



Quarterly Report: Restoration and Renewal of the Houses of Parliament

July–September 2025

These quarterly reports are primarily intended for the parliamentary community and are published to maintain transparency of this important programme.

Welcome *from Judith Cummins MP*

Chair of the R&R Programme Board

I am pleased to present the latest quarterly report for the R&R Programme, covering the period from July to September 2025. This report outlines the progress made across the Programme and sets out the costs incurred over this reporting period.

During this quarter, the R&R Boards have made significant progress in shaping the development of the costed proposals. The Programme Board has played a key role in supporting this work, alongside scrutinising plans for parliamentary engagement and initial R&R works. The R&R Client Board met in June to begin its consideration of the proposals and will continue those discussions in November. Both Boards will remain closely involved as this work progresses over the coming months. The Programme remains on track to publish a report later this year, outlining the costs, timescales, risks, and benefits of the delivery options, to enable Members to decide the preferred way forward for the programme.

Alongside this work, the Programme has also been learning from others. In September, members of the Programme Board visited Buckingham Palace to hear about its recent reservicing programme. The Programme Board will consider the valuable insights from the visit alongside lessons learnt from other major programmes.

While Member engagement was largely paused during the summer recess, survey activity within the Palace increased and understanding of the building continues to grow. A number of surveys were carried out, including archaeological investigations that uncovered a range of significant finds. The River Bed survey conducted from a platform in the Thames also concluded this quarter, and we now have a clearer picture of sub-surface

conditions which will inform future Programme development. I had the pleasure of visiting the platform in September with the Lord Speaker to observe the borehole drilling in action and view some of the samples recovered over recent months. It was great to meet the drilling team, who are based across the UK, showing the great opportunity for specialists and suppliers nationwide to get involved in restoring Parliament.

Engagement with the parliamentary community remains central to the Programme and has helped shape the development of delivery options. Planning is now underway for the next phase of engagement to accompany the publication of costed proposals. This will include a range of opportunities for Members, staff and others across Parliament to hear more about the proposals and share their views. I encourage all those interested to take part in these opportunities at this important stage of the Programme.



Judith Cummins MP

Chair of the R&R
Programme Board

For members of the parliamentary community, further information about the R&R Programme is available on the **R&R Hub**.

Activity by the R&R Boards

R&R CLIENT BOARD

During this quarter, the R&R Client Board, comprised of the two House Commissions, met on 30 June.

At its meeting in June, the Client Board discussed its preferred approach to the R&R costed proposals report which is expected to be published before the end of the calendar year. The report will provide information on the three R&R delivery options in development (full decant; continued presence; and enhanced maintenance and improvement) to enable Members of both Houses to decide the preferred way forward for the Programme.

The Client Board is scheduled to meet again in November to consider the report.

The previous [agendas](#) and [minutes](#) of R&R Client Board meetings are available on the Parliament website.

R&R Programme Board and sub Board

During this quarter:

- the R&R Programme Board, chaired by Judith Cummins MP, met twice on 15 July and 10 September;
- the R&R Programme Sub Board, chaired by Lord Vaux, met twice on 9 July and 10 September.

Some of the key topics covered by the R&R Programme Board and its Sub Board in this quarter included:

- Alignment and assurance of the R&R options;
- Plans for parliamentary engagement to support the costed proposals report;
- Proposals for an initial package of works for the R&R Programme;
- Alignment between the R&R Programme and the Commons Building Infrastructure Portfolio (CBIP), the portfolio of projects to refurbish Parliament's Northern Estate;
- Temporary accommodation and resilience proposals under all three R&R options;
- Cultural, tourism and heritage value of the Palace of Westminster; and
- Overview of the R&R Programme's social value benefits.

In September, members of the Programme Board also visited Buckingham Palace to learn about its recent reservicing programme.

The previous [agendas](#) and [minutes](#) of R&R Programme Board and Sub Board meetings are available on the Parliament website.

Surveying the Palace of Westminster

An extensive programme of complex surveys continues to be progressed for the Palace of Westminster. Some of the key R&R surveys in and around the Palace carried out from July to September are set out below. This period covers the parliamentary summer recess and the start of the conference recess which are typically useful times to undertake more intrusive surveys.

