



Gordon Brown
Labour Leader 2007 - 2010

Born 20th February 1951, Gordon Brown was brought up in Kirkcaldy, Fife with his father, who was a minister in the Church of Scotland, having a strong influence on his early life. During primary school he was placed on a fast stream for the gifted & talented which continued into High school, ending up at the University of Edinburgh at the age of 16 (it was here that during a rugby match he damaged and became blind in one eye). He obtained his degree in history at the age of 21, but continued with his education and achieved his PhD in history – achieved 10 years later.

He obtained a post at Glasgow College in 1976 as a lecturer for approximately 4 years before becoming a journalist at Scottish television where he stayed until entering parliament at the 1983 election.

He first stood for parliament at the 1979 election for Edinburgh South, a seat held by the conservatives in 1974 with just 35% of the vote in a 3 way marginal. In 1979 Michael Ancram was the candidate for Conservatives and won with 39% of the vote, Brown coming a clear second with 34% of the vote.

So it was at the second attempt that Brown entered Parliament standing this time (1983) in the newly created constituency of Dunfermline East, taking over 50% of the vote. Upon entering parliament he shared an office with Tony Blair (also just entering Parliament). Within just 2 years he was appointed as a shadow trade and industry spokesman, rising through the ranks until by 1992 he was shadow Chancellor. He continued to hold this post following the death of John Smith as Leader and replacement by Tony Blair.

Following the 1997 General Election he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, a post he would hold for more than 10 years until he himself became prime minister. An early act was the independence of the Bank of England, which set the scene as him being seen as a safe pair of hands. “Prudence” became a by-word for his economic policies during this period in Parliament.

When Blair announced that he would be standing down as Leader, Brown was the favorite to take over, doing so on 27th June 2007. His premiership was continually hampered by a succession of parliamentary scandals ranging from loans for peerages to MP’s expenses, as well as alleged plots against his leadership. To top it all we then had the scandal with the banks and worldwide recession, leading up to the 2010 general election. Labour lost the election, but there was no clear winner, resulting in the Liberals being courted by both major Parties. He resigned as Prime Minister on 11th May 2010 when the Liberals announced they would be forming a government with the Conservatives.

Gordon Brown remains a backbench Member of Parliament for the constituency of Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath