



House of  
Commons

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## Election of the Deputy Speakers

Candidates

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23 July 2024

# Contents

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<b>Dame Karen Bradley</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Judith Cummins</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Sir Roger Gale</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Ms Nusrat Ghani</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Helen Grant</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Mrs Sharon Hodgson</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Wendy Morton</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Caroline Nokes</b>	<b>13</b>

# Introduction

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This booklet lists all the candidates for the election of the three Deputy Speakers.

The election will take place on Tuesday 23 July between 10am and 1.30pm in Committee Room 8. The election is governed by Standing Order No. 2A.

The candidates are listed in alphabetical order. Each entry gives the candidate's name and the side of the House they come from.

All candidates are required to sign a statement indicating willingness to stand for election. Each candidate's entry in the booklet prints any further personal statement that has been submitted by that candidate.

Constraints will be applied to the count so that of those elected:

- two candidates shall come from the opposite side of the House to that from which the Speaker was drawn, the first of whom will be Chairman of Ways and Means and the second, Second Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means;
- one candidate shall come from the same side of the House as that from which the Speaker was drawn and shall be First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means; and
- at least one man and at least one woman shall be elected across the four posts of Speaker and Deputy Speakers.



# Dame Karen Bradley

Opposition side

### Nominated by

Gareth Snell, Adam Jogee, Tonia Antoniazzi, David Davis, Chris Law, Dame Diana Johnson, Mr Alistair Carmichael, Sir Jeremy Wright, Dan Carden, Emma Foody

## Statement

I have put myself forward for the role of Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons because I believe that my experience and personal qualities would contribute to keeping the chamber working effectively, assist all MPs with what can be a challenging job and help improve the public's view of Parliament.

I have been an MP for 14 years and during that time I have served as a Whip, as a Minister in three different departments and I have spent significant time on the backbenches. I have been a member of several select committees and APPGs and, during the last Parliament, I was honoured to be elected by MPs from across the House as Chair of the Procedure Committee. In that role, I was able to help us navigate the biggest change to the way Parliament works for over 600 years during the Covid pandemic. These experiences mean that I know how many of you feel today but also how to help you make the most from your time here as an MP.

Parliament has many functions. It gives us the opportunity to represent our constituents in a unique and privileged way. It provides for debate of both national and local concerns. It makes sure that ministers are properly scrutinised, which then makes for better government decisions. But it also has a role in ensuring that the Government can deliver the manifesto on which it has been elected by the people. We saw in the 2017 to 2019 Parliament, just how damaging it can be when Parliament tries to completely block Government from delivering what the public asked it to do.

If you choose me to be one of the Speaker's deputies, I will aim to help the House achieve all those important tasks. I am grateful for the backing of colleagues from across the political divide, several of whom have been kind enough to say that my calm, approachable style will help when the Chamber can be chaotic.

I thank all those friends I've worked with over the years for their endorsements including these.

*"Karen was an excellent chair of the Procedure Committee. She worked collaboratively and always held the long-term interests of the House as paramount. It's important that a deputy speaker acts fairly, and Karen would do that. Her intellect, people skills and enthusiasm for Parliament would make her an excellent Deputy Speaker."* – **Dame Meg Hillier MP**

*"Karen will be fair in the Chair, calm under pressure and comes to the job with the advantage of knowing what she is doing."* – **Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael MP**

*"I have known Karen Bradley as both a Minister and Select Committee Chair. Karen is fair and approachable and her work on the Procedure Committee has given her a firm grounding in how this place works. For all these reasons, Karen would make an excellent Deputy Speaker who would be trusted and respected across the House."* – **Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson MP**

If elected, my door will always be open.



# Judith Cummins

Government side

### Nominated by

Peter Dowd, Steve Barclay, Carolyn Harris, Jess Phillips, Tom Gordon, Sir Alec Shelbrooke, Michael Shanks, Gareth Snell, Chris Webb, Harpreet Uppal

## Statement

We live in an increasingly uncertain world, and it is the role of this House to provide strong, effective representation for all constituents. For this to happen, it is essential that our proceedings in Parliament are run with transparency, fairness, and respect.

These are the values that I represent as I seek election as Deputy Speaker.

For several years, I have served on the Speaker's Panel of Chairs, and I understand the importance of ensuring that proceedings are both transparent and fair. As a backbencher, I have continuously worked to be a strong, independent voice on issues such as NHS dentistry, foreign affairs, women's health, crime, rugby league, and defence.

This has meant engaging in cross-party campaigns, most recently on issues such as spiking and osteoporosis. I am also a long-standing champion of NHS dentistry.

I have served as the Acting Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons; I am also on the Speaker's Panel of Chairs which means that I have chaired Westminster Hall Debates, Delegated Legislation Committees, and Bill Committees. This gives me the confidence and experience to be a strong, competent, and impartial chair of proceedings.

