

# The Bar Is on The Floor: We Deserve Better



Let's be honest, no one likes politicians. And it's not hard to see why. One by one, they get caught up in scandal. Breaking the rules. Lying about it. Another day, another political controversy. What did you expect? That's just what politicians do, right? But why is this normal now? Why is the bar so low? We deserve better — leaders with honesty. Leaders with integrity. Leaders we can trust.

We've Been Conditioned to Expect It



Constant scandal, from expenses, affairs, corruption, lying, and rule-breaking, has created apathy both in the UK and around the world when it comes to our politicians. It's become so common that no one really bats an eye any more — but we should.

Take the 2009 expenses scandal. MPs from multiple parties were caught claiming public money for outrageous things: second homes, gardening, cleaning — even a duck house. It rightfully angered taxpayers and shattered trust. It showed voters that MPs believed the rules didn't apply

to them. Scandals like this have conditioned us to expect dishonesty, turning low standards of integrity into the norm.

More recently, the Partygate scandal during Covid brought that same hypocrisy to the surface again. While ordinary people were dying, unable to say goodbye to loved ones or attend funerals, Boris Johnson and his MPs were hosting illegal parties. His excuse? He claimed he didn't knowingly break the rules. The very rules *he* created and enforced as Prime Minister.

And it's not just the UK. In the US, Trump has been caught up in countless political, personal, and legal scandals, from inciting an insurrection to hoarding classified documents, yet his supporters remain blind and unmoved. The sheer volume of scandal has numbed public outrage, when instead it should ignite it.

### Scandals Should Mean Consequences

If a normal worker broke the rules, they'd be sacked, so why do we accept less from the people in charge of our country?

Sure, scandals lead to resignations and ruin reputations, but actual consequences are rare, which was made clear with Boris Johnson's Chief Advisor Dominic Cummings. During lockdown, he drove over 260 miles to stay on his parents' property, while showing Covid symptoms. This broke the exact guidance the government had given: stay home, avoid non-essential travel, don't visit elderly relatives. Thousands of ordinary people were fined or even criminally charged for similar behaviour. What happened to Cummings? No fine. No charges. No investigation. He kept his job until resigning later for unrelated reasons.

As the public, we should expect better and demand accountability from the people that are supposed to represent us.

### The Impact of Normalising Scandal

Normalising scandal after scandal has left us to pay the price.



Public trust in politicians is eroding, and apathy towards politics is spreading, especially among young people. This may be driving the UK's political participation crisis, where voter turnout, particularly among younger generations is continuing to drop. More and more believe their leaders are self-serving and shameless with no conscience. And, who can blame them?

The more we accept these scandals, the more space we create for deeper corruption. If lies, law-breaking and hypocrisy don't spark public outrage, then what will? When public reaction dies, bad behaviour thrives, and our democracy suffers for it.

### We Need a Wake Up Call

Of course, politicians are human. Like everyone, they make mistakes, and that's ok. What we shouldn't accept is scandal, deception, and rule-breaking being brushed aside as 'normal.' When those in power lie or break the law, it's not just a mistake. It's a betrayal of public trust. We deserve leaders of a higher standard, leaders who are honest and accountable. The bar has been lowered, now it's time to raise it up again.

