



POLITICAL SYSTEM OF GREAT BRITAIN



Let's start...

- The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a constitutional monarchy.
- Britain does not have a written constitution, but a set of laws
- Parliament is the most important authority in Britain. Technically Parliament is made up of three parts: the Monarch, the House of Lords; and the House of Commons. In reality the House of Commons is the only one of the three which has true power.

The Monarch

- The monarch serves formally as head of state.
- . But the monarch is expected to be politically neutral and should not make political decisions.



The present sovereign is Queen Elizabeth II. She was crowned in Westminster Abbey in 1953.



Sovereign — The Queen is the head of the Government.
She makes laws with the Parliament

Government

Parliament

Cabinet

House of Lords

House of Commons

Chairman:
Prime Minister

Chairman: Lord-
Chancellor

Chairman:
Speaker

Ministers

Government

MPs(659MPs)

Treasury

Foreign office

Home office

Law Lords
(20 lords)

Temporal

Spiritual
(24 bishops)

The House of Commons

- consists of Members of Parliament.
- There are 650 of them in the House of Commons. They are elected by secret ballot. General elections are held every five years. The country is divided into 650 constituencies.
- All citizens, aged 18 and registered in a constituency, have the right to vote. But voting is not compulsory in Britain. Only persons convicted of corrupt and certain mentally ill patients don't take part in voting.

More facts about the House of Commons

- This is the lower chamber but the one with the most authority.
- The House of Commons sits each week day for about half of the weeks of the year

