

Penny Mordaunt MP



Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government

Constituency: [Portsmouth North](#), South East

Majority: 7,289

Party: Conservative



Westminster

Penny Mordaunt MP

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

Tel: 020 7219 7129

Fax: 020 7219 3592

E-mail: [Create email](#)

Web: [Visit website](#)

Relevant contributions

- In 2013, Mordaunt asked a question on increasing the capacity in the voluntary and community sector
- She took part in a Westminster Hall debate on localism in planning, speaking in favour of allowing communities to take more of an active role in planning applications

A summary of her relevant parliamentary contributions can be found [here](#)

Electoral history

Contested Portsmouth North in 2005 general election. Member for Portsmouth North since May 6, 2010 general election

Parliamentary Career

PPS to Philip Hammond as Secretary of State for Defence 2013-14;

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government 2014-

Past Select committees

Member:

European Scrutiny 2010-13;

Defence 2010-13;

Arms Export Controls 2011-13;

Joint Committee on Privacy and Injunctions 2011-12

Backbench committees

Member, Executive, 1922 Committee 2012-13

All-party groups (office-holding)

Vice-chair, [Integrated Healthcare](#) Group 2010-

Vice-chair, [Shipbuilding and Ship Repair](#) Group 2010-

Chair, [Ageing and Older People](#) Group 2010-

Treasurer, [Boxing](#) Group 2011-

Secretary, [British Library](#) Group 2014-

All-party groups (membership)

Member, [Azerbaijan](#) Group

Member, [Armed Forces](#) Group

Member, [Atrial Fibrillation](#) Group

Member, [Breast Cancer](#) Group

Member, [Built Environment](#) Group

Member, [Cancer](#) Group

Member, [Continence Care](#) Group

Member, [Cricket](#) Group

Member, [Epilepsy](#) Group

Member, [Munitions Workers](#) Group

Member, [Genital Mutilation](#) Group

Member, [Intergenerational Futures](#) Group

Member, [Housing and Care for Older People](#) Group

Member, [Pharmacy](#) Group

Member, [Reserve Forces and Cadets](#) Group

Member, [Defence and Diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa](#) Group 2012-

Member, [National Citizen Service and Volunteering](#) Group 2012-

Member, [Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia](#) Group 2012-

Member, [Aluminium Industry](#) Group 2013-

Member, [Sure Start Children's Centres](#) Group 2013-

Member, [Social Mobility](#) Group 2013-

Member, [Textile Manufacturing](#) Group 2013-

Member, [Maritime and Ports](#) Group 2013-

Member, [Performers' Alliance](#) Group 2013-

Member, [Ticket Abuse](#) Group 2013-

Councils, public bodies

Commissioner, Commission on Assisted Dying 2010-

Political interests

Care and quality of life for the elderly, healthcare, defence, the arts, space

Countries of interest

India, USA

Armed forces

Royal Navy Reservist

Non-political career

Magician's assistant to Will Ayling, President of Magic Circle;
Head of foreign press, George W Bush's presidential campaign 2000;
Former communications director:
London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council,
Freight Transport Association,
National Lottery;
Director of strategy, policy and partnerships, Diabetes UK;
Associate, Hanover

Profile

Overview

Probably the only MP ever to have been a magician's assistant, the first to dive on live television and the only one to have worked for George W Bush, Penny Mordaunt was appointed to assist the Defence Secretary Phillip Hammond as his Parliamentary Private Secretary in 2013.

Background

Mordaunt was born into a Labour-supporting family in 1973, daughter of a paratrooper who became a teacher, and moved to Portsmouth at the age of two. She was named after a Royal Navy cruiser, HMS Penelope. She lost her mother to breast cancer when she was 15.

Mordaunt was educated at Oaklands Roman Catholic Comprehensive School, a sixth-form college and studied drama at a children's theatre.

Whilst working in a factory, Mordaunt was an assistant to a local magician, a former president of the Magic Circle. She says she was regularly “sawn in half and chopped to bits”. She was then the first of her family to go to university, reading philosophy at Reading, where she was president of the student union. She worked in hospitals and orphanages in Romania after the 1989 revolution which she cites as having a major impact on her political views.

She had a varied career in public relations and lobbying, as communications director for Kensington and Chelsea Council, the Freight Transport Association and the National Lottery, and head of strategy for Diabetes UK. She worked for the lobbyists Hanover and set up an organisation for service veterans to visit Second World War battlefields.

Mordaunt worked for George W Bush as head of foreign press in 2000 and worked on his campaign again in 2004.

She has two brothers, one of them her twin. She is a Royal Navy reservist, and is keen on painting and a member of the British Astronomical Society.

