remains high on the parliamentary agenda.

Our focus is on presenting a compelling “business case” to ministers, demonstrating how a well-structured package of reforms can benefit not just Parliament, but the Government as well.

### 2. Reform the language, customs and rules of the House of Commons

We are undertaking a comprehensive review of the language, customs and rules (Standing Orders) of the House of Commons. By modernising the language and rules of the House, we can make Parliament more accessible, more relevant, and more effective in serving the people it represents. Our goal is to demystify the way the Commons works so that its procedures are easier to communicate, understand, and engage with – for both MPs and the public. This work is being taken forward through engagement with the newly established House of Commons Modernisation Committee.

### 3. Support the next generation of MPs and candidates

The 2024 general election resulted in a significant intake of new MPs – many stepping into Westminster for the first time. The House of Commons is a complex institution, and new members face a steep learning curve.

To be effective legislators and scrutineers, they need practical guidance, procedural knowledge, and resources that will enable them to channel their skills and experience into meaningful parliamentary work on behalf of their constituents and the country.

We are creating tailored resources and training programmes to equip MPs and their staff with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to excel as legislators and scrutineers and to enhance their personal job satisfaction.

We will also pilot training for future parliamentary candidates, equipping them with a solid understanding of the constitution,



the legislative process, and how the House of Commons works before they ever take their seat.

#### 4. Build a stronger financial future for the Hansard Society

Our independence is the foundation of our credibility, and we work hard to protect it. Unlike many think tanks and organisations focused on improving government effectiveness, our work on Parliament is not backed by multi-million-pound philanthropic donations or the security of an endowment. Each year, we must raise the funds anew to deliver our mission.

We achieve this through a diverse mix of income streams. Project grants from

organisations such as the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust, and the Legal Education Foundation support specific initiatives. Alongside this, we generate core, unrestricted income from subscriptions to our journal *Parliamentary Affairs* and our Statutory Instrument Tracker®, as well as our membership and our training programmes.

Every pound we raise is reinvested directly into our research, education, and public engagement work. This model safeguards our financial independence, but it also makes funding the Society's work a constant challenge. That is why a key governance priority is to recruit new Trustees who can help us strengthen and diversify our income, building a secure and sustainable financial foundation for the future.



# Governance and decision-making

## Charitable status

The Hansard Society is a charitable company limited by guarantee in England and Wales. It was incorporated on 30 November 2001 and registered as a charity on 25 March 2002. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company. The company is governed under its Articles of Association.

## Honorary Co-Presidents

The Speakers of the two Houses of Parliament serve as Co-Presidents of the Society. These are honorary positions reflecting the Society's unique 'critical friend' relationship with the Westminster Parliament, and the Society's commitment to non-partisanship. The Speakers are supportive of the work of the Society, but they have no formal role in or responsibility for the administration, governance or activities of the Charity.

## Board of Trustees

Legal responsibility for the management and stewardship of the Hansard Society is vested in the Board of Trustees. Day-to-day management of the Charity is delegated to the Director.

The Board of Trustees meets four times per year; additional meetings take place if required. The Society does not operate standing sub-committees but convenes these from time to time where additional Board oversight is required.

The Director of the Society attends meetings of the Board of Trustees and provides regular reports on the work of the Society. Other staff may attend Board meetings as appropriate depending on the agenda.

## Recruitment

Trustees are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The Chair and Treasurer are appointed on a yearly basis at the Annual General Meeting. Other members of the Board of Trustees are appointed for a term of three years, after

which they may put themselves forward for reappointment for a further three-year term. In some circumstances, Trustees may be co-opted for a further period.

New Trustees are recruited with the intention of securing a range of views, interests and perspectives. In addition to public advertisements for new Trustees, wide networks are consulted, including those of our stakeholders, who represent the public, private, statutory and charitable sectors, and all the major political parties. As with staff, we select potential Trustees for interview through a blind review of (i) responses to a series of questions relevant to the role and (ii) their CV. To minimise bias, our assessment process is anonymised up to and including the shortlisting stage.