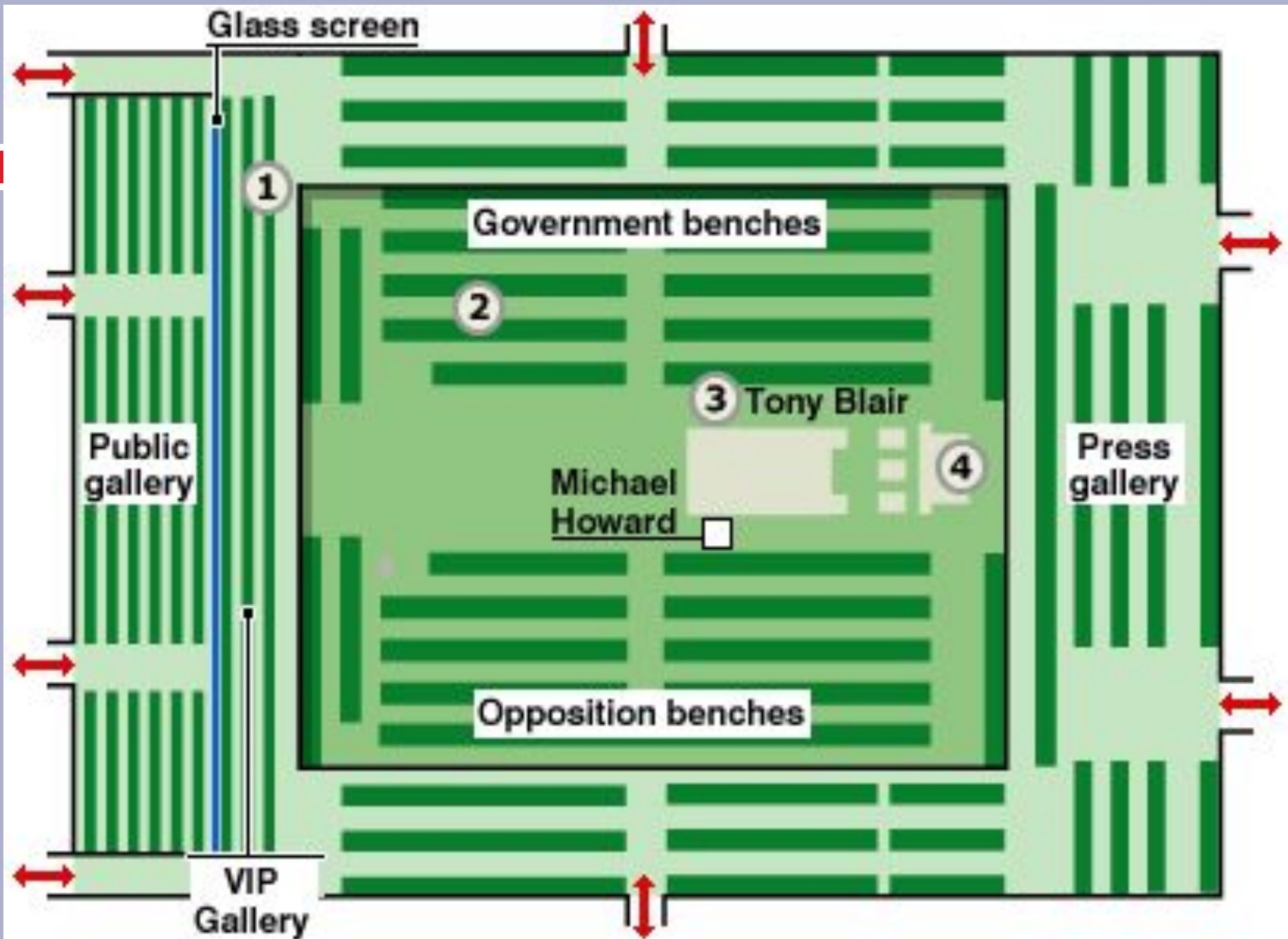


- The Commons is chaired by the Speaker.
- The House of Commons currently comprises 650 Members of Parliament or MPs
- Each member in the House of Commons represents a geographical constituency.

