

## The Sussex Hive Active Trefoil Guild - Tour of Parliament 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Thank you, Rishi Sunak, for calling the election, (of which more later) and Sarah, for organising a fascinating, accessible and informative trip! Fifteen members and one grandson were joined on the tour by Jean Kelly, our new National Trefoil Chair.



After we went through airport style security our guide met us in Westminster Hall. He told us the history of the buildings, such as the 1834 fire, which resulted from the burning of wooden tally sticks used by the Exchequer. We then went into St. Stephen's Hall, where brass studs on the floor marked the original Speaker's Chair. New artwork and old bars on windows paid homage to the struggle for women's suffrage. Once we entered the Lobby, surrounded by mosaics representing the four parts of the UK represented by our MPs, we were no longer allowed to take photos.

Given Parliament was still sitting following the election, we had the unexpected bonus of being able to go into the public galleries to see the Members of the Houses of Lords and Commons debating. Rachel Reeves, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, was giving her Inheritance Statement and answering questions.

And, yes, we had drinks in the café and perused the items in the shop - Democracy in action and a much better understanding of some of Parliament's arcane procedures.



Margery Nash