
WHAT IS HANSARD?

Hansard or the Parliamentary Debates Official Report is an edited verbatim record of the proceedings of the British Parliament in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords (along with some Standing Committees).

Parliamentary Debates have been recorded since the early part of the 19th century. William Cobbett’s Political Register was the first to publish a Debates style report following the Proceedings of Parliament in 1803. Cobbet sold his interests to Thomas Curson Hansard in 1812 and from 1829 the name Hansard appeared on the title page. Thus the report became known as Hansard. As a result of the financial difficulties facing Hansard in 1909, Parliament took over the responsibility for publishing and the debates of both Houses (the Lords and the Commons) were printed separately.

HOW IS HANSARD USEFUL?

Hansard is a useful resource for many subjects: history, law, politics, economics, health, social sciences etc. It can be used, for example, to trace the history of the health service, the economy, political changes and developments, world wars etc. It is possible to follow a single bill of parliament from start to end covering numerous sessions of parliament, or to find every word a certain politician has said during their parliamentary career.

WHERE TO FIND HANSARD

ONLINE
http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/
House of Commons Hansard available from November 1988 to the present day.
House of Lords Hansard available from November 1995 to the present day.
Daily debates are published within three hours of the debate taking place.

Browse Hansard – by date; by the name of the MP or Lord; by Public Bill committee; or by General committee.

Browse the Subject Index for each Parliamentary session. A Parliamentary session generally begins in November each year directly after the Queen’s speech, and continues to the following November. Debates for each Parliamentary session usually comprise about 15 volumes and each volume has a subject index linking to the text of the debates.

- To access an index go to http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/
- Select either Commons Hansard Archives or Lords Hansard Archives. Then click on By date.
- In the calendar that appears, select a session and month, and click Go.
Online archive of Hansard

Historic Hansard
A prototype digitised version of the Official Debates/Hansard is available online from 1803 until 2005 [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/]. As a prototype it is not yet complete with around 50 volumes still to be added. The site has a search facility where the archive can be searched by keyword or by standard Hansard reference, e.g. HC Deb 19 July 1982 vol 28 cc58-9W.

UK Parliamentary Papers website
You can also search for debates from the 18th, 19th and 20th century on the UK Parliamentary Papers website (Swansea University Login required). When you are on the website, click Search for Debates on the home page or use Advanced Search and select the Hansard and Debates options from the menu on the left hand side (de-selecting other options under Paper Series).

PRINT AND MICROFILM IN SWANSEA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

House of Lords Hansard

- J305.2 1930 – 2004 Print vols in Library store – Request on iFind or ask at the Information Desk
- Micro 700 1919 - 1947/8 fills gaps in print vols. AV Room 1 West Wing Level 2.

House of Commons Hansard


Hansard of both houses of Parliament [i.e. pre 1909]


Searching print volumes of Hansard
Each bound volume of the Commons Hansard has an index to its contents. At the end of a session a separate bound index is produced for the entire session. The Lords Hansard contains a cumulative index to a session, which is found in the final volume of the session.

National Assembly for Wales Record of Proceedings
A record of the proceedings of the National Assembly for Wales is available online at [http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-record-of-proceedings.htm] from 1999 until the present day. Select the Assembly you wish to search and enter your keywords into the search terms box. You can also limit to a particular date or range of dates. Click Filter to carry out your search and scroll down to see the results.

Bilingual transcripts of the plenary meetings are published within 24 hours of the end of the meeting; a summary is available within 30 minutes of the meeting ending. Transcripts are also available for all Committee meetings, Assembly questions and answers and Written statements.

For alternative formats please contact
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