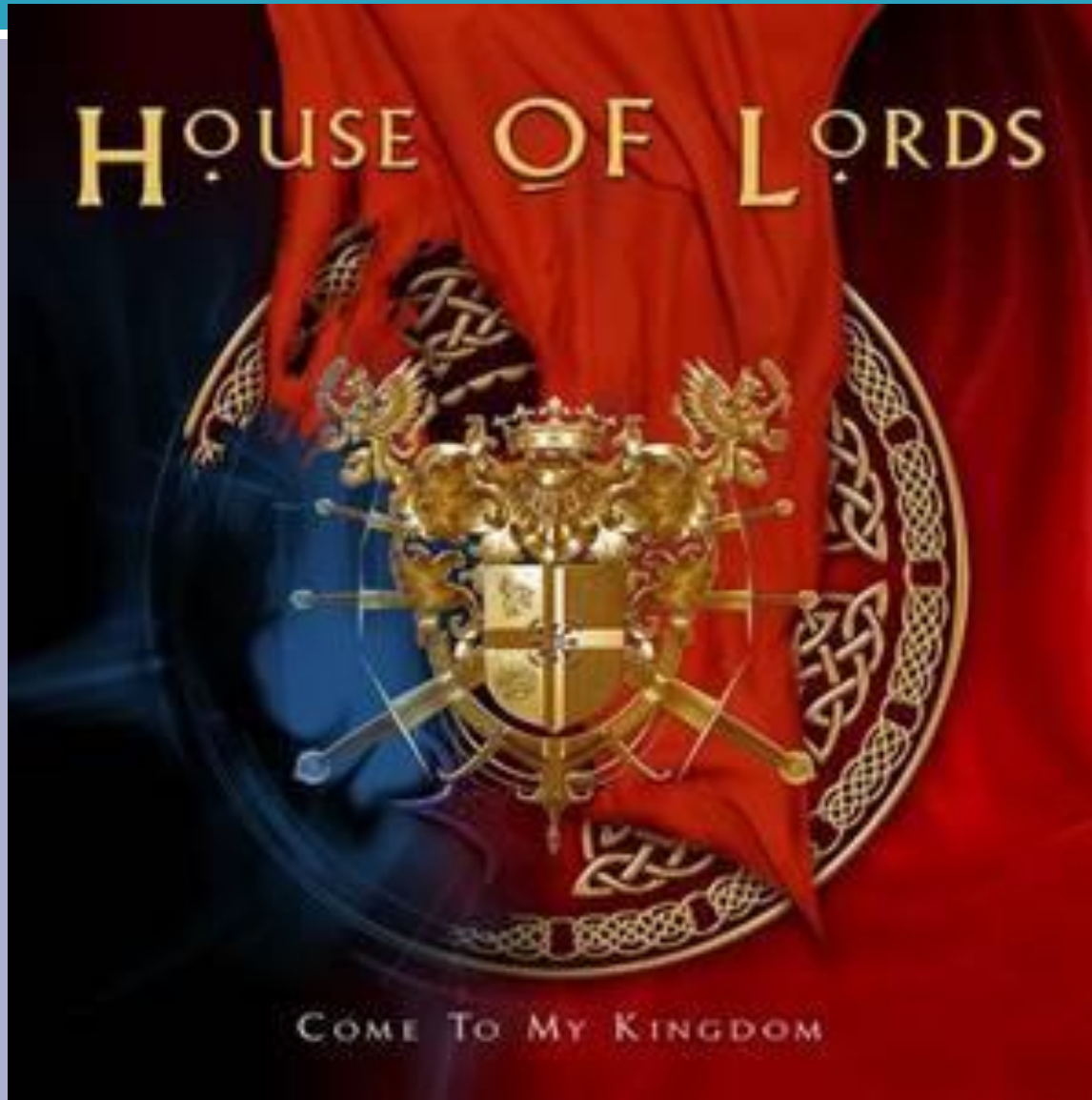


The last General Election was held in May 2010
and the result was as follows.





The House of Lords



The House of Lords

- This is the upper chamber but the one with less authority.
- Its main roles are to revise legislation and keep a check on Government by scrutinizing its activities.
- Since 1911, its power to block "money bills" is limited to one month and its power to block other bills is limited to one session, so ultimately it cannot block the will of the House of Commons.

The House of Lords

- comprises about 1,200 peers
- It is presided by the Lord Chancellor.
- The House of Lords has no real power.
- It acts rather as an advisory council.



- There is no fixed number of members in the House of Lords, but currently there are around 830 members - many more than in the House of Commons. Historically most members of the House of Lords have been what we called hereditary peers.





IMPORTANT!!!

- It's in the House of Commons that new bills are introduced and debated.
- If the majority of the members are in favour of a bill, it goes to the House of Lords to be debated.
- The House of Lords has the right to reject a new bill twice.
- But after two rejections they are obliged to accept it. And finally a bill goes to the monarch to be signed. Only then it becomes law.

**The Prime Minister
the current PM - David Cameron - is
the 53rd**



- the Prime Minister is a very powerful figure and increasingly has been behaving much like a president in other political systems, especially in the area of foreign policy.



The official residence of the Prime Minister is at 10 Downing Street.










- There are few political parties in Britain thanks to the British electoral system. The main ones are: the Conservative Party, the Labour Party and the Liberal / Social Democratic Alliance.
- Each political party puts up one candidate for each constituency. The one who wins the most votes is elected MP for that area.

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- The party which wins the most seats in Parliament forms the Government. Its leader becomes the Prime Minister. His first job is to choose his Cabinet. The Prime Minister usually takes policy decisions with the agreement of the Cabinet.

Sovereign — The Queen is the head of the Government.
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Let's check up your knowledge (mark the statement as TRUE or FALSE)


1. Great Britain is the only active constitutional monarchy in the world.

true/ false

2. A constitutional monarch is a figurehead with no power in the government.

true false

3. Queen Elizabeth II is also known as Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada. true false

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5. **The Prime Minister is the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armed Forces.** true false
 6. **Britain has a written constitution similar to the United States Constitution.** true false
 7. **In the British system, the Queen appoints the prime minister and cabinet ministers and assents to legislative bills passed by Parliament.** true false

- 8. Who is the head of state?
- 9. The British Parliament consists of which two chambers?
- 10. The House of Commons is where ...
- 11. How many Members of Parliament (MP) are there?
- 12. What is the House of Lords' function in parliament?

Thank you for your attention 😊

