

Modernisation Committee

Access to the House of Commons and its procedures: House Administration Response

First Special Report of Session 2024–26

HC 1726

Modernisation Committee

The Modernisation Committee is a cross-party committee of MPs that considers reforms to House of Commons procedures, standards, and working practices.

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The following Members were members of the Committee during the inquiry:

[Sarah Coombes](#) (Labour; West Bromwich)

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[Joy Morrissey](#) (Conservative; Beaconsfield)

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Powers

The powers of the Committee are set out in the order of the House of 25 July 2024, which is available here – https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5901/cmstords/addendum/so_add_250501.pdf

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First Special Report

The Modernisation Committee published its First Report of Session 2024–26, [Access to the House of Commons and its Procedures](#) (HC 755) on 11 December 2025. The House Administration Response was received on 2 March 2026 and is appended below.

Appendix: House Administration Response

Conclusion, para 14 – Accessibility must remain a key priority for the renovated Palace of Westminster on any of the options chosen, and we will write a letter to the Restoration and Renewal Client Board emphasising this.

The House Administration supports this ongoing focus. Accessibility is one of the issues the Corporate Officers have to have regard to under the the Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019.

Conclusion, para 34 – We have listened with concern to disabled colleagues, peers and staff telling us about the challenges they face daily due to the inaccessibility of the parliamentary estate. The ongoing negative impact this has on their ability to contribute equally alongside their colleagues is unacceptable. We understand that extensive upgrades to the Palace must wait until the R&R programme begins. However, many of the issues related to the physical state of the parliamentary estate that make it unacceptably challenging to work in, or visit, are long-standing and well reported.

Conclusion, para 35 – Although we are pleased to see some action now being taken on short and medium-term work to make the estate more accessible, it is much overdue. The House of Commons Administration must examine its priorities and show clearly how it will be held accountable for delivering the improvements needed.

We acknowledge the need to continue making the estate more accessible, and this is a key priority for the Commons Executive Board. The Estates Accessibility Board (EAB), working with the Members' Accessibility Group, is identifying short, medium and long-term accessibility priorities. Accessibility-focused objectives will be captured in the House Administration's business planning and corporate strategy. Management information will be reported to the CEB quarterly and the Board will be held accountable for progress. This includes through completion of the EAB's priority list, and regular reporting on progress.

The Administration's focus on accessibility is already yielding tangible results. The projects within the Security Portfolio are now taking a far more proactive approach to user engagement, and gathering feedback and user needs from people who work on the estate, before designs are finalised. For example, recent surveys of the Portcullis House and Derby Gate entrances have highlighted the accessibility challenges faced by some people who use these entrances and ensured that addressing those needs can be prioritised by any work undertaken.

In the longer-term, accessibility is an important objective of R&R. The Parliamentary Buildings (Restoration and Renewal) Act 2019 states that the Corporate Officers must have regard to the need to ensure that the end-state Palace and any temporary accommodation are "accessible to people with disabilities" as well as have regard to "the need for improved visitor access" to the Palace.

While some improvements have been and will be made to accessibility ahead of the R&R Programme, significant improvements in some areas can only be fully delivered by a programme on the scale of R&R. Significant accessibility improvements that are within the scope of R&R include:

- Improved step-free access, with at least 60% of the Palace of Westminster's total floor area set to be step-free—a significant increase from the current 12%—and up to 90% step-free access in areas with high Member and visitor use;
- Comprehensive restoration and upgrades of key spaces such as the Chambers and committee rooms, improving accessibility, environmental conditions (such as temperature control, air quality and lighting) and acoustics;
- Replanned spaces within the Palace of Westminster including upgraded office facilities, with improved resilience, security, and accessibility, reflecting parliamentary standards and requirements;

- Fit-for-purpose and accessible visitor arrival space, including higher capacity security search and screen areas that will reduce the likelihood of queuing outside; and
- A permanent Education Centre.

The end-state of the Palace of Westminster after the R&R Programme will therefore be significantly more accessible under all options for visitors and users. Focus to date on end-state accessibility has been on step-free access. As designs mature, work will be undertaken to look at a wider range of accessibility improvements, for example, acoustics and lighting, and improvements to the Chambers and committee rooms.

Conclusion, para 36 – We are encouraged by the establishment of the Accessibility Group, chaired by the Director General, and by the inclusion of disabled MPs in considering access issues on the estate via the Members Accessibility Group. We also look forward to the continued work on the Workplace Adjustment Passports which will centralise and streamline the support provided to MPs by the House of Commons service.

