

A scheme for providing financial assistance to the Opposition and second largest opposition party in the House of Lords to assist them in carrying out their Parliamentary business was introduced in October 1996. This was extended to cover the Convenor of Crossbench Peers in October 1999. Under the scheme, the parties and Convenor are responsible for ensuring that the expenses claimed are incurred exclusively in relation to their Parliamentary business. At the end of each financial year they provide a certificate from an independent professional auditor to confirm this.

The maximum amounts payable are updated annually in line with the retail prices index.

|                                   | Total Payments made |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Official Opposition               | £226,552            |
| Liberal Democrat                  | £68,278             |
| Convenor of the Cross-Bench Peers | £20,981             |