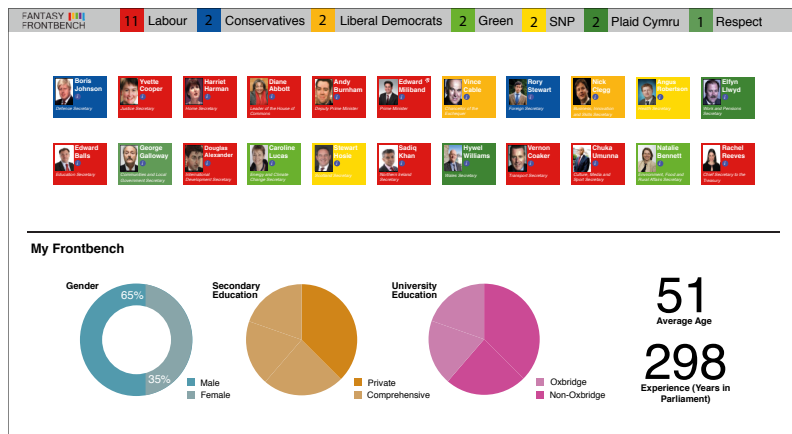


FANTASY FRONTBENCH

The white noise generated by politicians from all sides and amplified by the media makes it almost impossible for voters to know where our leading politicians stand on the most fundamental of issues. The Hansard Society’s annual audit of political engagement found in 2014 that only 49 per cent of those questioned stated they were ‘certain to vote’. This is the lowest the figure has been in a pre-election year and has led Hansard to warn that turnout at the 2015 election ‘may struggle to match 2010 levels’¹, they themselves being the third lowest since 1945. It is in this political climate that we recognise the need for an engaging, publicly available tool to better understand our future leaders.

Fantasy Frontbench provides the public with an engaging accessible platform for directly comparing politicians. A twist on the popular fantasy football concept, voters and learners alike are able to create their own ‘fantasy’ cabinet of 22 ministers. Using open political data provided by Public Whip and They Work For You, users are able to sort and select politicians for their *fantasy frontbench* based on key parameters such as a parliamentary experience, education and voting history.



Once selected, users are able to see a breakdown of their *fantasy frontbench* by any number of factors, most importantly how they have voted on major issues such as EU integration, NHS reform and university tuition fees. This will hopefully aid them in making an informed decision regarding their voting intention at the election. Once saved they will have the option of sharing their *fantasy frontbench* via social media.

In addition to being able to create their own *fantasy frontbench*, the site features a number of historical frontbenches e.g. Tony Blair’s 1997 Frontbench, and policy-focussed frontbenches e.g. a frontbench of those most strongly in favour of raising welfare benefits, as well as information on the workings of government and the electoral system.

Fantasy Frontbench is a not-for-profit project and is endorsed and funded by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust Ltd.

Our aim is to empower voters through information and provide them with the opportunity to compare potential ministers on the issues that most matter to them. We hope the tool will encourage political discourse and increase voter engagement.

David Cameron
Conservative
Age: 48
Constituency: Witney

Edward Miliband
Labour
Age: 45
Constituency: Doncaster
Current Position: Leader of the Opposition
Previous Positions: Shadow Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change
Secondary Education: [Redacted]

University Education: Oxford University: BA Politics; London School of Economics: MSc Economics

Voting History

Issue
Gay rights
Smoking ban
Hunting ban
Same-sex marriage

¹<http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Audit-of-Political-Engagement-11-2014.pdf>