A close working relationship between the Estates Accessibility Board—an internal board of officials responsible for oversight and delivery of actions to improve accessibility across the parliamentary estate—and the Members’ Accessibility Group, will ensure that the perspectives of disabled Members are taken into account when decisions are made on estate-related accessibility matters.

The Board has already involved Members in its work. For example, before Christmas, three disabled Members toured parts of the estate with officials, showing them their most used routes and areas of inaccessibility. As a result, Strategic Estates is expanding its accessibility audits to include all areas around the Chamber and Committee Corridor, ensuring Members’ priority routes are captured. Issues that can be resolved in the short-term are being taken forward, such as:

- improving the accessible toilet by the Chamber, which was completed in early February 2026;
- introducing high visibility markings to the steps outside Portcullis House, which was completed in early February 2026; and
- installing accessible door handles, which will be completed in all Portcullis House bathrooms by the end of April 2026, with wider work also underway.

In addition, in early March key members of the Estates Accessibility Board are scheduled to consult the Members' Accessibility Group on how actions arising from accessibility audits should be prioritised, to ensure the greatest positive impact in the shortest timeframe for disabled Members.

Work to develop the workplace adjustments passport for Members is progressing, and the Members' Accessibility Group will be consulted on the draft passport at its next scheduled meeting, in early March. Under the current proposals, the passport will summarise Members' needs following a meeting with the Workplace Adjustments Manager and the Head of Member Liaison. This passport could then—should the Member wish—be shared with other House officials whenever the Member takes on new parliamentary duties.

Recommendation, para 37 – To learn from disabled people about their experience visiting and engaging with Parliament, we recommend that the House of Commons Administration set up an External Accessibility Advisory Group. The group's membership should include organisations representing disabled people and it should be tasked with considering feedback from disabled people about improving parliamentary services. The group should publish an annual report to be considered by the House of Commons Commission. Its remit should include disabled visitor access and experience, and disabled people's participation in and access to Parliamentary business.

We will establish an external accessibility group to complement the work of the existing Members' Accessibility Group and the Access and Inclusion Steering Group. We will look to draw on the experience of colleagues in the Senedd, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament, who have implemented similar initiatives, and broader good practice such as TFL's Independent Disability Advisory Group, to ensure that any Parliamentary external accessibility group provides a genuine voice to visitors and other external users of the Parliamentary Estate.

We will ensure that the group draws on lived experience; embed the group in governance processes within the Commons so that accessibility is considered by design in decision making; and report annually on the group's activities so that we can identify and respond to any challenges. We will aim to have established this new external group by the end of 2026.

Recommendation, para 38 – The House of Commons Administration must be transparent about decisions it makes in response to accessibility audits. We therefore recommend that it include a summary of progress against accessibility audit recommendations in the Strategic Estates team's Annual Business plan. We recognise that some of the details might be confidential, so we emphasise that we are referring to an overview of progress rather than a detailed breakdown.

We agree with the Committee that the Administration should be transparent about actions taken forward from accessibility audits, wherever confidentiality reasonably allows. An overview of progress against accessibility audit recommendations will therefore form a regular feature of the business plans of Strategic Estates, the Parliamentary Maintenance Services Team, and the Customer Experience and Service Delivery Team from the 2026/27 financial year onwards.

Accessibility audit actions are split into short, medium, and long term, as follows:

- 330 short term actions, of which 126 are closed;
- 662 medium term actions, of which 82 are closed; and
- 305 long term actions, of which 13 are closed.

Additionally, the House Administration's progress against the actions of the accessibility audits will be tracked throughout the year and reported to CEB, and the actions will be discussed with the Members' Accessibility Group.

Recommendation, para 39 – We recommend that the House of Commons Administration make it a priority to advertise on the intranet and on communication screens, including the annunciators, when an accessible entrance/exit is out of use and clearly signpost an alternative entrance/exit.

We will make it a priority to advertise when an accessible entrance or exit is out of use and to clearly signpost the nearest alternative accessible route.

From now on, the closure of any entrance or exit, including accessible entrances, will be advertised on the annunciators, together with clear information on the nearest alternative accessible entrance. This will apply both to short-notice closures and to closures arising during the working day.

This work will be jointly led by the Security & Access Hub and the Security Operations Centre (SOC), working closely with Communications teams to ensure that information is accurate, timely and consistently presented. Where works affecting access are planned, the Hub and SOC will work together to ensure these are clearly identified in advance, so that closures are advertised ahead of time on the intranet and annunciators, with appropriate signposting of alternative accessible entrances.