HERITAGE VIBRATION MONITORING

A heritage vibration study is being carried out in multiple locations in the Palace to help manage and minimise the risk of vibration generated by construction activity during the R&R Programme and to acquire baseline vibration data inside the Palace. The vibration monitoring was also used to monitor the ongoing survey and other works, happening in the Palace and river over the summer, to minimise any impact on the business of both Houses.

During this quarter three different methodologies were used for the survey, both in parliamentary recesses and during periods when Parliament is sitting:

- a laser doppler was used in 17 high profile spaces to capture a direct measure of the vibration exposure on assets such large fresco paintings, murals, and mosaics;
- building response testing using a force input hammer in 35 spaces helped to develop an understanding of how efficiently vibration transmits through the Palace's building structure; and
- baseline monitoring was undertaken across 11 spaces during periods when Parliament was sitting to capture business-as-usual activities causing vibration across the building.

RIVER BED SURVEY

A comprehensive ground investigation marine survey was undertaken along the River Thames, adjacent to the Palace of Westminster, spanning from Westminster Bridge to Lambeth Bridge. Fourteen boreholes were drilled to depths ranging between 35 and 75 metres using cable percussion and rotary drilling techniques, facilitated by a jack-up barge to ensure safe access. The survey aimed to enhance the R&R Programme's understanding of sub-surface conditions to inform future development of the Parliamentary estate. Rock and clay dating back millions of years was recovered from the riverbed by engineers.



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This survey has now concluded after 6 months. Prior to demobilisation, the Lord Speaker and Judith Cummins MP, Chair of the R&R Programme Board (and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons) visited the platform to meet operatives and gain further insight into the engineering works.

Lord McFall, the Lord Speaker said:

“I was very impressed by the professionalism and dedication of the experts on board the drilling platform in the Thames, and it was an eye-opening to see London clay dating back millions of years and ancient riverbed material before it was packed into crates and sent for analysis as part of the restoration and renewal programme.”

During the six month survey period, a temporary issue arose on 12 June when noise and vibration were experienced in the river-side Committee Rooms. Investigation confirmed that this was caused by one of the platform’s legs dragging slightly as it was repositioned. In response, vibration monitoring and extra checks were promptly implemented. These measures ensured there was no further disruption to parliamentary business, and the survey works continued without further incident.

Further information about the survey is available on the [R&R Delivery Authority website](#).

RIVER TERRACE BOREHOLES

During the summer recess, two boreholes were drilled on the River Terrace, each to a depth of approximately 45 metres. These boreholes examined the condition underneath the Terrace and clarified key soil structures for future design purposes. Wireless monitors will continue to collect data over the next two years.

The River Terrace surveys marked a shift in logistics management on the R&R Programme. With limited land access to the Palace’s River Terrace—due to traffic, safety, and heritage considerations—the project team [used the Thames to deliver heavy drilling equipment directly to site](#). This approach helped overcome complex site conditions while keeping disruption to the surrounding area to a minimum, trialling the arrangements for riverside deliveries for the future works to the Palace.



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Further information about the survey is available on the [R&R Delivery Authority website](#).

ARCHAEOLOGY

Over the summer, a comprehensive programme of archaeological surveys and trial trenching was successfully delivered across key areas of the Estate, including Victoria Tower Gardens and Peers' Car Park. In Victoria Tower Gardens, the team uncovered a range of significant finds including leather shoes, clay pipes, ceramic tiles, and other artefacts indicative of historic activity in the area. Meanwhile, trenching within Peers' Car Park revealed structural remains associated with the historic Lesser Hall, notably a section of wall that provides valuable insight into the site's architectural past.



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In 1801, the Lords moved from the Queen's Chamber, where it had sat since the Middle Ages, into the Lesser Hall. Originally one of the banqueting halls of the royal palace and later used by the Court of Requests in which petitions of the King's subjects were heard. The Lords remained in the Lesser Hall until the great fire of 1834 destroyed much of the Palace of Westminster. After the fire, the empty shell of the Lesser Hall was repaired around its surviving medieval walls and fitted out temporarily for use by the House of Commons while the Lords relocated to another building on the site, the Painted Chamber. Both Houses remained in these temporary locations until their new Chambers were completed during the Palace's reconstruction by Charles Barry and Augustus Pugin in the late 1840s and early 1850s.