Following their appointment, new Trustees have an induction meeting with the Chair and Director and then meet with other members of staff to discuss their particular areas of work. They are also provided with an induction pack containing information about the Society and their responsibilities as Trustees, including charity law and governance issues.

## Conflicts of interest

Given the nature of the organisation, the Society's Board includes members who serve in Parliament, are involved in politics and government, and who are generally well-connected with many other organisations and individuals in wider civil society in both the private and public sectors.

This poses a conflict-of-interest risk that must be managed. The Society thus has a Conflict-of-Interest Policy governing the Board of Trustees.

All Trustees must make a declaration of interests annually, and new Trustees must make a declaration on their appointment to the Board and prior to attendance at their first meeting. Declaration of interests is a standing agenda item at all Board meetings.



## Staff and volunteers

The senior management team of the Charity in 2024 comprised the Director, Dr Ruth Fox. The Society employed an average of 4.1 members of staff compared to 3.8 in 2023.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for deciding the staff remuneration policy which they review regularly at Board meetings. Its implementation is delegated to the Director.

Salary levels are set in relation to the skills and experience that are required to enable the Charity to carry out its work.

In addition to directly employed staff the Society employs freelancers on time-limited contracts to deliver certain projects, for example the co-host and producer of our Parliament Matters podcast.

## Operational support

A range of core services are contracted externally. Most notably, accounting services are provided by JS2, IT support is provided by

Cheeky Munkey, and HR advice is provided by HR Services. The Society also subscribes externally to provide an Employee Assistance Programme for all staff.

## Membership

Membership of the Society is open to members of the public, who can join as ordinary members or as members who in addition subscribe to our journal, *Parliamentary Affairs*. Members of Parliament can join as parliamentary patrons.

The Society offers a concessionary membership tier for under-30s, students, the unwaged receiving welfare benefits, and those who are retired on a low income. Recognising that some people face financial barriers to political engagement and participation, we hope this discounted membership will allow more people to support our work championing the cause of parliamentary democracy.



The audience, including journalist Andrew Marr, listens to the Rt Hon Theresa May MP give the inaugural Churchill–Attlee Democracy Lecture, Westminster Central Hall, 14 May 2024  
Credit: Hansard Society / Roger Harris

## Financial overview

The financial statements contained in this report are prepared in accordance with the FRS 102 Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities', applicable accounting standards and the Companies Act 2006.

### Income

Total income for 2024 was £354,518, an increase of £81,103 on 2023. Income was derived predominantly from grants to support the Society's charitable activities, and publications, amounting to £340,215 in total (compared to £264,403 in 2023).

### Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was £297,684 (compared to £316,247 in 2023). The Society thus had a net surplus of £56,834 in the year, compared to a net deficit of £42,832 in 2023.

### Balance sheet

The current funds position shows £28,629 held in restricted funds (compared to £34,403 last year) and a further £134,566 held in the general fund (compared to £71,958 in 2023). The net current assets are £163,195 (compared to £106,361 the previous year).

### Reserves policy

The Society's Trustees ensure the overall health of the Charity by managing its free reserves to ensure the organisation can withstand short-term financial risks and adverse events that may damage some or all of the Society's areas of work.

With no endowment or substantial assets, the Society is dependent on income from project grants, membership subscriptions, Statutory Instrument Tracker® subscriptions, training programmes, publications, and donations. The Charity therefore needs to manage the financial risks inherent in a model in which income is subject to fluctuation from year to year.

The Society's reserves policy is currently set at a minimum of three months' core operational expenditure, or £76,002. The Society has

spent down its reserves since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 to support the transition to a new funding model following the closure of the Scholars Programme. The reserves policy is reviewed on a yearly basis.

### Grant funding

We are grateful to the following grant bodies for their support.