The annunciators will continue to be used as the primary channel for real-time access changes, supported by ParliNet and targeted communications where appropriate. This approach will ensure that staff, Members and

visitors—particularly disabled people—receive clear and practical information about access arrangements whenever an accessible entrance or exit is unavailable.

Recommendation, para 40 – We recommend that the House of Commons Administration implement an option to text message when needing to report an urgent security or safety concern, as a complement to the current telephone line, and ensure that this option is communicated via the annual essentials training programme.

The House administration will review options by the summer recess for the reporting of security and safety concerns on the estate which do not require an emergency response, through a variety of routes, including a text-based system.

Where an emergency response is required, we believe that the current phone-based model remains the most appropriate mechanism for reporting urgent security or safety concerns to ensure appropriate assistance is provided.

Recommendation, para 57 – We believe that there is no lack of ambition about delivering accessible services among House staff. However, there is a lack of practical guidance, and accessibility is not always made a priority by senior leaders and managers. We therefore recommend that the House of Commons Administration ensures that all staff teams receive training on how to provide better services to disabled people and people with learning difficulties, specifically tailored to the part of the House in which they work, and the services they provide. We also urge the House of Commons Administration to make it mandatory for line managers and team leaders to undertake regular training on how to support disabled and neurodiverse colleagues.

The Administration has recently renewed its efforts on training and guidance. Accessibility is a key part of the learning strategy and the learning platform, Act, has been revised and relaunched with improved accessibility for users. Disability training was refreshed during 2025, including sessions for all staff, managers, and customer-facing colleagues. New e-learning modules were released in December 2025 to better accommodate the learning needs of estate-based colleagues, as well as being accessible for all parliamentary passholders. This training will be mandatory for all customer-facing colleagues by the summer recess.

Neurodiversity guidance for managers and leaders will be published during Neurodiversity Celebration Week (16–20 March 2026), and the Workplace Adjustments Manager in the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service will undertake the Neurodiversity Workplace Needs Assessor qualification, enabling Parliament to deliver more effective, inclusive and evidence led support for neurodivergent passholders.

Conclusion, para 56 – Although the House of Commons Administration Strategy 2023–27 states that the organisation will provide accessible services, there seems to be no central responsibility to ensure that this happens which is likely to be why there are no clear lines of accountability.

Recommendation, para 58 – We recommend that the House of Commons Administration revises its strategic priorities to make it explicit, as part of its value of being “inclusive”, that accessibility is a major priority for the organisation, alongside security and safety. Senior leaders must personally drive this and embed a culture where accessibility becomes a shared responsibility between all those who work on the Parliamentary estate. We expect the Clerk of the House and the Director General to provide an update in 12 months’ time to show their progress.

Conclusion, para 127 – We hope that by making accessibility a strategic priority for the organisation the House of Commons Administration can continue to improve access to the House of Commons for the public, and increase engagement with disabled people and people with learning difficulties by making the Parliamentary estate and the House of Commons’ social media and website more accessible and engaging. Suggestions for achieving this include displaying more of the daily business, and organising information by topic areas.

At its February meeting, the House of Commons Commission agreed the next three-year strategy for the House Administration. That strategy includes an explicit commitment to improve accessibility. For each of the outcomes set out in the new strategy, there will be a CEB lead identified, ensuring that there is accountability for delivery of our strategic outcomes. Additionally, the Director General, Marianne Cwynarski, will formally be ultimately responsible for ensuring that these outcomes are delivered. The Clerk of the House and the Director General will write to the Committee before the end of 2026 to update it on the progress made against all recommendations and audits, and will include a section on digital accessibility.

We are grateful to the Committee for its suggestions on ways to make the website more accessible. We are always looking for ways to improve the reach of our digital outputs, and currently tailor our approach in a number of ways:

- Making business content accessible to the general public through different formats;

- Providing both visual and written business updates across a range of social media channels. To ensure this is accessible we use different formats on individual platforms and use accessibility features such as ALT text, subtitles, colour-grading and contrast, voiceovers, and promote BSL;
- Using plain English where possible to fit the national reading age;
- Regularly reviewing analytics to ensure our content reaches a wide demographic across channels and does not assume levels of understanding, as well as using storytelling techniques on different platforms to engage a wide variety of the public;
- Avoiding text dense copy and text heavy graphics;
- Using headings in news stories to break up text and make it easy to navigate for screen readers; and
- Using readable text formats, exhibiting particular care around caps and italics.

The Communications team will continue to engage with Member groups and relevant external stakeholders.