House of Lords from Old Palace Yard, 1834 Watercolour by Robert William Billings Courtesy of UK Parliament, WOA 1660 heritagecollections.parliament.uk

MARKET ENGAGEMENT

The R&R Delivery Authority held three successful market engagement events in July with potential strategic partner suppliers for the delivery of the R&R Programme. The Delivery Authority also held a well-attended webinar for potential suppliers looking to express interest in the House of Lords temporary accommodation project procurement. These events are part of the R&R Programme's ongoing commitment to communicate regularly, effectively and transparently with the various markets and to promote opportunities across the UK.

Ongoing works on the Parliamentary Estate

Each quarter we provide an update on progress with a project currently being delivered on the Parliamentary Estate, either as part of the R&R Programme or as part of ongoing project and maintenance work that supports delivery of the works to the Palace.

NORMAN SHAW NORTH ATRIUM ROOF

The project to refurbish MPs' offices in Norman Shaw North has reached a major landmark with the completion of glazing to the new atrium roof. All 144 panes of glass and 36 opening vents are now in place, enclosing the courtyard and providing weather proofing for the internal courtyard space. This achievement follows months of planning and detailed coordination by the project team and specialist



sub-contractor Seele, whose expertise ensured the complex installation was delivered safely and on time. All that remains is the installation of a walkway around the roof's perimeter, which will be used by maintenance staff to access the windows and vents.

Completing the glazing ahead of the colder, wetter autumn weather was a vital programme milestone, reducing risk to the building and allowing work on the courtyard spaces to progress. The atrium roof will provide a light-filled centrepiece for the restored building, a lasting testament to the collaboration and hard work of everyone involved.

Refurbishment of the Norman Shaw North building will provide decant space for Richmond House residents and services, facilitating the planned refurbishment of Richmond House and adjacent buildings. This is critical for R&R to ensure that high quality decant space is available on the Northern Estate for the House of Commons. These works will deliver essential procedural facilities for the House of Commons, supporting the continuity of parliamentary business throughout the R&R programme, regardless of the final delivery approach for the Palace.

R&R Phase 1 Milestones

The R&R Programme is currently in “phase one”, under the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019.

The key milestones for the Programme over the next 12–18 months are set out below:

R&R Surveys	<i>STATUS</i> ON TRACK	Continue to plan and undertake intrusive and non-intrusive investigatory survey work on or around the Parliamentary Estate to better understand the Palace and inform future works.
Develop House of Commons and House of Lords Decant Plans	<i>STATUS</i> ON TRACK December 2025	Develop plans and confirm preferred locations for the decant of both Houses if needed. These will be presented to the Houses as part of the R&R costing proposals.
Costed proposals presented to the Houses	<i>STATUS</i> ON TRACK December 2025	Proposals will be put to both Houses to agree the way forward for R&R. The proposals will include costs, timescales, deliverability, temporary accommodation proposals, and risk for all three options.
Invitation to tender for Delivery Authority strategic partners	<i>STATUS</i> ON TRACK 2026	The Delivery Authority is planning to tender for the strategic partners that will deliver the works for the next stages of R&R. This milestone will take place after the consideration of the costing proposals in both Houses. Work to support the development of the invitation to tender is ongoing.
Commence further design of House of Commons and House of Lords Decant proposals	<i>STATUS</i> ON TRACK <i>House of Lords</i> April 2026 ON TRACK <i>House of Commons</i> Q3 2025	The next design stages for the House of Commons and House of Lords decant proposals are planned after the Houses’ consideration of the costing proposals. Procurements to support this design activity are planned in early 2026.

ENGAGING WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNITY

In September officials from the R&R Programme appeared before the House of Commons Administration Committee and the House of Lords Services Committee to discuss and seek feedback on the emerging temporary accommodation plans for the “enhanced maintenance and improvement” R&R option.

