



The key messages of the campaign

Reform of the House of Lords is complex – *really* complex – and there are a number of issues which will be vying for attention over the coming months. We want to make sure that the removal of the Bishops is at the top of the list. The message is simple and it's one we want to communicate loud and clear. Maintaining special places for Bishops is:

1. **UNFAIR:** Reserving a place for Anglican Bishops in our Government is an anachronistic privilege for a special interest group. It is at odds with the aspiration of a more representative and equitable Parliament.
2. **UNJUSTIFIED:** No sound argument has been put forward to justify this privilege. The fact that they have been there for a long time is not an argument.
3. **UNPOPULAR:** Retaining special places for Bishops is unpopular, as has been demonstrated in successive polls. A January 2012 YouGov survey for *The Sun* found 60% of people opposed to the Bishops, with only 26% in favour. An Ekklesia poll found that 74% of people opposed the automatic right of Anglican bishops to sit in the House of Lords, with only 21% thinking it right. In January 2003, YouGov revealed that the public's least favoured candidates for appointment to the House of Lords were religious representatives.

All three of the main political parties have committed themselves to some form of Lords reform in their manifestos – Labour and the Liberal Democrats even promised the complete abolition of automatic seats for Bishops.

We now possess a once in a generation opportunity to strike for a fair reform of our Parliament and our message must be clear: privileging special interest groups is **unjust, unjustified and unpopular**.

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