

Political Biography

Martin Salter. MP for Reading West 1997 -2010

Home – Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire,

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Offices –

Labour MP for Reading West

Won a Labour Majority 2,997 at 1997 General Election – overturning a Conservative Majority of 13,298.

Won a Labour Majority 8,849 at 2001 General Election – second highest swing to Labour in the UK.

Won a Labour Majority 4,682 at 2005 General Election – one of only 6 Labour MPs to secure a majority in excess of the 1997 landslide.

Trade Union Activity

Member of Transport and General Workers' Union (now UNITE).

Former Shop Steward, TGWU & UCATT

Convenor Steward, TGWU

Member of the Trade Union Group of Labour MPs

Constituency development agreements with UNISON and UNITE

Political Career before Parliament

Labour Party Member from the age of 17

Member, Co-operative Party

Community activist and secretary of local resident's association 1980-84

Councillor, Reading Borough Council 1984-96

Chair of Leisure Committee 1986 -88

Deputy Leader, Reading Borough Council 1987-96

Labour Parliamentary Candidate in Reading East 1987

Founding Member and organiser, Network of Labour Councils in South 1986–96

Parliamentary Career

Elected Labour MP for Reading West - 1st May 1997
Elected Chair of South East Group of Labour MPs - 1999
Appointed South East Convenor of Labour's Parliamentary Campaign Team - 1999-2001
Appointed Parliamentary spokesman on angling and shooting - 2002 to 2010
Appointed Deputy National Convenor of Labour's Parliamentary Campaign Team - 2003 - 05
Parliamentary Private Secretary at the Department for Education and Skills - 2005 (resigned over Education White Paper).
Elected by Labour MPs to the Parliamentary Committee - 2005-08 (representing the views of backbenchers to the Prime Minister)
Vice Chair Labour Party (Environment) - 2007 to 2010

House of Commons Select Committees

Northern Ireland 1997-November 1999
Modernisation - 2001- 05
Home Affairs - 2006 - 2010
Parliamentary Reform - 2009 to 2010

Parliamentary Groups

Chair: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Gurkha Rights
Chair: All Party Parliamentary Group on Angling
Chair: All Party Parliamentary Group on Community Banking
Vice Chair: All Party Parliamentary Group on Third World Solidarity
Secretary: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Kashmir
Member: Human Rights, Youth Affairs, Multiple Sclerosis, Rwanda & Genocide, Environment, Far East Prisoners of War, Thames, Fibromyalgia and Endometriosis All-Party Parliamentary Groups.
Founder: Labour Friends of Searchlight

Charities and Organisations

Patron: Downs Syndrome International Swimming, Berkshire MS Therapy Centre, ABC to Read, Thames Valley Positive Support, Angling Projects, Reading Initiative for Tsunami Action, Arthritis Matters, British Association of Shooting and Conservation
Trustee: Thames Rivers Restoration Trust and Reading Local History Trust
V. President: YMCA
Governor: John Madejski Academy, Reading
Member: Greenpeace, National Trust, Amnesty International, Angling Trust.

Publications

On line political contributor for the Daily Telegraph.

Various articles in the national and local press including: *Guardian, Daily Telegraph, Fabian Review, New Statesman, House of Commons Magazine, Total Politics, Tribune & Punch, Tackle and Guns, Coarse Fisherman. Coarse Angling Today* .

Initiated two local history books:- *Newtown – The Inside Story* (oral history project) and *Routes to Reading* (stories of immigration to the town)

Political Interests

Political campaigning, Environment, Water Policy, Climate Change, International Development, Local Government, Northern Ireland, Home Affairs and Parliamentary and Constitutional Reform.

Selection of Political Campaigns and Achievements

- Led a delegation of parliamentarians to Northern Ireland to campaign across the sectarian divide for the 1998 Belfast Agreement.
- Presented with a Labour Party 'Diversity Champion Award' by the Reverend Jesse Jackson
- Led the campaign in Parliament for settlement rights for ex-Gurkha soldiers through the Home Affairs Select Committee and setting up the APPG on Gurkha Rights.
- Worked to secure the introduction of the new Marine Bill to protect the marine environment, introduce coastal access and overhaul fisheries legislation.
- Secured a change in the law to ban the possession of extreme pornographic images following the murder of a constituent's daughter by a man obsessed with "snuff movies".
- Campaigned for tighter rules to tackle the difficult issue of forced marriage in minority communities.
- Campaigned against the proposed new third runway at London's Heathrow Airport alongside climate change activists.
- Introduced a Private Member's Bill to prevent MPs taking second jobs or having outside business interests.
- Campaigned to extend abortion rights to women in Northern Ireland
- Successfully organised the campaign to elect John Bercow MP as the new Speaker of the House of Commons.
- Led the Parliamentary campaign against the privatisation of Air Traffic Control persuading the government to adopt a not-for-profit Trust.
- Co-authored the 2006 "Alternative Education White Paper" following his resignation as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Schools Minister.
- Led moves to modernise the working hours and procedures of the House of Commons.
- Successfully lobbied for legislation to control the sale of replica guns.
- Campaigned against the rise of the far-right and organised racist groups.

Countries of Interest

India, Pakistan, Kashmir, Australia, Ireland and Canada

Registered Business Interests

None apart from occasional writing

What people say about Martin Salter

“He has a really quite exceptional ability to energise whatever he is involved in; he builds teams and creates alliances; he has a clarity which means he can focus his own and others energy and he is relentless in pursuing arguments and ideas. He sticks with campaigns when others might give up and is usually proved right!”

- Estelle Morris (Secretary of State for Education and Skills 2001-02)

“When Martin Salter commits himself to do something he really does it. In the House of Commons he always speaks, briefly, clearly and to great effect. When campaigning he understands what works and then delivers” -

- Frank Dobson MP (Secretary of State for Health 1997-2000)

“In the twelve years that I have worked with Martin, I have admired the enthusiasm and energy that he has devoted to campaigning. Whilst holding fast to his values and principles, he has always been willing to look for and negotiate solutions. He is a loyal colleague and fun to work with”.

- Jacqui Smith MP (Home Secretary 2007-2009)

“Hard working and approachable...a keen moderniser...a fluent speaker with a bluff, blokish manner.... A sharp, clever backbencher... Loyal, but no robot” -

- Dodds Parliamentary Companion

“The success of the operation is a tribute to the organising power of Martin Salter, the Labour MP for Reading – Mr. Bercow’s neighbouring constituency”

- Sam Coates (The Times, 23.06.09)