# Guidelines for Contributors to History of Parliament

The History of Parliament website is home to **groundbreaking** and **ambitious articles** from our team of academics and guest contributors, and is one of the avenues we use to create a comprehensive account of parliamentary politics in England, Britain and then the United Kingdom, from their origins in the thirteenth century.

These articles aim to add to the comprehensive Member biographies, constituency profiles and political history surveys contained in the History of Parliament's printed volumes and [Research Portal](). By exploring our Digital Archive [Link], you will be able to see the diverse range of historical disciplines and research interests that contributors have been able to cover under the umbrella of parliamentary history.

Through our articles we aim to create parliamentary history which is accessible to the widest audience possible. This means not only producing articles which are rigorous yet accessible for readers, but also pieces that are written from a variety of perspectives.

Whether you are an academic, independent scholar, heritage professional, local historian, student or simply have a passionate interest in parliamentary history, we invite article submissions from those who would like to showcase their work on our platform.

With previous guest contributors writing pieces not only on parliamentary, political and electoral history, but also on horticultural history, LGBTQ+ history, art and fashion, minority histories and disability histories, we accept articles covering a wide spectrum of themes, and all periods from the 13th to the 21st century. Most importantly, we are looking for articles which are robust in their research, accessible in their style and focus, nonpartisan and original, and which promote the study of the history of Parliament and British political history more broadly.

## Submitting an article

To express your interest in writing an article for the History of Parliament, please submit a short (one or two paragraph) pitch to our Public Engagement Team [*will most likely be a contact us form on the website page]*. This should include two or three sentences about yourself.

We aim to return your submission within 2 weeks with feedback, and a verdict on whether we would like for you to continue with writing your article.

All external contributions are reviewed and edited by a member of the Public Engagement Team as well as one of our academics with expertise most closely aligned

with your topic. A timeline of the editorial process depends on the workload of staff, which varies throughout the year.

We cannot guarantee that your article will be published after this point, but you will be able to benefit from expert feedback and guidance from our team of academics. To find examples of the style of article we have published previously, explore our Digital Archive [Link].

## Writing your article

History of Parliament articles are usually between 800 to 1200 words, to make sure articles are concise and well crafted. However, further reading and preambles do not count towards the word limit.

### Title
We encourage that article titles are clear and concise about their subject matter, rather than longer academic styled titles. This provides an easier pathway for users to find your content, particularly through online searches.

### Content
Each article posted begins with a short 1-2 sentence long introduction. This should introduce the argument or focus of your article concisely, as well as introduce yourself as the author, which can be expanded upon at the end of the article.

Tonally, we expect submissions to be unassuming in terms of the knowledge of readers. Therefore, historical context must be provided to allow your article to be accessible to a wide variety of readers. Although they are less formal than an academic article, we still expect pieces to be engaging, thought-provoking and offer new insights into the field of parliamentary history.

History of Parliament articles are traditionally signed off by the author's initials, in keeping with our printed volumes. You can provide your full name in the initial preamble.

You are also able to provide an 'about the author' section at the end of your piece, which can expand on the information given in the introduction, including links to appropriate material pertaining to your work.

### Conventions

We do not use footnotes in our articles. However, we do give the option to provide a **further reading** list at the end of the piece which can be used to record sources used in

the article. The style we use for our further reading list, in which materials are usually ordered in terms of their significance to the piece or topic, is as follows:

For books
Martin Spychal, *Mapping the State. English Boundaries and the 1832 Reform Act* (2024)

For journal articles
Sarah Richardson, 'Parliament as Viewed Through a Woman's Eyes: Gender and Space in the 19th-Century Commons', *Parliamentary History*, 38:1 (2019), 119-34

For newspapers
*The Times*, 1 Jan. 1900

Online material can be referenced with links, e.g.
[P. Bolton, 'General Election 2019: The impact of weather on turnout](#)', House of Commons Library (2020)

Archival material should be referenced in the format usually used in relation to that archive.

**Grammar and house style**
- History of Parliament uses UK spelling
- Single quotation marks are used for direct quotes, as well as in-text references
- We don't use Oxford commas.
- Leave only one space after a full stop.
- Do not indent the first line of paragraphs.
- Use italics rather than bold or underlining for any emphasis.
- Dates are given in the format 16 January 2025.
- [also decide a policy on numbers, maybe one to twenty or one to a hundred in full and above that in numerals, unless there is a long list of numbers.]

We use embedded hyperlinks in our articles to link to appropriate additional History of Parliament content, whether that be previous articles, member biographies of those mentioned in the content or relevant constituency profiles (found on our Research Hub). If possible, please insert hyperlinks directly into your submission.

**About You**

Each History of Parliament article is accompanied by a 180-character biography of the author, as well as an author photograph (or other preferred image). For example:

Martin Spychal is a historian of modern Britain, specialising in nineteenth-century politics, society and culture. He is a Senior Research Fellow at the History of Parliament working on the House of Commons 1832–1945 project.

**Images**

Article submissions should also contain a minimum of 2 images (as separate files) relevant to the piece. These images should either be covered under creative commons, public domain, have written permission from the owner for the image to be used on our platform, or be owned by the author of the article.

Each image used should have a written caption. These captions should include (where applicable) Title, Author/creator, Date, Ownership/Source, and link to appropriate Creative Commons license. For example:

> Sir Charles Barry, John Prescott Knight (c. 1851), © National Portrait Gallery, London [Link], CC BY-NC-ND [Link]

**Alt-text** must be provided for any images used in your piece, describing the contents of the picture; this will be further edited by our Public Engagement Team to fit our accessibility requirements.

*Please get in contact if you have any additional questions regarding the guidelines for contributors or the submission process.*