The Legal Education Foundation (LEF) has continued to provide ongoing financial support for our research work on delegated legislation – in 2024 the Society received £49,091 in grant funding from them for this purpose.

The Society received £77,444 from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust as the second tranche of a three-year restricted grant to support the case for parliamentary reform, and to support the training of new MPs in legislative and related procedures.

A further £19,067 was received from the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust towards the work reviewing the customs, language and rules of the House of Commons.

### Financial risks

The most significant financial risks facing the Society are:

- economic downturn impacting on Society-wide activity;
- forecast income from our journal not realised;
- inadequate reserves and cashflow; and
- inadequate non-project-related funding.

The Board reviews the financial plans at each meeting and manages the significant risks accordingly through income generation

pipelines, budgetary controls, and management of reserves to ensure that the organisation lives within its means.

## **Financial outlook**

The Hansard Society's overall financial position has been weaker in recent years due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the loss of our international Scholars Programme which for decades was a source of core, unrestricted income generation for the organisation.

Throughout 2024 regular financial monitoring and scenario planning was undertaken to identify measures that might be required to maintain a secure financial position while continuing to invest in core activities to meet the Society's charitable objectives.

A smaller surplus in 2025 has been budgeted for to facilitate cost of living salary increases for staff, investment to refresh our IT equipment and funding of core activities such as the Parliament Matters podcast which are not supported by project grants.

## **Going concern**

Taking into account existing plans, the Society's reserves position, and confirmed income and expenditure, the Trustees are of the opinion that the Charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities. They are therefore satisfied that the Charity is a financially viable organisation – a 'going concern' – that can continue operating for the next 12 months (from August 2025, when the assessment was made).

## **Fundraising**

The Society is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and complies with all the relevant standards set out in the Code of Fundraising Practice. We did not undertake any work in the year with fundraising companies.

# Key risks

## Risk management

The Hansard Society maintains a comprehensive risk register to monitor and manage the key risks and uncertainties that could significantly affect its ability to deliver its charitable objectives.

While risk can never be eliminated entirely, the Board’s priority is to reduce exposure to acceptable levels. At times, however, higher-risk options may arise that could advance the Society’s mission. In such cases, the Board seeks to balance potential benefits with the risks involved.

The Board of Trustees formally reviews the full risk register at least twice a year. Between these reviews, any significant change – whether an increase or decrease in a risk rating – is reported to the Board for discussion and, where necessary, further action.

Risks are assessed across six categories:

- (i) operational;
- (ii) financial;
- (iii) strategic;
- (iv) reputational;
- (v) occupational health; and
- (vi) legal and regulatory matters.

Each risk is scored from 1 to 5 for both *impact* and *likelihood* (1 = minimal/remote; 5 = extreme/highly likely). The combined score (impact multiplied by likelihood) determines the overall rating:

- 21+ (an ‘alarm bell’ risk): requires immediate action; potential existential threat;
- 16–20 (a ‘priority’ risk): requires comprehensive mitigation and monthly monitoring;
- 11–15 (an ‘important’ risk): adequate mitigation in place; monitored quarterly;
- 6–10 (a ‘watchlist’ risk): reviewed quarterly; mitigated if resources allow; and
- 0–5 (a ‘managed’ risk): reviewed quarterly for changes.

The Trustees confirm that, at present, no risks fall into the ‘alarm bell’ category.

Six risks are rated as a ‘priority’. The principal risks and uncertainties remain unchanged from the previous year.

## Key risks identified by the Society were:

Risk	Mitigation / Commentary
Operational	
Temporary loss of key staff	
In a small organisation the unplanned loss of key personnel, even for a short period of time, can have a significant impact on delivery of work.	The Society’s staff work to ensure that processes are clearly structured and well documented, with cross-training provided wherever feasible. However, given the small size of the team, the risk of disruption from unplanned or unavoidable staff absences remains high.

