

# Where are they now?

**Vera Baird** was Labour MP for Redcar from June 2001 to May 2010

## THEHOUSE What are you up to now?

I'm the elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria – the people's voice in local policing. I have to consult the public to find out what their priorities are for the police and ensure they deliver those priorities. PCCs replaced the old Police Authorities and can give public leadership, faster innovation and stronger governance than that committee structure allowed.

The role also gives me shared responsibility for community safety and for the efficient and effective working of the local criminal justice system. From April, commissioning victims' services will devolve down

to PCCs and we are mapping the need for and current supply of support services. I am looking forward to trying to streamline victim support across all agencies and to making sure victims neither fall through the cracks nor have too many 'best friends' helping them out at various stages of the process. It is a great role; challenging, but very rewarding.

## THEHOUSE How does it compare to being an MP?

Unlike MPs, in order to make things happen I don't have to go through the parliamentary system to pass legislation. I can bring partners together to agree how to tackle a

problem or what is a good way forward and then we just do it. I hold the police budget so there is some leverage, although the cuts have been particularly savage in Northumbria which is a relatively poor area with a small local police precept. We have achieved a lot in a short time so far, and I am very proud that it has all been possible through partnership working.

## THEHOUSE How did you react to losing your seat?

I got on with life.

## THEHOUSE What do you miss about Parliament?

The camaraderie of like-minded MPs.

## THEHOUSE What don't you miss about Parliament?

The crazy hours, the travel and the awful sexism that infuses life in the Commons.



## THEHOUSE Did you try/would you like to come back as an MP?

I'm an elected politician, still involved in public life, serving Northumbria and speaking up for my party. My background as a criminal law QC means I have a depth of knowledge and experience that makes me particularly suitable for this role. I'm still involved in public life, serving Northumbria and speaking up for my party. 🇬🇧

For more information on the Association of Former MPs, please contact: Sally Grocott, on [grocotts@parliament.uk](mailto:grocotts@parliament.uk).

# Guess who?

Can you guess who the future MP is? Try and win a bottle of champagne, email your answer to [editorial@housemag.co.uk](mailto:editorial@housemag.co.uk)



**Here's a clue:** A talented family affair for this little boy, whose great aunt wrote the carol, *Once in Royal David's City*. She may have praised all creatures great and small, but her nephew's still a keen angler.



**Previous winner:** Congratulations Paul Harding, it is indeed a young Jim Murphy

# Caption competition



**Previous winner:** Bill Wiggin with: "Of course you are almost old enough to vote."