Since July 2024, the Programme has recorded over 330 interactions with Members of both Houses, alongside more than 1,500 engagements with House staff, Members’ staff and trade union representatives. These conversations have supported the development and consideration of the R&R delivery options. In this quarter between July and September, the Programme recorded 40 interactions with Members of both Houses [there were seven parliamentary sitting weeks in this period due to the summer and Conference recesses].

Planning is now underway for the next phase of engagement to accompany the publication of costed proposals. This will include individual briefings with Members, presentations to party groups in both Houses, and sessions with House administration staff, Members’ staff, trade union associations and other staff groups to ensure broad understanding and feedback across the Parliamentary community.

Over this period, the Programme has worked closely with Parliamentary teams to support the development of future plans for the Palace and its services. This has included collaboration with subject matter experts to shape proposals for temporary accommodation for the House of Lords, and engagement on how different delivery options would manage temporary accommodation requirements. These proposals were reviewed by Parliamentary officials and shared with the R&R Programme Board and Member governance forums to provide a clear overview of the emerging plans. Alongside this, ongoing work with accommodation and property teams has helped identify current challenges and future needs, while development of the Palace fire strategy continues, incorporating design proposals and stakeholder feedback to ensure a joined-up approach.

LOOKING OUTWARDS

The R&R Programme continues to engage with comparable programmes and institutions to share insights and embed lessons learned. As part of this, colleagues from across Parliament visited the University of Oxford in September to explore how they are approaching the challenge of balancing accessibility with heritage preservation, offering valuable perspectives. Engagement with the International Network of Parliamentary Properties was also conducted over the summer recess.

We continue to track public sentiment towards the Palace and its restoration through regular polling. To deepen our understanding, during August we conducted a series of focus groups across the UK, which provided richer insights into the drivers of public opinion. These findings are helping to shape and refine our communications and engagement approach moving forward.

Engagement with the heritage skills sector continues, participating in regional skills groups to better understand industry challenges and explore how it can support future workforce planning. The Programme had a strong presence at the National Federation of Builders Conference in September, raising awareness of the opportunities the restoration will bring to the sector.

We delivered communications to raise awareness of R&R activity and surveys, including the river bed survey in the Thames (see “Surveying the Palace of Westminster” section). This included communications to Members and other users of the Parliamentary Estate, as well as setting up filming and interviews for BBC national news on the river platform to highlight the successful delivery of complex surveys alongside the Palace. As set out earlier, the Lord Speaker and the R&R Programme Board Chair visited the drilling platform in September alongside communications colleagues to capture video explainers of the survey.

Tours and briefings for journalists continued, with 20 members of the press gallery attending tours.

Finance

The R&R Client Board expects to publish a report later in 2025 setting out the estimated costs and risks of delivering the different R&R options, including the costs of providing temporary accommodation. Work on developing this report is underway.

R&R DELIVERY AUTHORITY

The R&R Delivery Authority Q2 spend of £15.0m was underspent against the budget of £16.4m by £1.4m (9%). This included:

- a £0.5m underspend in surveys from savings in activities such as the River Terrace boreholes, archaeological trial trenches, as well as marine ground investigations delivering on time and under budget;
- a £0.5m underspend in data and digital savings in software licences, as well as slippage in investment projects that are expected for later in the year;
- £0.3m for marine jetty design savings and UK Power Network (UKPN) utility ducting slippage due to delays in obtaining permits; and
- a net underspend of £0.6m spread across the rest of the Delivery Authority from multiple areas such as lower legal support costs, cost estimating team support, external support in areas such as planning and consent, health and safety as well resource savings across multiple functions.

These underspends have been partially offset by the £0.6m of overprogramming which was budgeted to mitigate optimism in the timing of activity.

R&R CLIENT TEAM

At the end of Q2, the R&R Client Team reported an underspend of £170k, with an actual outturn of £1.81m against a budget of £1.98m.

The primary driver of the underspend was Professional Services (£148k of the £170k), due to:

- Management Consultancy (Business Case and Strategy): reduced consultancy activity led to savings.
- Marketing Services (Engagement and Parliamentary Relations): efficiencies in planned engagement activity contributed to savings.
- Other Professional Fees (Programme Board): certain planned activities, including delaying a Gateway Review which would otherwise have duplicated a report from the Independent Advice and Assurance Panel due to be published later this year. Planned capability work was also conducted in house reducing costs.