Recommendation, para 59 – To better welcome disabled visitors and visitors with access needs, we recommend that visitors should be asked, upon entry, whether they have a disability or access need and offered support. Staff at entrances should also offer disabled visitors or visitors with access needs a Sunflower scheme lanyard in addition to their visitor pass, which will help signal to colleagues working on the estate that they might benefit from extra support during their visit. We recommend that the House of Commons Administration consider whether disabled people and people with access needs can be better signposted to accessible routes and toilets, and in the event of a construction project, alternative routes and toilets.

The Participation team is leading work, in partnership with the Parliamentary Security Department and colleagues across the estate (including Customer Experience and Service Delivery), to strengthen how disabled visitors and visitors with access needs are identified, supported and signposted.

At present, visitors are not routinely asked on entry whether they have a disability or access need, reflecting the importance of respecting privacy and avoiding assumptions. Instead, Visitor Experience staff and security staff are trained to respond positively and proactively where visitors self-identify an access need, and to offer appropriate support, including use of accessible routes and fast-track access where necessary. Visitor

Assistants and Security Officers have been trained to recognise and respond appropriately to Sunflower lanyards, and the Security & Access Hub has opened use of the visitor fast-track lane to all Access Card holders. Visitor Experience colleagues have also confirmed that use of identifiers such as lanyards is optional and not required in order to receive support.

Building on this, Participation will introduce clearer and more consistent prompts for visitors, including signage and messaging at entrances and in pre-arrival information online, inviting visitors to speak to staff if they have an access need or would like support. Furthermore, we will look to provide a visible, central 'Access Hub' in Westminster Hall to provide visitors with immediate assistance, mobility support, and specialist resources. This approach is intended to encourage disclosure where helpful, without requiring visitors to be questioned on entry.

Participation will also review training and guidance for front-of-house colleagues to ensure staff are confident in supporting disabled visitors. This includes refresher guidance on access needs, use of the Sunflower scheme, and appropriate routing and escalation. The team will continue to collaborate closely with Security teams to coordinate enhanced training for their staff, ensuring a fully integrated and inclusive approach to welcoming all visitors.

Delivery will follow a phased approach – foundational planning, development and training from April to June, operational piloting from July to September, and full implementation from October to December.

Conclusion, para 60 – The focus of the House of Commons Administration must be on the security and the safety of the estate, but this should not be at the expense of accessibility. Instead, security, safety and accessibility can, and must, complement each other.

In 2025, the Commons Executive Board added accessibility to its priority areas, alongside safety and security. We will continue to explore ways to deliver improvements that take all three into account, including support for the user journeys of passholders and visitors on the estate, enhanced training for front-line Administration staff, and prioritising accessibility improvements that contribute to greater safety of users while maintaining security standards.

We actively seek user feedback and requirements for security projects to ensure there is a balance struck between security, user requirements (including accessibility) and value for money. We are committed to ensuring that Members and staff with a range of accessibility requirements are given the opportunity to comment on the project plans and designs, for example through early engagement with the Accessibility User Group.

Parliament has continually sought to improve fire safety standards across the estate and in particular will always do so within the context of accessibility. For example, we have a comprehensive Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs) process. Fire safety colleagues advertise and promote extensively PEEPs and the support we can provide to all persons with mobility or cognitive impairment whether permanent or temporary. Currently we have a number of active PEEPs across the estate, and all Members and staff who have requested support have received advice and a plan. Other key safety initiatives—such as modernising lifts to make them suitable for use in evacuations, and reviews of escape signage and fire action notices—are heavily informed by users’ accessibility needs.

Recommendation, para 61 – We recommend that the House of Commons Executive Board run a communications campaign, similar to the campaign on pass checking run by the Parliamentary Security Department, focused on accessibility and disability awareness. We expect the House of Commons Executive Board to act on this recommendation within the next six months.

The communications team, working with the Inclusion and Diversity team, will take forward the recommendation to run campaign activity focused on accessibility and disability awareness, modelled on successful campaigns that focused on safety and security issues. The campaign is expected to begin in March.

Conclusion, para 67 – An MP’s ability to scrutinise legislation and carry out their duties on behalf of their constituents must not be limited due to the inaccessibility or inflexibility of the rules and conventions which govern their work in the Chamber and committees. The House of Lords helpfully signpost the reasonable adjustments which a disabled peer can expect to be able to access in its Companion to the Standing Orders and Guide to the Proceedings of the House of Lords.

Recommendation, para 68 – In the absence of an official guide to the House of Commons Standing Orders, we recommend that reference to the informal and formal routes available to MPs who require reasonable adjustments be made in House of Commons guidance for Members.

