UK Parliament

Information & Digital Strategy for Parliament 2024–27

Transform | Modernise | Enable | Protect

Information & Digital Strategy for Parliament **2024–27**

The purpose of this strategy is to set the direction for Parliament's use of information, data and digital. The strategy will inform Parliament's ongoing digital transformation, information and data enhancements, and underpin decisions across Parliament, to the benefit of the Parliamentary community.

Parliament must confront the challenges, and embrace the ever-evolving opportunities, presented by new ways of working and emerging technologies. We need to do so sustainably, while addressing the problems which previously inhibited the delivery of effective services to the Parliamentary community. Parliament's approach to the use of information, data and digital must continue to change.

Teams across Parliament must be empowered to embrace and use digital tools and encouraged and enabled to innovate. At the same time, our information and data must be protected and can be trusted, and it should be easy to find, share and use for communities inside and outside Parliament.

At the heart of the strategy is the need to ensure that we work collaboratively across Parliament without siloes, making the best use of digital technology so that data and information is available to support effective, evidence-based decisions.

This strategy is for everyone working with information, data, and digital in Parliament, so that both Houses have the support they need to meet their strategic priorities. In particular, it seeks to give effect to the shared strategic priorities of both Houses to:

- **Provide reliable digital services;** and
- **Treat our data and information as a vital asset.**

Parliament agreed a digital strategy in 2022, which this strategy is an evolution, recognising our increased understanding and maturity by bringing together information, data and digital into a single strategy. Parliament has made significant steps in transforming its approach to information, data and digital, but it needs to continue maturing.

The strategy will be accompanied by an action plan which will define and measure how the priorities will be achieved, supported by senior leadership across both Houses. The Information and Digital Board will keep the strategy under review, tracking progress, prioritising and evolving the activities required to achieve the strategic aims.

A technology strategy will be prepared over the course of 2024 to underpin the Information and Digital Strategy and support the realisation of the strategic priorities.

This strategy is owned by the Information and Digital Board, a pan-Parliament body that oversees information, data and digital in Parliament, on behalf of the two Management Boards.

Strategic aims

This strategy sets out how Parliament's strategic priorities in relation to information, data and digital will be realised. These priorities include:

Provide reliable digital services

We provide digital services that allow the UK Parliament to function and enable Members and staff to work at their best.

We will:

- ensure that our digital services are flexible, secure and resilient in the face of evolving threats;
- keep pace with advances in digital technology to support parliamentary functions and modern work practices, engaging and empowering Members and staff to make the best use of digital;
- make digital more sustainable and scalable by removing existing obstacles and updating our operating models;
- enable the UK Parliament to make best use of its data and information securely.

Treat our data and information as a vital asset

We manage, share, protect, value and maximise the potential benefit from our data and information to transform how we work.

We will:

- build a complete picture of the information we hold, ensuring the quality of the underlying data;
- secure and protect sensitive data and information, including that shared externally with our supply chain and delivery partners, to prevent its loss or compromise, prioritising work to focus on areas of known concern and high risk;
- develop the capabilities and skills we need to access, analyse, share and exploit data and information effectively, maximising the opportunities provided by new technology;
- develop a culture of data and information stewardship, building trust and confidence amongst users, stakeholders, and the public in in our handling of data and information.

To realise these strategic priorities several objectives have been identified which are set out below, grouped into the following four themes:

Transform

Modernise

Enable

Protect

Definitions

Having a shared understanding of what is meant by information, data and digital is key to delivering this strategy. For our purposes:

- **Information** is a collection of data that has been processed, organised or structured in a meaningful way to convey knowledge, ideas or instructions. Information can be communicated through various mediums, such as text, audio, image. Information generated from data itself has attributes (the meta-data about the information which is the data that describes the information) which need to be treated as data. High quality and accurate information helps inform decisions and enable problem solving and effective communication.
- **Data** is defined as a collection of discrete values that convey information, describing quantity, quality, fact, and other basic units of meaning collected during the operations of a business which can be used to measure and record a range of business activities. It also includes images, text, audio and generated insights. Data requires structure, context and meaning to become information.
- **Digital** is the binary representation of analogue information, systems, processes. At its core it is replicating the real world in a storable, replicable, computable format to do the things we want to do more quickly and accurately. It is a term that encompasses a broad range of functions from the provision, use, infrastructure, and security underpinning that technology, to the various types of media used to engage with people, through to ways of working with digital tools and services.

Transform

Enable a user-centred way of working

Fundamentally, the activities set out in this strategy are to support Members, Peers, their staff, and the staff of both Houses in the discharge of their Parliamentary responsibilities, and to aid the public and external stakeholders in their engagement with Parliament. The needs of users are not sufficiently defined and used to inform decisions around information, data and digital in Parliament, and there is inadequate coordination of those needs. Moving to a more user-centred approach enables Parliament to be informed and driven by user needs, early engagement, and feedback. We will adapt to evolving expectations and innovative technologies and stay relevant and responsive to the needs of the Parliamentary community. It also allows us to provide more joined-up services.