Every Member must be given a voice in this Parliament. I am committed to nurturing a positive and inclusive environment, where every Member is treated with respect and dignity. It is essential that all Members are provided with strong security, especially in a digital age. I would work with the Speaker and his team to ensure that the very highest protections are afforded to all Members.

I recognise the importance of being approachable, and, with so many new Members, I commit myself to being accessible on a daily basis for questions and discussion. As Deputy Speaker, I would unite these values with extensive experience and dedicate myself to supporting all Members, Mr. Speaker, and his team.

Judith



# Sir Roger Gale

Opposition side

### Nominated by

Andrew Bowie, Kim Leadbeater, Esther McVey, Gavin Robinson, Mr Alistair Carmichael, Mary Glendon, Jim Shannon, Paulette Hamilton, Peter Dowd, Uma Kumaran

## Statement

Roger Gale is the former radio and television reporter, producer and director who began his broadcasting career on Radio Caroline!

He was first elected to contest the newly created North Thanet constituency in East Kent in 1983 and represented the seat until it was abolished in the 2024 boundary changes. He was then re-elected as the Member of Parliament for the new Herne Bay and Sandwich constituency on 4th July.

In the course of a long and varied career Roger has served as Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to two Secretaries of State for the Armed Forces, resigning over a point of principle. He is a post-graduate of the Parliament and Armed Forces scheme and while an MP also carried out duties as a Special Constable with the British Transport Police.

A life member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Roger has worked as an international election observer in many countries in Africa and in political hotspots, including the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia, throughout the wider Europe.

After five years as a back-bench Member Roger became the leader of the UK delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (the PACE) in 2015 and, having been the senior Vice-President, ended his term of office as President of the Assembly.

Roger joined Mr. Speaker`s Panel of Chairs in 1997 and has presided over many significant pieces of legislation under Labour, Conservative and Coalition governments both in committee and on the floor of the House. He is now the most senior and experienced member of the Panel.

Roger first acted as a Deputy Speaker during the Queen`s Speech debate in 2019. In January of 2023 he was appointed to the role of Deputy Speaker by Order of the House, a position that he held for the eighteen months until the dissolution of Parliament this year.

Roger Gale will bring experience, fairness, strict impartiality and courtesy to the position of Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons/ Chairman of Ways and Means.



# Ms Nusrat Ghani

Opposition side

### Nominated by

Mr Andrew Mitchell, Jess Phillips, Sir Iain Duncan Smith, Layla Moran, Mark Pritchard, Preet Kaur Gill, Alison Griffiths, Chi Onwurah, Graham Leadbitter, Rachel Hopkins

## Statement

My Pitch = Experienced. Principled. Fair.

My ticket = Parliamentary Integrity. Security. Impartiality.

My style = collaborative, making a difference and not making the most noise - ‘too much about politics today is sound and fury, signifying nothing.’ As Deputy Speaker I will help colleagues address people’s real problems and challenges our great country faces.

- A Backbencher who has served on the Speaker’s Panel of Chairs.
- A Backbencher who has led cross-party amendments on legislation.
- Defended the rights for MPs to speak without fear or favour in Parliament and paid the price by being sanctioned by the Chinese Communist Party.

I hope you will agree that my experience, values, and dedication to parliament make me the right candidate. I would be honoured to have your pledge and vote.

It is the role of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers, together with colleagues, to defend the hard-won freedoms and conventions that enable Parliament to do its job. This is a grave task requiring constant diligence, and one which comes at a cost. I know this first hand, having been sanctioned by Russia and China for exercising those freedoms - the only female MP to have been targeted in this way.

We live in a time of unprecedented threats to our democratic processes from both domestic and foreign actors. Many of us have suffered severe

harassment, and some of our friends are no longer with us. Parliament must have confidence that its Speakers are alert to the threats we are facing and will work tirelessly to confront them. The security of parliamentarians and the integrity of our processes would be my top priorities.

My approach is, and has always been, collaborative. I believe that every MP has the right and duty to represent their constituents through the legislative process. I have always worked cross party, as my record bears out, recognising that some issues are bigger than party politics. As Deputy Speaker, I would work to protect and expand backbench-initiated debates. With the current makeup of the House, it is ever more important we balance the rights of MPs to represent their constituencies and hold the Government to account.

I have served as a Backbencher, Chair of Westminster Hall Debates and Committee sessions as an active Member of the Speaker’s Panel of Chairs. I have worked cross party on amending legislation in both Houses and served on multiple Select Committees. As a Minister I have delivered tricky legislation whilst being accessible to colleagues of all parties and led on cross party debates and motions that have secured unanimous support of all political parties. I also secured the confidence of my Conservative colleagues to be elected as Vice Chair of the 1922 Committee – a job that requires discretion and lots of time.