We agree that the ability of Members to scrutinise legislation and carry out their duties must be comprehensively and effectively supported by reasonable adjustments when these are required. The Members and Members’ Staff Services Team (MMSST) and Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service (PHWS) have developed mechanisms to facilitate this which are being embedded within existing procedures. Members are encouraged to arrange a workplace adjustments assessment with the Workplace Adjustments Manager and Head of Member Liaison. The assessment covers all aspects of the Member’s working life, including

the Chamber, Westminster Hall, Committees and interparliamentary delegation participation. Adjustments to enable the Member to scrutinise legislation and carry out their parliamentary duties are then coordinated by PHWS and MMSST and relevant groups such as Whips, clerks and the Speaker's Office. Alongside this, a workplace adjustments passport is being developed for Members, so they may communicate and arrange their own adjustments as they need with teams. Some of the adjustments that have been implemented to date include: providing ergonomic furniture for offices; arranging additional training, such as procedural briefings, and support with committees; and installing digital accessibility software on devices.

We agree that information on informal and formal routes for reasonable adjustments for Members should be clearly signposted in guidance. By Easter, we will add an explanation to the online MPs' Guide to Procedure which provides an overview of reasonable adjustments, including a non-exhaustive list of informal and formal adjustments that can be made and how Members can access them. More broadly, we will look for opportunities to include information or references to that guidance in other documents as appropriate.

Conclusion, para 97 – We are supportive of the temporary proxy votes arrangements introduced in the 2024–26 session of Parliament for MPs who need a proxy due to serious long-term illness or injury, and would welcome the Procedure Committee's further consideration of the scheme as a whole.

We will support the Procedure Committee in taking forward any recommendations after it has further considered this issue, and note that the House agreed on 2 February 2026 to extend proxy voting arrangements for serious long-term illness or injury to the end of the current Parliament.

Recommendation, para 98 – We recommend that the House of Commons Administration consider how deferred divisions can be transferred to a digital system, such as the current pass reader system for other votes, so that the practice of paper slips can be abandoned.

The Public Bill Office is working with the Parliamentary Digital Service to establish how the existing pass-reader division system could be modified to accommodate deferred divisions.

The system will need to be adapted so that it can record names in relation to multiple, simultaneous questions on deferred divisions: at the moment it only handles one question at a time. Provision will also need to be made for the deferred division to be suspended for a live division in the House and resumed afterwards. We will need to ensure that any changes do not create new accessibility challenges of their own. We will update the Committee on this work before the summer recess.

Recommendation, para 99 – We were persuaded by the argument that the House should provide reasonable adjustments for those MPs who find voting in the division lobbies challenging, and recommend that the Clerk of the House engages the party Whips in a conversation about how the Reasons Room could be reconfigured to meet the needs of disabled MPs. We also encourage the party whips to continue to make use of informal arrangements such as “nodding through” and pairing where possible.

We have engaged with party Whips on this issue and are exploring options for how the spaces around the Chamber could be used to support Members’ accessibility requirements. We note that recent experience from when the Reasons Room was undergoing refurbishment indicated that moving the Reasons Committee to another location creates additional accessibility issues for its members. The room is also used intermittently by Members seeking a private space for conversations. If the Committee wishes to pursue the option of using the Reasons Room as envisaged, we recommend that the Committee holds informal discussions with representatives of the Whips’ Offices and the House Administration to try to identify an acceptable way forward.

Recommendation, para 108 – We suggest the Speaker ask the Serjeant at Arms and his team to consider whether it would be possible to introduce a “Reasonable Adjustments card” scheme for MPs who require certain seats for access reasons to use instead of a daily prayer card.

We note that Mr Speaker has instructed the Serjeant at Arms to investigate the introduction of a Reasonable Adjustments Card. The Serjeant at Arms and his team will consider how this could work and will report to the Speaker’s Office.

Recommendation, para 128 – We suggest that the Administration Committee review the placement of speakers and annunciator screens in the House of Commons public gallery, and consider providing more accessible subtitling of debates.

We understand that the Chair of the Administration Committee is exploring this recommendation with officials ahead of determining how to take forward any possible changes, which we will facilitate.

Conclusion, para 140 – Parliamentary language is sometimes seen as unnecessarily complex, and especially challenging for some disabled people and people with learning difficulties or those who are neurodivergent. We respect the history and customs of Parliament and understand that a measure of technical language is needed as part of what are sometimes necessarily complex processes. However, we hope that the direction of travel is to simplify language where possible.