We will develop Parliament's digital and data operating model to ensure that teams, stakeholders and end-users in both Houses are supported in defining their needs, articulating their demand and are involved at each stage of delivering change. This includes making sure we are developing and managing services, products and platforms in a way that helps us to be responsive to the needs of Parliament. This will be underpinned by the continued development of the digital and data playbook.

Board-level sponsor
Chief Operating Officer, House of Lords

Continue to embed and evolve the digital and data operating model

Transforming our approach to the use of information, data and digital is essential to support the delivery of excellent services to Parliament. The digital and data operating model is already changing how Parliament works with digital and data and we will continue to work with specific areas of Parliament to ensure the operating model works for the entire Parliamentary community.

We will measure and manage the operating model to ensure it is embedding and delivering its intended benefits for both Houses. We will introduce a method of assessing where work may be most required and will guide teams to make sure the operating model is understood and working for all teams.

We will explore risks and opportunities of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, and the potential for innovation in the information, data and digital spheres and continue to explore alternative methods of delivery, improving our approach to commercial activity and further evolving the operating model.

We will continue to appraise and refresh decision-making processes, and make sure that technology introduced, developed, and used by teams in both Houses is maintained and enhanced to the quality and standard expected, and funded to do so.

Board-level sponsor
Chief Digital Adviser

Connect information and data across Parliament

Parliament has a rich and varied range of information and data. We aim to build a complete picture of the information we hold and maximise the value of it for Parliament, partners, and the public. We need to ensure that Parliament can capitalise on the information and data it holds to embrace future changes and is supported by effective governance. We will maximise the potential of our information and data by better understanding Parliament's information and data architecture. This includes understanding Parliament's information and data assets, how they are managed and the cause of any siloes that exist. We will increase interoperability, access to information and data and improve connections across and between the systems we have.

Building upon existing work to define our information and data assets, we will analyse the information and data landscape to discover the causes of siloes and understand our information and data assets, who owns them and how they are managed. This will enable our most sensitive and business critical assets to be protected and managed, along with improving the data quality, accessibility and availability. We will review information and data capabilities to understand the maturity, capability and capacity. We will also ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place for information and data, so staff know where to go for decisions.

Board-level sponsor
Managing Director, Parliamentary Digital Service and Chief Information Officer

Modernise

Manage our information and data responsibly

We will continue to support the Houses in driving maturity in our approaches to information and data governance and cooperation across Parliament to improve the information and data quality that underpins our services.

We will review how our information and data assets are managed, ensuring that secure practices, governance and standards continue to be developed for the use and maintenance of those assets, making information and data open wherever it is possible to do so. We will build a new modern cloud-native open data integration platform with associated procedural data services, replacing legacy data technology as we go. This will help to drive standards for information governance, exploit data analytics and ensure digital continuity and information sustainability are maintained.

We will ensure that parliamentary information and data can be sustained for as long as required for business purposes, through appropriate policies, services and by developing a culture of information and data stewardship. We will focus on maturing Parliament's approach to the management and use of information, including the risks and opportunities with information.

Board-level sponsor
Librarian and Managing Director, Research and Information, House of Commons

Continue to reduce legacy technology

Significant progress has been made in addressing the challenges of our legacy technology estate in Parliament, and we now routinely assess and prioritise investment to tackle the areas that present the greatest risk or are major user pain points. However, digital technologies across Parliament are not consistently funded or supported through their lifecycle, and there is limited clarity of ownership of such technologies. Better addressing the systemic reasons for the size and scale of this legacy technology estate will help ensure that technologies are kept secure and that we also realise the value of the investment Parliament has made in such technology by realising its full potential.

We will map and understand our technology and clarify who is responsible for its management. We will prepare guidance and introduce a process for the decommissioning of technology which is no longer required, including criteria for the selection of decommissioning legacy technology and a proposed initial list of what can be decommissioned. We will continue to embed the new financial model which supports continuous improvement of digital services, products and platforms, and introduce a requirement for teams to develop roadmaps for Parliament's information technology to guide investment and development choices.

Board-level sponsor
Managing Director, Parliamentary Digital Service and Chief Information Officer

Enable

Enable measurement of corporate performance

The House Administrations need to be supported to measure performance more effectively. While responsibility for determining what we need to measure and for establishing targets sits with the governance bodies of both Houses, digital and data teams play a key role in enabling us to track progress towards the realisation of our strategic priorities.

We will establish a clear plan to support the development and implementation of performance frameworks for both Houses. We will review the effectiveness of digital systems to provide performance data, assess how our performance data can be better integrated, look at tools and techniques to support improved analysis and reporting of performance data and enable teams across both Houses to access that data.

The aim is to get the best value out of our performance data, continuously improving existing processes and introducing new tools and techniques only where doing so will add value. We will trial these in focused areas before rolling out more widely, continuously learning from what works and what does not.

