

[We shouldn't subsidise the new political class](#) [1]

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In 1911 MPs began receiving a salary. By paying MPs it was hoped the general population could independently enter politics, rather than simply leaving it dominated by a wealthy elite.

MPs compensation has since betrayed this vision. The system now supports a new political class. In the 1970s MPs' salaries were comparable with average UK income, today they seek triple the average, [putting them in the top 2%](#) [3] of earners. Not to mention the abuse of expenses or even illegal activities by some of this political class.

Hence the rise of professional career politicians. Consider Victoria Fowler, Labour's 22 year old Parliamentary candidate. [Her \(now-deleted\) Wikipedia page](#) [4] cites her running the Warwick Speakers (a student society) and two years experience as a councillor, to justify a potential starting salary of £77,000. Glancing over Liberal and Conservative lists, she is not alone in the political class. Many pursue power with a bland CV of nothing more than work in Parliament, brief Party Research Department experience or a token career in PR. The narratives about working class links or special expertise are common but seem to have little bearing on reality.

The solution is simple. MPs should have their pay fixed around average UK salary. After all, there are many perks, like a [£5.8m subsidy for food and booze](#) [5] in the Commons, and prestige from the post too. Perhaps they could continue to receive a second home allowance, or basic temporary accommodation to allow them to attend debates. Travel expenses, only from the constituency to Westminster when supported by just cause, such as a vote, might be reasonable.

Rather than cutting the number of MPs and supporting politics as a full time career, MPs should be part time. Politicians should understand real world working Britons as workers themselves. They should bring genuine specialist expertise, not just the skillset of a student hack. This might reduce time for legislation, though the MPs of past debated in the evenings after work and were not supported by a modern Civil Service. Why must every government create more laws anyway? What of simplification and repeals?

MPs should take a pay cut. We need more parliamentarians from the real world rather than the rising political class. MPs should be part time, and driven by a desire for public service not the raw pursuit of power and a fat cheque at the expense of their constituents.

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