

# **Parliament suffering from infestation of moths amid fears from peers that their ‘clothes will be turned to lace’**

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Parliament is suffering from an infestation of moths which poses a “serious risk” to artworks and has led peers to warn that their “clothes will be turned to lace”. Nearly 20,000 moths were “detected” in Parliament last year, up from 11,855 in 2010.

There are concerns that the moths will damage historic furnishings and art textiles. In 2016 year Parliament spent £8,924 on moth deterrents and the authorities have installed 729 “moth monitoring devices” across the Parliamentary estate to assess the scale of the problem.

Speaking earlier this week Lord Vaux, a crossbench peer, said: “The mice I can cope with - indeed there are a couple that have almost become personal friends. “But the moths. Given that nothing looks like happening soon please could we put aside some time during a recess to have the building fumigated.

“I am starting to worry... that if i sit still for too long in this chamber I’ll stand up to discover my clothes have been turned into lace.”

The Parliamentary authorities said: “The clothes moths population needs to be controlled to prevent damage to furnishings, including historic Pugin furnishings in the Palace of Westminster, and textiles. The Parliamentary Art Collection, which includes one of the largest collections of contemporary art textiles in public ownership, is also at significant risk from infestation.

“All are irreplaceable, expensive to repair and it is more cost effective to prevent this damage in the first place by controlling moth populations. 729 moth monitoring devices are in place across the Parliamentary Estate to assess moth levels in order that action can be taken where necessary to control the population.”