Conclusion, para 141 – To ensure that the public is engaged with our work we need to make concerted efforts to make it clear how the work of the House of Commons is relevant in their lives, and how their engagement with our work can make a difference. Ensuring what we communicate is engaging and accessible is a first crucial step towards making this a reality.

Recommendation, para 142 – As a part of the wider drive to make Parliament more accessible, the House Administration should make more frequent use of, and reference to, its glossary and where possible incorporate it in documents and guidance. We also recommend that explainers of terms, processes and procedures are included whenever possible, along with other resources co-designed with and aimed at disabled and neurodivergent people and people with learning difficulties. We were pleased to see the work carried out by the Public Bill Office in explaining processes and procedures in connection with Bills, and recommend that other offices supporting the chamber and committees consider how they can pursue similar work in their areas.

Across the House Administration, we are working with a trusted third-party supplier to make a range of alternative accessible formats available at the point of publication. This will help ensure that all audiences can engage with our content effectively. A cross-Parliament alternative formats group has been set up to look at how we can standardise the service level. A comprehensive brand audit is currently being conducted, with a specific focus on accessibility.

We are committed to working closely with external specialists with first-hand experience of accessibility needs. Their expertise will guide us in aligning our communications with best practice standards and ensuring they meet the needs of disabled and neurodivergent audiences. We are awaiting the recommendations from the ongoing Disability Smart audit. In parallel, we are considering the findings from two reports: the External Consultation on Accessibility and Inclusion, which is helping to evaluate how effectively our pre-visit information and on-site experience supports autistic visitors; and the ADHD Champions report, which contains insights gathered through in-person and online activities, and is improving our understanding of how visitors with ADHD experience Parliament. We appreciate the emphasis on co-designed resources and will continue to explore opportunities to embed these principles into our work.

While there are some technical aspects of procedure where use of exact terms is essential, we agree that language should be simplified where possible – both to make proceedings more accessible and for simple clarity. This holds true both for Chamber and legislative proceedings, and for select committees. We are grateful for the Committee's support for the explainers

that were produced by the Public Bill Office, and we will consider how we can use similar documents in future to provide timely and accessible procedural information that will complement our existing work:

- **The MPs Guide to Procedure:** a key source of plain English explanations and “how to” guides, which is reviewed regularly;
- **Explainer content on House business:** engaging and accessible public-facing content on a range of subjects, including: the Budget, Private Members’ Bills; and Adjournment Debates;
- **Research briefings:** published by the Library and POST, these briefings on complex and technical topics are written in plain language to help Members and the public understand and assess policy issues; and
- **Select Committee engagement events:** an average of 40 online and in-person activities delivered annually by the bicameral Public Engagement Team, giving participants with professional expertise or lived experiences the opportunity to share their views with Parliament, where they might otherwise be seldom heard.

We will look at potential opportunities to extend the use of glossaries and similar tools to aid procedural understanding, as the Committee suggests. We are conducting a procedural content audit of all of our channels, to ensure our existing accessibility work is enhanced, including investigative work into terminology and areas of procedure that is not understood. We are also working with the enquiries team, to focus on making answers to frequently asked questions publicly available in multiple formats. We will update the Committee on this work before the summer recess.

Conclusion, para 150 – We understand that services to improve accessibility are costly. However, to ensure that the work of the House of Commons serves the public, we must ensure that everyone who wants to, can participate, and we therefore agree that this is money well spent.

We agree. Improving accessibility is one of our current investment priorities, which help guide our decisions on spending. We have established two specific workstreams for each of our buildings which aim to make immediate improvements—on toilets; and on entrances and access routes—as well as support from a new technical lead in PMST to prioritise projects and monitor completion. In addition, we have recently launched a tender to supplement the accessibility audits that have already taken place. The further work is a whole-building accessibility audit of the Palace of Westminster. Our previous audits within the Palace concentrated and prioritised the House of Commons visitor route, the House of Lords visitor route and the House of Commons Members and Peers travel routes, within the Palace. This audit will be completed by the end of March 2026.

Conclusion, para 149 – The House of Commons should lead by example and inspire other public sector bodies to ensure that communication and engagement is delivered in accessible formats. These formats should be available as a default, at the same time as other communication unless there is a specific reason why they cannot be. Accessibility should not be an afterthought.

Recommendation, para 151 – We recommend that the House of Commons Administration establish a working group to consider the merits of bringing the production of accessible formats in-house. The group should not just consider the feasibility in terms of cost, but the potential of engaging with groups which are less well represented in Parliamentary engagement. We expect this group to report within 12 months of the publication of this report.