Staff costs remained on budget, showing only a modest net underspend of £13k.

The full-year forecast indicates that total expenditure is expected to remain in line with the approved budget. Total projected spend is £7.67m against a £7.70m budget, suggesting a potential overall underspend of £30k–£40k for the year.

STRATEGIC ESTATES ENHANCED MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT TEAM (EMI)

Parliament’s Strategic Estates team is leading on the initial development of the EMI option. The EMI Q2 spend has been higher than expected to respond to requests from the R&R boards to develop more detailed temporary accommodation and resilience proposals for EMI.

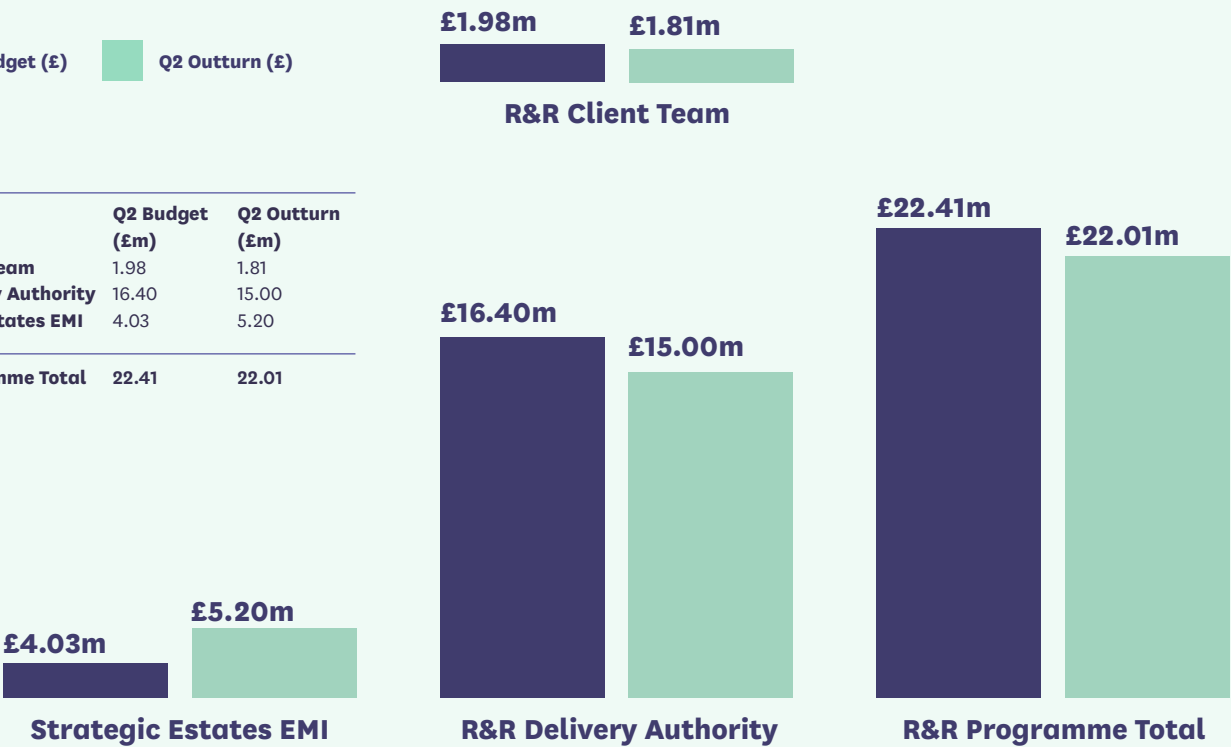
EMI costs are expected to reduce in the next quarter as any further development of the EMI option is handed over to the R&R Delivery Authority.

Q2 Outturn vs Budget

Key:



	Q2 Budget (£m)	Q2 Outturn (£m)
R&R Client Team	1.98	1.81
R&R Delivery Authority	16.40	15.00
Strategic Estates EMI	4.03	5.20
R&R Programme Total	22.41	22.01





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