I have campaigned on Human rights and sexual violence against women and was nominated by NATO PA for the ‘Women for Peace and Security’ Award. I was runner up to Nancy Pelosi.

Thank you, Nus.



## Helen Grant

### Opposition side

#### Nominated by

Mr Andrew Mitchell, Dame Meg Hillier, Valerie Vaz, Layla Moran, Joy Morrissey, Kit Malthouse, Jeremy Hunt, Chi Onwurah, Debbie Abrahams, Dawn Butler

## Statement

### My background

I was brought up in the far north of England, attending comprehensive secondary schools in Carlisle. I became a legal-aid family law solicitor and practiced for 23 years before entering Parliament in 2010, having built and led a widely respected specialist law firm.

I am proud to have been the first black female Conservative MP and later, Minister, under David Cameron's coalition government. I served as Justice Minister, Minister for Women & Equalities and Minister for Sport. During this period, I was one of the three Ministers responsible for taking the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill through the House of Commons.

For the last four years I have been the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Girls Global Education within the FCDO, championing Britain's leading role in seeking to ensure every girl on the planet has access to 12 years of quality education. The work has taken me to heads of state and governments worldwide and required considerable diplomatic and political collaboration.

### What I will bring to the position

If elected as a deputy speaker my priority in the Chamber will be to ensure smooth and compliant procedure, the highest standards of respect, absolute impartiality in granting a voice to Members of all sides of the house, and fairness. My style in the chair will be respectful yet gently firm. I have no time for those who seek to belittle others and I know that giving new members as much certainty as possible with procedures and timings will be especially important.

Behind the chair I will work closely with Mr Speaker to continue his mission for modernisation and culture change. I care particularly about helping to sustain and preserve Members' family units in this unique, but often challenging, working environment. I will also help to further sharpen the focus on the well-being, security and safety of Members, their families and staff.

I have worked with the previous Speaker on various projects, including preserving and improving the existing creche facilities for members and staff, selecting a new Serjeant at Arms and creating a parliamentary exchange programme for international students.

### In conclusion

If you elect me, you will have broken yet another important glass ceiling, taking a significant step toward further diversification and inclusivity and sending a clear message to the generations who will follow us here.

I am certain I can bring much to this role, and I promise to serve with justice, fairness and independence, which are at the core of my personal values.

If there is anything colleagues wish to discuss prior to the vote, please feel free to contact me.



## Mrs Sharon Hodgson

### Government side

#### Nominated by

Dame Siobhain McDonagh, Sir Christopher Chope, Sir Edward Leigh, Matthew Patrick, Layla Moran, Graeme Downie, Natasha Irons, Baggy Shanker, Liam Byrne, Lewis Atkinson

## Statement

I am an **experienced** member of this House, **passionate** about what MPs are able to achieve and take a **fair** approach to Parliamentary matters. These are all qualities that I believe are integral to the role of Deputy Speaker. To be elected to serve this House and its Members would be my greatest honour.

If elected, I would be able to draw on my 19 years of **experience** as a Member of Parliament. I have a detailed knowledge of our precedents and procedures, which would be key to presiding over the House and in supporting new colleagues. Since being elected in 2005, I have spent time on the front bench in Government and Opposition, and recently served as PPS to Sir Keir Starmer. I have served on a number of select committees, and most recently served as Chair of the HoC Finance Committee and as a member of the HoC Commission, which has given me first-hand non-partisan experience of governing the House behind the scenes. I believe the role of Deputy Speaker extends far beyond the actions taken in the Chair, and I will use my experience to deliver for all colleagues.

I am **passionate** about this House and strongly believe in the ability of MPs to change things for the better. I am a longstanding supporter of backbench campaigns, working with colleagues across the House in All-Party Parliamentary Groups, and am proud of the success I have had. Working with colleagues to bring in my PMB the Special Educational Needs Act, helping to secure Universal Infant Free School Meals alongside the Liberal Democrats, getting a Labour manifesto commitment to ticket touting reform and campaigning to re-open the North East's Leamside Line all stand amongst my proudest achievements.

Most recently, I was proud to support my colleague Dame Diana Johnson's cross-party campaign which secured justice for victims of the infected blood scandal. My door will always be open for colleagues who seek advice on how best to use this House and its institutions to deliver for their constituents.

I understand the principles of **fairness** and impartiality as foundational to the role of the Speaker and his Deputies. All members must be supported to fully represent their constituents and deserve an unimpeded voice and platform to do so. This includes taking a firm approach against misbehaviour which distracts us from members' contributions and prevents effective scrutiny of both the Government and opposition parties.

It's also important to remember that this Parliament does not consist of just one House. I always enjoy working with Peers on APPGs and as Chair of the Finance Committee I have worked closely with the Lords Finance Committee to ensure the effective running of the whole estate.