Risk	Mitigation / Commentary
<b>Financial</b>	
<b>Inadequate reserves and cashflow</b>	
<p>The Society's reserves policy stands at three months of core operational expenditure. This policy is kept under review by Trustees. Despite the difficulties and financial losses incurred in the years since the start of the pandemic the Society's reserves have been maintained at just above the three-month requirement.</p>	<p>Further progress is required to deliver the Society's financial turnaround plan in full, but the combination of cost-control measures and income generation activities is beginning to show results. 2024 marked the first year since the pandemic in which the Society achieved a year-end financial surplus. As a result, the general fund closed the year with reserves equivalent to 4.8 months of total expenditure. Cashflow pressures remain infrequent, as a significant proportion of the Society's income – most notably the contribution from Oxford University Press for <i>Parliamentary Affairs</i> – is received in advance. Certain grant income is also paid ahead of delivery, either quarterly or annually, which further supports liquidity.</p>
<b>Financial</b>	
<b>Health of the economy impacting on Society-wide activity</b>	
<p>The economic context (particularly inflation, the rising cost of living and a decline in business confidence) is not an ideal environment in which to generate discretionary income.</p>	<p>The Society's income generation strategy is focused on diversifying revenue streams, with particular emphasis on opportunities that can provide recurring annual income. Membership growth has begun to show progress, although subscriptions to the SI Tracker remained broadly unchanged in 2024. Work also continues to develop the Society's procedural training programmes. Efforts to engage high-net-worth individuals with an interest in politics and Parliament were initiated during the year but were disrupted by external events. A ministerial reshuffle required the cancellation of a planned fundraising lunch, while the earlier-than-expected general election led to the cancellation of another fundraising event involving two former party leaders.</p>
<b>Financial</b>	
<b>Forecast income from <i>Parliamentary Affairs</i> is not realised</b>	
<p>Two potential risks to <i>Parliamentary Affairs</i> journal income have been identified by the Society in discussions with our publisher, Oxford University Press (OUP): a reduction in institutional subscriptions arising from financial pressures on universities; and a reduction in income as a result of open access publishing over the next few years.</p>	<p>The journal retains a strong subscriber base, supported by its inclusion in OUP consortia sales. The continued growth of its Impact Factor strengthens this position and is expected to sustain demand. To date, the anticipated financial impact of open access publishing has not materialised. At the end of 2024, the Society agreed to renew its partnership with OUP on the same financial terms, securing this core income stream for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2030.</p>



Risk	Mitigation / Commentary
<b>Occupational health</b>	
<b>Health problems – e.g. flu, viruses – leading to loss of key staff at key moments</b>	
<p>Given the Society has a very small team, the potential impact of illness resulting in one or more members of staff being absent at short notice is disproportionately high.</p>	<p>Absence due to sickness remained low throughout 2024. However, in the first quarter of 2025 levels of illness increased significantly. Despite this, the Society was able to deliver almost all planned activities, except for public events. Staff are required not to attend the office if they – or members of their household – have Covid and are also discouraged from working onsite if experiencing cold or similar symptoms, to minimise the risk of transmission. All staff are equipped with the IT systems and software necessary to work remotely, and work planning considers the potential impact of staff absence on projects. To support resilience, processes are carefully structured and documented, and cross-training is implemented where feasible, particularly for key activities such as maintaining the SI Tracker and producing the weekly Bulletin and podcast.</p>
<b>Strategic</b>	
<b>Changes in membership of the Board leading to a loss of key skills / knowledge</b>	
<p>A loss of Trustees can have a detrimental impact on institutional knowledge but if unplanned and unexpected it can also give rise to unanticipated recruitment costs, with implications for staff time and wider Society resources.</p>	<p>Succession planning is a priority for the Board. Trustees' terms of office are reviewed considering their plans for the following 12–18 months. In exceptional circumstances, where the expiry of a Trustee's term would risk the loss of critical skills or institutional knowledge, the Board may co-opt that individual for a further period. Several Trustees are now approaching the end of their term in office. To ensure continuity and renewal, the Society has begun recruiting a pipeline of new Trustees to join over a managed transition period. Recruitment is focused on strengthening expertise in three priority areas identified through a skills audit: charitable fundraising (e.g. cultivating high-net-worth donors or running successful online small-donor campaigns); digital communications and engagement (especially through social media); or building stakeholder partnerships (e.g. securing sponsorships for events or projects).</p>

## Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also Directors of the Hansard Society for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company and charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the 'going concern' basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and group and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. So far as each of the Trustees is aware at the time the report is approved:

- there is no relevant information of which the charitable company's independent examiner is unaware; and
- Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the independent examiner is aware of that information.

The report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

## Approval

Approved by the Trustees on 2 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



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The Rt Hon the Baroness Taylor of Bolton (Chair)

## Independent Examiner's report

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Hansard Society for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 34 to 48.

### Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act").

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charitable company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination I have followed the requirements of the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

### Independent Examiner's statement

Since the charity's income is in excess of £250,000, its examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination by virtue of my membership of the Association of Accounting Technicians which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



2 September 2025

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**Andrew M Wells FMAAT**  
**Counterculture Partnership LLP**  
23 St Leonards Road, Bexhill, East Sussex, TN40 1HH

# **Financial statements**

# Statement of financial activities

Incorporating an income and expenditure account for the year ended  
31 December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
<b>INCOME</b>					
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	14,303	-	14,303	9,008
Charitable activities	4	194,613	145,602	340,215	264,403
Investments:					
bank interest		-	-	-	4
Other income		-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>208,916</b>	<b>145,602</b>	<b>354,518</b>	<b>273,415</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities		146,308	151,376	297,684	316,247
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	5	<b>146,308</b>	<b>151,376</b>	<b>297,684</b>	<b>316,247</b>
Net (expenditure) and Net movement in funds		<b>62,608</b>	<b>(5,774)</b>	<b>56,834</b>	<b>(42,832)</b>
Balances brought forward		<b>71,958</b>	<b>34,403</b>	<b>106,361</b>	<b>149,193</b>
<b>Balances carried forward</b>		<b>134,566</b>	<b>28,629</b>	<b>163,195</b>	<b>106,361</b>

There are no recognised gains or losses other than those shown in the Statement of Financial Activities.

All income and expenditure in each of the above two years derive from continuing activities.

# Balance sheet

As at 31 December 2024 – Company number 04332105

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Intangible assets	8		-		-
Tangible assets	9		-		879
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	10	47,791		15,817	
Cash at bank and in hand		164,033		139,067	
		<u>211,824</u>		<u>154,884</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(48,629)		(49,402)	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<u>163,195</u>		<u>105,482</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<u><u>163,195</u></u>		<u><u>106,361</u></u>
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Restricted funds	12		28,629		34,403
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	12	-		879	
General fund	12	134,566		71,079	
			<u>134,566</u>		<u>71,958</u>
			<u><u>163,195</u></u>		<u><u>106,361</u></u>

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 December 2024. No member of the company has deposited a notice, pursuant to section 476, requiring an audit of these financial statements. The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime. They were approved, and authorised for issue, by the Directors on 2 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

The Rt Hon the Baroness Taylor of Bolton (Chair)

Shirley Cameron (Hon. Treasurer)

# Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
<b>Cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>				
Net movement in funds	56,834		(42,832)	
Add back depreciation and amortisation	879		1,558	
Less investment income	-		(4)	
Decrease in debtors	(31,974)		71,435	
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(773)		23,900	
<b>Net cash (used in) operating activities</b>		24,966		54,057
<b>Cash flows (used in) / provided by investing activities</b>				
Investment income	-		4	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-		(1,758)	
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by investing activities</b>		-		(1,754)
 Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		24,966		52,303
 Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		139,067		86,764
 Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		164,033		139,067



# Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 December 2024

## 1. Statutory information

The Hansard Society is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales (Company number 04332105). The registered office address and principal place of business is 36-37 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7TL.