She lives in Portsmouth with Ian Lyon, a classical singer, cat breeder and director of an IT company. They have a Labrador and eight cats. She complained that delays in a new system for claiming expenses were leaving many MPs out of pocket, saying she had had to borrow money from her partner to tide her over at Christmas.

Political Career

Mordaunt is a former head of youth and head of broadcasting for the Conservative Party. First selected for Portsmouth North in 2003, she failed to win the seat in 2005 by 1,139 votes, possibly through the intervention of the UK Independence Party.

She had turned Portsmouth North from red to blue in 2010 at her second attempt. She used YouTube for election messages, keeps a video blog and took part in a photoshoot of selected women candidates for the magazine *Vanity Fair*.

A regular speaker, Mordaunt devoted her maiden speech to the Royal Navy, saying the service often felt under-represented and unappreciated, has lobbied the Government to protect the Fleet and has campaigned vigorously to preserve the shipbuilding industry in Portsmouth.

She has called for a Cabinet Minister to be given responsibility for looking after the interests of older people, whom she defines as anyone over 50, to combat isolation and make the most of people's potential.

A former voluntary hospital visitor for eight years, assisting the dying, she served on the former Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer of Thoroton's Commission on Assisted Dying, funded by the author Sir Terry Pratchett and the businessman Bernard Lewis. Mordaunt had already spoken in favour of assisted suicide for terminally ill patients.

The Commission duly recommended the legalisation of assisted suicide in certain cases, and she raised the issue during an adjournment debate on the care of the dying.

Mordaunt campaigned in support of the fans' ultimately successful buy-out of Portsmouth Football Club, which revived the club from a seemingly terminal condition. She raised the issue with the Prime Minister, who agreed that you couldn't expect Portsmouth fans to support Southampton. She also accused the Professional Footballers' Association of undermining the bid by Portsmouth Supporters' Trust, a charge the PFA denied.

Mordaunt describes herself as a Eurosceptic, but loyally voted against a referendum on membership of the European Union, saying it would achieve nothing.

But she was among more than 90 Conservatives who rebelled against the Government's House of Lords Reform Bill, saying she was in favour of reform but that the Bill was "a dog's breakfast". She said it proposed to use a voting system which the electorate had rejected in a referendum.

She criticised the narrower, 18-inch seats introduced by South West Trains on some services between Portsmouth and London, saying many of her constituents had complained of being "in agony".

In 2011 she came top of the female section of a poll to find the "most attractive" MP. She said she was embarrassed, but put the story on her website. She dismisses claims of sexism in the House of Commons as "banter".

In 2012, Mordaunt was elected to the executive of the backbench 1922 Committee, as part of a slate organised by the pro-Cameron '301 Group' which ousted several right-wingers. But she had to leave the executive on joining the Government a year later.

Mordaunt was appointed to assist the Defence Secretary Phillip Hammond as his Parliamentary Private Secretary in 2013. As a Defence PPS she was barred from speaking in the Chamber about the decision by BAe Systems to close their Portsmouth shipyard and move production to Scotland, threatening 1,000 jobs.

On the issue of politics and gender, Mordaunt has criticised moves towards discrimination in favour of women in the Conservative Party, saying women-only selection produced MPs who would always be seen as second-rate. She has also regretted the premature promotion of women and defied orthodoxies by regretting the changes towards "office hours" in sittings of the House. She said there was now little time for meetings during the week and for constituents who wanted to visit Parliament.

Her latest trick, in January 2014, was to dive from a high board in the television reality show *Splash*, dividing her £10,000 fee between the renovation of Portsmouth's Hilesea Lido and armed forces charities. There was some criticism of her decision in view of the threat to jobs in the constituency. She received massive publicity and trained hard "outside working hours", but mistimed her difficult

dives and was eliminated in a “splash-off” in the first round.

The July 2014 Cabinet reshuffle was successful for Mordaunt as she was promoted to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Contact

Address as: Ms Mordaunt

Westminster address

Penny Mordaunt MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA
Tel: 020 7219 7129
Fax: 020 7219 3592
E-mail: penny.mordaunt.mp@parliament.uk
Web: www.pennymordaunt.com

Constituency addresses

Penny Mordaunt MP
379 London Road
Portsmouth
PO2 9LD
Hampshire
Tel: 023 9269 7266
Fax: 023 9269 9578
E-mail: info@pennymordaunt.com

Ministry Office

Penny Mordaunt MP
Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Tel: 030 3444 0000
E-mail: [\[firstname.lastname\]@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:[firstname.lastname]@communities.gsi.gov.uk)
Web: www.gov.uk/dclg



Staff

Secretary

Gemma Freeman
Julia Clarke

Research assistant

Adam Chambers