Board-level sponsor
Head of Governance Office, House of Commons

Develop Parliament's information, data, and digital capabilities and culture

Open collaboration, and having the right behaviours, systems, policies, skills and relationship in place is fundamental to achieving the outcomes we want through the better use of information, data and digital in Parliament. We will continue to develop a culture of collaboration, trust, inclusivity and respect.

We will focus on developing, retaining and recruiting talent, becoming more competitive in the market, attracting specialist roles and exposing the exciting work we do, supported by an employee value proposition to attract candidates with digital and data skills to Parliament. Providing the Parliamentary community and senior leaders with support and skills development to use digital tools and manage information and data effectively is crucial. We will improve digital, data and information literacy across Parliament, developing essentials training and support to ensure the consistent use of digital tools and proactive management, use and publication of data and information. We will facilitate opportunities to share knowledge and best practice across Parliament to help improve the management and use of digital tools, data and information.

We will continue to embed the Parliamentary Digital Careers Toolkit, making it accessible for digital roles across both Houses, and introduce a reward strategy for specialist digital pay. We will trial the use of LinkedIn Learning for staff in both Houses, to provide on-demand access to online training to supplement the learning offers from both Houses.

Board-level sponsor
Managing Director, Parliamentary Digital Service and Chief Information Officer

Maximise the potential of information and data

Parliament has a wealth of information and data expertise, guidance, tooling, technical advice, assurance and analytics which should be accessible and usable for the Parliamentary community. This supports collaboration and co-ordination for information and data across both Houses and builds trust and confidence in our information and data.

We will transform the discoverability, usability and means of access to information and data assets to reach a more diverse audience to increase use and re-use of our assets. This includes using information to support inclusion. Better linking of our disparate information and data assets will improve the customer experience and enable delivery of effective and efficient services.

To access information and data expertise, we will explore the viability and feasibility of establishing a centre of excellence. This includes understanding how the centre of excellence would fit into the digital and data operating model. We will identify the capabilities and services required to access consultancy on information and data and define the training and skills development needed to use the tools required. It will also include making sure we have the right guidance available to support teams in the use of information and data.

Board-level sponsor
Librarian and Managing Director, Research and Information, House of Commons

Protect

Keep Parliament cyber-secure

Parliament remains a high-profile target for cyberattacks, and it is essential that we continue to remain vigilant to existing and emerging threats. The work to strengthen Parliament's cyber capability, and protect Parliamentary information and systems, has delivered significant benefits for both Houses, and to continue to protect the Parliamentary community we need to continue this journey. It is essential that this work is a collaborative effort across Parliament, with every team playing their role.

To do so, we will ensure Parliament has access to the required cyber skills (including those needed outside of the PDS cyber team). We will mature cyber awareness, including making sure that our users have the information they need to react to threats accordingly. We need to reduce and manage our cyber risk exposure, following best practice technical and cyber controls, and we need to manage the lifecycle of digital services, products, and platforms to guard against vulnerabilities and ensure that they are configured correctly. We will work closely with teams across Parliament to enable the required cooperation to respond to blended threats and work collaboratively with the Government and other Parliaments to ensure we are up to date on threats and incidents.

Board-level sponsor
Managing Director, Parliamentary Digital Service and Chief Information Officer

Set clear standards for digital, data and information

We anticipate a future where Parliament's digital, data and information needs continue to grow and evolve, and Parliament needs to securely meet those needs. Whether it be the design of technologies for a smarter parliamentary estate, cyber standards to allow for the safe broadcast of Parliamentary proceedings, or the outsourcing of bespoke development to support the work of MPs and Peers, we need to define, agree and manage clear enterprise and technical standards for digital, data and information.

We will adopt a framework of functional standards to underpin this work, leveraging from the existing suite of standards published by the Government Digital Service and other public sector bodies. A robust governance framework for the creation and curation of technical digital standards is required, ensuring standards are well communicated and complied with. This should include a review and consolidation of the relevant digital, data and information security policies and standards in use.

Board-level sponsor
Managing Director, Parliamentary Digital Service and Chief Information Officer

Improve the security of Parliament's information

Information security is crucial in today's interconnected world where information is a valuable and vulnerable asset upon which we all rely. We must ensure Parliament's information is protected and secure to maintain its confidentiality, integrity and availability, and to mitigate information security risks.

We will improve the security of Parliament's information by introducing standards to ensure consistency and sustainability in the approach to information management. We will work with our suppliers to make sure that information and data is managed and shared appropriately in line with best practice information security due diligence.

Parliament's most valuable information will be categorised, including defining where the information is held and the associated controls. Information security policies and the accreditation process will be reviewed and updated to align with best practice. Everyone across Parliament will be made aware of their responsibility for keeping Parliament's information secure and understand where to seek guidance.

Board-level sponsor
Chief Technology Officer

UK Parliament

For more information about the Information & Digital Strategy for Parliament please contact IDB@parliament.uk