## 2. Accounting policies

### 2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for investments which are included at market value and the revaluation of certain fixed assets and in accordance with the *Charities SORP (FRS 102) Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice* applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), Financial Reporting Standard 102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and the Companies Act 2006.

The Hansard Society meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

### 2.2 Company status

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company include the Trustees. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the Charity.

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of the 'going concern' basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability

of the Charity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Having reviewed our budget and projections in light of the current situation, the Trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Charity therefore continues to adopt the 'going concern' basis in preparing its financial statements.

### 2.3 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

### 2.4 Income

All income, including funding from government, is recognised once the charity has entitlement to income, it is probable that income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies income includes donations and gifts. Income is deferred only when the Society has to fulfil conditions before

becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified the income is to be expended into a future period. Where donors specify that donations and grants, including capital grants, are for particular restricted purposes, which do not amount to pre-conditions regarding entitlement, this income is included as restricted income when receivable.

## 2.5 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources. The irrecoverable element of VAT is included within the item of expense to which it relates. Direct costs, including directly attributable salaries, are allocated on an actual basis to the key strategic areas of activity. Overheads and other salaries are allocated between the expenses headings on the basis of time spent.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the Charity and include governance costs which are incurred in connection with enabling the Society to comply with external regulation, constitutional and statutory requirements and in providing support to the Trustees in the discharge of their statutory duties.

## 2.6 Intangible fixed assets and amortisation

All assets costing more than £500 are capitalised.

Intangible fixed assets are stated at cost less amortisation. A full year of amortisation is charged on all assets in the year of purchase. Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of intangible fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following basis:

Website development – 3 years straight line.

## 2.7 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

All assets costing more than £500 are capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. A full year of depreciation is charged on all assets in the year of purchase. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following basis:

Office and computer equipment – 2 years straight line.

## 2.8 Employee benefits

Short-term benefits including holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the period in which the service is received.

Termination benefits are accounted for on an accrual basis and in line with FRS 102.

Pension scheme: the Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme, the assets of which are administered by Scottish Widows. All contributed costs are accounted for on the basis of charging the cost of providing pensions over the period when the charity benefits from the employees' services. The charity has no further liability under the scheme.

## 2.9 Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

## 2.10 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

## 2.11 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the

date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

## **2.12 Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

## **2.13 Accounting judgements and estimates**

The key judgements and estimates used in the preparation of these Financial Statements are as follows:

- the depreciation rate of tangible fixed assets and amortisation rate of intangible fixed assets (as detailed above); and
- support costs are apportioned to direct activities based on the direct staff costs allocated to these activities (see Note 5).

There are no other key assumptions concerning the future and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

### 3. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations	14,303	-	14,303	9,008
	<u>14,303</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,303</u>	<u>9,008</u>

In the year to 31 December 2024, all income from donations and legacies was unrestricted.

### 4. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
The Legal Education Foundation	-	49,091	49,091	24,545
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	77,444	77,444	19,361
Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust	-	19,067	19,067	26,693
Total grants	-	145,602	145,602	70,599
Other project income: research, education and events	4,404	-	4,404	8,297
Membership subscriptions	6,839	-	6,839	4,125
Publications	183,370	-	183,370	181,382
	<u>194,613</u>	<u>145,602</u>	<u>340,215</u>	<u>264,403</u>

## 5. Expenditure

### CURRENT YEAR

	Direct staff costs £	Direct costs £	Support costs £	Total 2024 £
Projects – research, education and events	110,428	71,314	115,742	297,484
Publications	-	200	-	200
Support costs (see Note 6)	22,862	92,880	(115,742)	-
	<u>133,290</u>	<u>164,394</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>297,684</u>