Irrespective of the outcome of this election, I want to reiterate that my door is always open, for all new and returning MPs. I am honoured to represent my constituents in Parliament and, if elected, I would be immensely proud to serve all of you.



# Wendy Morton

Opposition side

### Nominated by

Mr Tom Morrison, Dave Doogan, Sir John Whittingdale, Saqib Bhatti, Mary Glendon, Ruth Jones, George Freeman, Peter Dowd, Gareth Snell, Jim Shannon

## Statement

I am standing for the election of Deputy Speakers at the start of this new Parliament. We have a large intake of new colleagues and I recognise the crucial role the Speaker and his team of Deputies will play in delivering confidence and fairness for all.

Since first being elected to the House of Commons in 2015 I have always sought to play an active part in Parliament. I have held a number of positions including Chief Whip, Ministerial positions at the Foreign Office, Ministry of Justice, and Department for Transport. On the back benches I have successfully steered two Private Members Bills through Parliament and regularly participate in debates and questions. I served on the International Development Select Committee, Regulatory Reform Committee, and the Committee on Arms Export Controls. Most recently, I was a member of the Back Bench Business Committee. I have also completed the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme and represented the UK on the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and with Westminster Foundation for Democracy delegations.

The Deputy Speakers play a crucial role in supporting the Speaker to carry out his duties and ensure that Members are heard in a fair and measured manner while following House procedures. This requires a specific skill set, tone and manner and I believe my background in business management prior to entering Parliament, together with my MBA will further assist me in working constructively with all members across the House.

My three core principles in standing to be your Deputy Speaker are:

**Commitment** - I did not come to the House as a career politician. Since arriving nearly 10 years ago I have been committed to the House and the representation of my constituents from both the frontbench and the back benches. I offer the same commitment to the whole House if elected as your Deputy Speaker.

**Respect** - It is an honour to be a Member of Parliament and we all have a duty to our constituents to demonstrate respect between one another. As a Deputy Speaker I would offer both Minister and Back Bencher the same respect to uphold the dignity of our procedures.

**Confidence** - Members can have confidence that I will uphold the standards of the House, I will be fair, approachable, and impartial to ensure that the 59th Parliament has the highest standards.

I am committed to Parliament. I will work constructively with everyone across the House, and with the team of Officials who support the work of this great institution to ensure voices are heard, debate is fair, and everyone is valued, not least the voice of the Back Bencher.



# Caroline Nokes

Opposition side

### Nominated by

Melanie Onn, Mims Davies, Mark Garnier, Sir Julian Lewis, Alison Griffiths, Dame Caroline Dinéage, Bill Esterson, Matt Western, Carolyn Harris, Wera Hobhouse

## Statement

Our Parliament is one to be proud of, a phenomenal institution which has endured steadfastly over the centuries. Every person in this place brings something unique and our Chamber needs to empower them to champion their constituents and the causes they care about.

I can bring experience to the role of Deputy Speaker, having served on the Panel of Chairs since 2019. I have seen, from the Chair, the passion Members bring to this place, and the power we have to hold Ministers to account. It isn't always easy which is why it matters to have a team of Deputy Speakers who will be firm but fair. Over the last 4 years in Westminster Hall and Committees I have been scrupulously fair to both sides of the House, and I will continue in the same manner.

Between 2020-24 I Chaired the Women and Equalities Select Committee, working on a cross party basis on a range of issues. During Covid we worked hard to make sure the voices of disabled people and their carers were heard. Since then, we have tackled issues around how to make sure an older population is supported, we have looked at the gendered impact of the cost of living crisis, and made recommendations on how best to support those with additional needs get into employment. Tackling violence against women and girls was a constant thread through our work, and I have been proud to work with Jess Phillips, Alex Davies-Jones and many others on revenge porn and public sexual harassment.

In this place pragmatism and an ability to work together really matters. Whether it has been the work I have done on the menopause with Carolyn Harris, initiatives around women's sport with Dame Tracey Crouch, my commitment to the RAMP project alongside Tim Farron, or my work with Naz Shah on the APPG for Muslim Women, I have always sought to build consensus and find solutions that work.

There is a fantastic raft of candidates to choose from in this election. All of us bring something different and all of us want to work to make sure Parliament is heard. We need to work together to make sure the issues you will champion get time and attention. I know many new colleagues will want support and encouragement. Procedures and conventions can be very different, and I want to be a Deputy Speaker who will be able to guide and advise, not interfere. You will want to do it your way, and I want to help you do exactly that.

In my time on the back benches, I have never been afraid to speak out, and recognise that on some occasions that is crucial. But the role of Deputy Speaker is absolutely not about being outspoken, it is about enabling others to get their point across. This is my opportunity to hear your voices, not for you to hear mine, and there may be many who welcome that!

