

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

ANDREW GEORGE

Liberal Democrat MP for St Ives. 1997-2015

What are you up to?

Transition to civvy street is a challenge. Like others before me I spend much time attempting to masquerade as a normal human being. A tough call when everyone knows MPs are in fact a sub-human species transplanted on earth from a netherworld purely for the entertainment of those who set them unrealistic demands and unresolvable and disputatious problems. To assist me (in this shameless pretence) I am director of a housing charity, lead a Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust supported project and undertake other research and writing.

How does it compare to being an MP?

Though of course I miss the perpetual torment and the unrealistic demands placed on MPs, I admit to finding that achieving work/life balance is more seductive than I'd anticipated. I've also discovered that ardent conspiracy theorists and serial complainants represent a much smaller proportion of the populous than most MPs would otherwise be led to believe.

How did you react to losing your seat?

Disappointment (especially at having to relinquish to my successor my carefully nurtured army of internet trolls and other armchair cynics/detractors).

I discovered that I'm more impervious to these kind of knocks than perhaps I should be? I spent more time consoling what appeared to me to be the majority of the electorate who seemed more surprised and distraught at the result than I was. Is it just in west Cornwall that we have this strange

phenomena of Conservative voters who are never seen until their votes are counted at election time? Do they live in caves, under stones or in remote reclusive cul-de-sacs and never come out, but have food parcels delivered at dead of night...?

What do you miss about Parliament?

Mostly the cleaning, kitchen, security, civil servants and other staff who were always wonderful.

What don't you miss about Parliament?

The snobbishness.

Do you keep in touch with politicians?

I often visit the Westminster village.



Mostly to gloat and poke things through the bars of the penitentiary at the poor tortured souls within.

Did you try/would you like to come back as an MP?

Yes I did. A close shave on 8th June. Apparently saved by 300 voters (which may have included second homers who switched their votes from the safe Tory seats of their primary residences). And yes again. I've had the test and have been certified sufficiently bonkers, enough to do it again.

What is your favourite political memento?

Memories, photos etc of Charles Kennedy. Charles was a remarkable, outstanding and much missed mentor. Troubled and with an ultimately fatal illness over which I and others wrestled with him. I found him to always be kind, sharp witted, entertaining and with remarkable integrity and strength.

Do you still follow politics closely?

Is the Pope still a Catholic? I find that the political news is best taken with the help of a mild sedative, but yes I do. However, I do find it particularly difficult to follow at present, especially while the children appear to have snatched the keys of the family car and seem to be on an unstoppable lurching joy ride over the nearest cliff... 🏰