### PRIOR YEAR

	<i>Direct Staff costs £</i>	<i>Direct costs £</i>	<i>Support costs £</i>	<i>Total 2023 £</i>
<i>Projects – research, education and events</i>	<i>143,288</i>	<i>24,727</i>	<i>145,618</i>	<i>313,633</i>
<i>Publications</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>2,507</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>2,614</i>
<i>Support costs (see Note 6)</i>	<i>37,515</i>	<i>108,157</i>	<i>(145,672)</i>	<i>-</i>
	<u><i>180,856</i></u>	<u><i>135,391</i></u>	<u><i>-</i></u>	<u><i>316,247</i></u>

## 6. Support costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Governance costs:		
Independent examination	1,440	1,512
Board expenses and meeting costs	-	-
	<u>1,440</u>	<u>1,512</u>
Other support costs		
Staff costs	22,862	37,515
Premises, equipment and depreciation	26,561	44,001
Stationery, post, phone and IT	19,291	16,454
Information, research and communications	3,652	8,611
Legal and professional	30,019	27,483
Other	11,917	10,096
	<u>115,742</u>	<u>145,672</u>



## 7. Employee and key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the Trustees (“Directors” for the purposes of the Companies Act) and Director. The total amounts paid in respect of the key management personnel of the Charity (including employer's National Insurance contributions and employer's pension contributions) were £61,561 (2023: £61,561).

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration from the charity during the year. No Trustees were reimbursed any expenses in the year (2023: £58) relating to travel and subsistence.

There were no related party balances as at 31 December 2024 (2023: nil).

	2024 £	2023 £
The aggregate payroll costs were:		
Wages and salaries	119,443	158,323
Social security costs	6,654	12,302
Employer pension contributions	7,193	10,231
	<u>133,290</u>	<u>180,856</u>

No employees had emoluments amounting to over £60,000 in the year or the previous year (exclusive of employer pensions and employer National Insurance contributions).

### Particulars of employees:

The average number of staff employed by the Charity during the financial year amounted to:

2024 No.	2023 No.
<u>4.1</u>	<u>3.8</u>

## 8. Intangible fixed assets

	Website development £
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 January 2024	25,096
Additions in the year	-
At 31 December 2024	25,096
<b>Amortisation</b>	
At 1 January 2024	25,096
Charge for the year	-
At 31 December 2024	25,096
<b>Net book value</b>	
At 31 December 2024	-
At 31 December 2023	-

## 9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer and Office Equipment £
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 January 2024	18,293
Additions in the year	-
Disposals in the year	(8,628)
At 31 December 2024	9,665
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 January 2024	17,414
Disposals in the year	(8,628)
Charge for the year	879
At 31 December 2024	9,665
<b>Net book value</b>	
At 31 December 2024	-
At 31 December 2023	879

## 10. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	-	-
Prepayments	11,424	6,619
Accrued income	30,261	3,679
Other debtors	6,106	5,519
	<u>47,791</u>	<u>15,817</u>

## 11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	13,708	6,274
Taxes and social security	2,842	3,830
Pension contributions	957	710
Accruals	7,629	7,665
Other creditors	2,082	2,105
Deferred income	21,411	28,818
	<u>48,629</u>	<u>49,402</u>

### Deferred income:

Balance brought forward	28,818	4,013
Amount released to income	(28,818)	(4,103)
Amount deferred in the year (see Note 2.4) all relating to services not performed until the following year		
Statutory Instrument Tracker income	640	-
The Legal Education Foundation	16,364	20,455
Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust	-	7,627
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	4,407	736
	<u>21,411</u>	<u>28,818</u>

## 12. Statement of funds: current year

### Restricted funds

	Balance at 1 January 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2024 £
Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust	26,693	19,067	(29,906)	-	15,854
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	10,447	77,444	(88,223)	-	(332)
The Legal Education Foundation	(2,737)	49,091	(33,247)	-	13,107
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>34,403</b>	<b>145,602</b>	<b>(151,376)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28,629</b>

Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust: this relates to a grant to review the customs, language and rules of the House of Commons. Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust: this relates to a grant for our 'Building a Better Commons' work on parliamentary reform. The Legal Education Foundation: this relates to a grant to support our work on reform of the parliamentary scrutiny system for delegated legislation.