We agree that making further progress on accessibility in terms of communication, engagement and publications needs to be a high priority for the House Administration. To this end, colleagues regularly meet with their counterparts in other Parliaments through the Interparliamentary Communications Network digital forum to share best practice on accessibility.

Many of the House's publications, including its core business documents, are already provided in alternative, accessible formats (see Annex A), and both visual and written business updates are additionally provided across a range of social media channels. To ensure this is accessible, we use different formats on individual platforms and use accessibility features such as ALT text, subtitles, colour-grading and contrast, voiceovers and promote BSL.

Additionally, work is underway to improve the accessibility of the House's library publications. The Alternative Formats Group is a cross-Parliament group led by the Research and Information (R&I) communications team looking at how to standardise approaches to producing alternative formats for Library publications. It works closely with the project team for the new Longform Publishing and Authoring project in R&I, which over 2026 will develop a style of webpage-based research briefing that can accommodate content of any length, improving the usability of all our briefings. The link between the Alternative Formats Group and the publishing project aims to ensure accessibility is at the centre of how R&I develops its publications over the coming year.

To consider bringing the production of accessible formats in-house, we will look to build on the existing Publishing in Parliament Group set up by the House's Procedural Publishing Unit (PPU), which already draws in other teams. We agree that a Working Group should be established to determine the next steps in this area, which will be chaired by a member of the PPU and include in its membership the Parliamentary Digital Service,

Communications, Participation, Research and Information, the Inclusion and Diversity Team, and the Select Committee Team. We will update the Committee on this group's work by the start of the 2026 summer recess.

Conclusion, para 152 – This inquiry is just the beginning of making Parliament a more accessible place to work. While the House of Commons is an old institution, it must make progress in this area. It is not acceptable that some MPs, staff and visitors are turned away from engaging with parts of Parliamentary life due to the inaccessible nature of the House of Commons. Accessibility must be woven into the fabric of what we do and be mandatory in the design of new services and spaces. The House of Commons is the crucible of our democracy and of national debate. It belongs to us all equally, and not on the condition that you are able to access its inaccessible building or understand its complex language.

Conclusion, para 153 – We are encouraged by the signs of progress we can already see and by the shared willingness we encountered from colleagues and officials to make this a new dawn for accessibility in the House of Commons, with accessible physical spaces, processes and communication resulting in a Parliament that serves all the public and enables all MPs and staff to carry out their important work.

The Administration welcomes the Committee's inquiry and is now working on how best to deliver its recommendations. Our core aim of providing excellent services to Members will only be fulfilled if we improve accessibility for all. We are now working to prioritise actions, in consultation with disabled Members, and will update the Committee as this work progresses.

Annex A – procedural publications

Summary of Procedural Publications

Business Papers

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Order Paper: Business Today	Daily agenda of business for the House of Commons: Summary Agenda, Effective Orders, Written Ministerial Statements, List of Committees sitting, List of Published Reports, Announcements section.	Daily	• Print • PDF • Large Print • HTML
Order Paper: Future Business	Part A: upcoming Business in the Chamber that has been allocated a date. Part B: upcoming Business in the Chamber not yet allocated a date.	Daily	• Print • PDF • Large Print • HTML
Order Paper: Business Today & Future Business	Combined document containing Business Today & Future Business	Daily	• Print • PDF • Large Print • HTML
Provisional Order Paper: Business Today & Future Business	Combined document published on non-sitting day on blue paper; finalised as the Order Paper published on next sitting day. Occurs over recess periods, also on non-sitting Fridays.	Recess/ non-sitting Fridays	• Print • PDF • Large Print • HTML

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Votes and Proceedings	Formal Record of Proceedings in Chamber and Westminster Hall on previous sitting day	Daily	• Print • PDF • Large Print • HTML
Early Day Motions	Motions tabled on previous day to publication date, and added names to recent Motions.	Daily	• Print • PDF • HTML
Questions for oral answer on a future day (Future Day Orals)	All Oral Questions tabled for Answer in the Chamber on a future date	Daily	• Print • PDF • HTML
Questions Tabled	All Questions Tabled for oral and written answer on the date of publication.	Daily	• Print • PDF
Given Private Business	Private Business items deposited on day prior to publication.	When requested	• Print • PDF
Daily Private Business	Version of Private Business which is appearing in Order Paper Part One on blue paper.	When requested	• Print • PDF
Selection of Amendments (to Motions)	Sets out the amendments to some Order Paper Motions that have been selected for debate by the Speaker.	When requested	• Print • PDF • Large Print • HTML
Deferred Division Slip	Ballot paper for Members voting in Divisions that have been deferred until the day of publication (e.g. for voting at a convenient time instead of holding each division immediately at the end of a debate).	When requested	• Print • PDF
Written Answers Daily Report	Answers given to written questions in the course of sitting day or during recesses over a specified period, between Members and Ministers.	Daily	• Print • PDF

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Oral Questions Rota	The oral questions rota indicates each department answering oral questions approximately once every five sitting weeks.	When requested	• Print • PDF • HTML
Written statements	Supplied by the relevant Government departments, they are not produced in Parliament.	When requested	• PDF
Oral statements	Supplied by the relevant Government departments, they are not produced in Parliament.	When requested	• PDF

Official Reports and Proceedings

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Commons Hansard	Near-verbatim Record of Proceedings in Chamber and Westminster Hall	Daily	• Print • PDF • HTML
Public Bill Committee Hansard	Near-verbatim Record of Public Bill Committee Proceedings	Produced when committee meets	• Print • PDF • HTML
Delegated Legislation Committee Hansard	Near-verbatim Record of Proceedings in Delegated Legislation Committees	Produced when committee meets	• Print • PDF • HTML
Lords Hansard	Near-verbatim Record of Proceedings in Lords Chamber	Daily	• Print • PDF • HTML
Lords Grand Committee Hansard	Near-verbatim Record of Proceedings in Lords Grand Committee	Produced when committee meets	• Print • PDF • HTML
Public Bill Committee Proceedings	Procedural record of previous day's PBC sitting(s)	After Committee meets	• PDF

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Chamber Amendment Proceedings	Formal record of legislative proceedings in Chamber, including: Committee of the Whole House Proceedings, Consideration (Report Stage) Proceedings, Commons Consideration of Lords Amendments Proceedings, Commons Consideration of Lords Message Proceedings	As needed	• PDF

Legislation/Amendments

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Commons Bills	Bills as they are to be considered in the Commons including “as amended” at PBC and CWH and one print copy of Bill as it stands after Report sent to the Lords to form the basis of Lords consideration of that Bill	As needed	• Print • PDF • Large Print • XML
Lords Message/ Amendment Bills	Ping pong material received from the Lords, containing amendments to a Lords Bill. Published and printed as a Commons Bill	As needed	• Print • PDF • Large Print
Commons Bills Associated Documents	Notes on content of Bill as it is to be considered, such as Explanatory Notes and Impact Assessments. These documents are typically supplied by the sponsoring Government departments, they are not produced in Parliament.	As needed	Typically: • Print; • Large Print (for Explanatory Notes) • PDF

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Daily Chamber Amendments	Marshalled Lists of Amendments to be considered on the floor of the House, on the day of publication at Committee of the Whole House stage, or Consideration (Report) Stage	As needed	• Print • PDF • HTML
Ping Pong Daily Chamber Amendments	Commons Consideration of Lords Message or Commons Consideration of Lords Amendments	As needed	• Print • PDF • Large Print
Public Bill Committee Amendment Paper	Marshalled List of Amendments to be considered on day of publication in a PBC	As needed	• Print • PDF
Marshalled List of Amendments	Lists of Amendments due to be considered on a later date in Public Bill Committee, or Committee of the Whole House, or at Report Stage, or at Commons Consideration of Lords Amendments Stage or at Commons Consideration of Lords Message Stage.	As needed	• Print • PDF • Large Print
Chair's Selection and Grouping for Debate in Committee	Shows which amendments the Chair has selected for debate and how those amendments have been grouped for debate	As needed	• Print • PDF

Volumes/Other

Publication	Content	Frequency	Formats
Commons Journal	The House of Commons Journal is the corrected, archive edition of Votes and Proceedings, the formal record of House of Commons business for a given day.	Annually	• Print • PDF
Sessional Diary	The Sessional Diary sets out the amount of time spent on different items of business on each Parliamentary day in the House of Commons Chamber and in Westminster Hall.	At the end of each Parliamentary session	• Print • PDF • Excel spreadsheet
Standing Orders	The rules that regulate the way MPs conduct House of Commons public business, including electing the Speaker, and powers of committees.	As per Standing Order updates	• Print • PDF • HTML
Member Photobook	A directory of Commons Members featuring names, constituency, party affiliation, and a profile image. Distributed at the start of a new Parliament. (Content also available via 'Find an MP' online.)	As needed	• Print