### Designated funds

	Balance at 1 January 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2024 £
Fixed assets	879	-	(879)	-	-
<b>Total designated funds</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(879)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Fixed asset fund – this represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets in use by the Society and therefore not available to meet future operational expenditure. A transfer is made each year to reflect the change in net book value.

### SUMMARY OF FUNDS IN THE YEAR

	Balance at 1 January 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2024 £
Designated funds	879	-	(879)	-	-
General fund	71,079	208,916	(145,429)	-	134,566
	71,958	208,916	(146,308)	-	134,566
Restricted funds	34,403	145,602	(151,376)	-	28,629
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>106,361</b>	<b>354,518</b>	<b>(297,684)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>163,195</b>

## 13. Statement of funds – prior year

### Restricted funds

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2023 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2023 £</i>
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	-	19,361	(8,914)	-	10,447
Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust	-	26,693	-	-	26,693
The Legal Education Foundation	-	24,545	(27,282)	-	(2,737)
Total restricted funds	-	70,599	(36,196)	-	34,403

### Designated funds

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2023 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2023 £</i>
Fixed assets	679	-	(1,558)	1,758	879
Total designated funds	-	-	(1,558)	1,758	879

### SUMMARY OF FUNDS IN THE YEAR

	<i>Balance at 1 January 2023 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 December 2023 £</i>
Designated funds	679	-	(1,558)	1,758	879
General fund	148,514	202,816	(278,493)	(1,758)	71,079
	149,193	202,816	(280,051)	-	71,958
Restricted funds	-	70,599	(36,196)	-	34,403
Total funds	149,193	273,415	(316,247)	-	106,361



## 14. Analysis of net assets between funds

CURRENT YEAR	Designated funds £	General funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	-	134,566	28,629	163,195
	-	134,566	28,629	163,195
PRIOR YEAR	Designated funds £	General funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Fixed assets	879	-	-	879
Net current assets	-	71,079	34,403	105,482
	879	71,079	34,403	106,361

## 15. Pension

The Society operates defined contribution schemes for its employees, making a contribution of 7% of gross salaries. The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the Society in independently administered funds. The pension charge represents contributions payable by the Society and amounted to £7,193 (2023: £10,231). Contributions totalling £957 (2023: £710) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

## 16. Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date, the company had the following future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases (all for property) which fall due as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Less than one year	33,593	32,230
Between two and five years	16,796	55,988
	50,389	88,218

## 17. Statement of financial activities – prior year

	<i>Unrestricted Funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Restricted Funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Total Funds 2023 £</i>
<i>INCOME</i>			
<i>Income from:</i>			
<i>Donations and legacies</i>	9,008	-	9,008
<i>Charitable activities</i>	193,804	70,599	264,403
<i>Investments: Bank interest</i>	4	-	4
<i>Other income</i>	-	-	-
<i>TOTAL INCOME</i>	<u>202,816</u>	<u>70,599</u>	<u>273,415</u>
<i>EXPENDITURE</i>			
<i>Expenditure on:</i>			
<i>Charitable activities</i>	280,051	36,196	316,247
<i>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</i>	<u>280,051</u>	<u>36,196</u>	<u>316,247</u>
<i>Net (expenditure) / income and Net movement in funds</i>	<u>(77,235)</u>	<u>34,403</u>	<u>(42,832)</u>
<i>Balances brought forward</i>	149,193	-	149,193
<i>Balances carried forward</i>	<u>71,958</u>	<u>34,403</u>	<u>106,361</u>



# Hansard Society Ltd

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Company Registration Number (England and Wales): 04332105

Charity Registration Number: 1091364

