



HOUSE OF LORDS

Focus on Inclusion

Two years on



Introduction

In contrast with the foundation-building of the first Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) strategy, 'Focus on Inclusion' has challenged Offices across the Administration to embed inclusion within their day-to-day working and interactions. This strategy enabled the advancement of our compliant activity to become best practice, for example in reasonable adjustments and recruitment, to grass roots innovation from colleagues in a variety of ways to improve the inclusive practices or experience of culture for those in their Office and beyond.



Strategy Highlights



People

- 'Press Pause' launched and implemented, to drive better progression opportunities whilst also aiming to increase diversity within senior leadership.
- Social Mobility questions were added to complete the Diversity Data monitoring on MyHR.
- Our Mencap Work Experience scheme expanded, offering meaningful experience for young people with learning disabilities and developing colleagues understanding of a neurodiverse workplace.
- Bi-monthly Job Descriptions Spot-Checking to measure impact of inclusive recruitment actions.
- Increased the percentage of women in the most senior levels from 35% to 46% in under five years.
- Increased the disclosure rates of diversity data from 54% to 76% in under three years.

Place

- Access and Inclusion Steering Group projects included the publication of the Inclusive Design Guidance, Fielden House refurbishments and the Lords Decant planning.
- The Wayfinding and Signage strategy was devised using Millbank House as a best practice example for the wider parliamentary estate.
- An access review was delivered resulting in the removal of grade restrictions on the Terrace and 'A' security passes.

Profile

- Inclusion Passport fully embedded into organisational practice, including further development to incorporate caring responsibilities. This tool was developed by the I&D team and has been recognised externally as best practice, organisations across the UK have now adopted and adapted this tool for their own use.
- Refreshed our Inclusion Champions model to facilitate two-way conversation with I&D to create bespoke inclusion solutions for Offices.

Performance

- Entered into Stonewall's Top 100 Employers at 64th position; the highest new entrant for 2020.
- Became the first organisation to achieve Gold in the Inclusive Employers Standard; a year after achieving Silver status.
- Placed 47th in the Social Mobility Foundation's Index.
- Ranked 15th in the UK's Top Inclusive Employers list.
- Achieved Level 3, Disability Confident Leader, surpassing Level 2.
- Delivered entirely virtual National Inclusion Week initiatives including Inclusion starts with 'I', Virtual Coffee Club, Meet the WENs and 'Top 5 Recommended' lists.

Organic Activity

- Hosted the first ever Open Iftar in Trafalgar Square with over 1500 people present, in partnership with Ramadan Tent Project. The project proactively profiled the Administration as an Inclusive Employer and speakers included Lord Dubs and Mayor Sadiq Khan.
- Hosted the first ever Menopause at Work event in the River Room with over 50 colleagues present in collaboration with ParliGender.
- ParliCare launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, to support and champion colleagues with a multitude of caring responsibilities.

Reactive Activity

- Inclusion Spotlights internally shared to highlight the inclusion initiatives and practices within Offices across the Administration.
- Update to the Gender Identity in Parliament Guidance and subsequent Roadshows to Offices within the Administration. This required a year-long consultation process.
- As a result of the murder of George Floyd and significant colleague impact, the team delivered Race at Work Facilitated Conversations to Offices and Action on Race Conversations to senior leadership.



Glossary of Terms



- **Press Pause** – A recruitment initiative which applies to all roles graded HL7 and above advertised externally in which the recruitment process can be ‘paused’ at each stage to ensure the pool of candidates is diverse, in respect of gender and ethnicity. This initiative also mandates that all HLI-6 roles are advertised internally only for an agreed period.
- **Job Descriptions Spot-Checking** – An initiative which reviews five job descriptions every other month, across various grades and Offices, to identify any opportunities to gain wider diversity within the candidate pool. For example, reviewing use of gendered language, offering of flexible working opportunities, defining complex terms and limiting the number of essential competencies.
- **Inclusive Design Guidance** – This is a document which was devised by the Access and Inclusion Steering Group (including WEN representation and the Inclusion teams of both Houses) to clearly outline the accessibility and inclusion requirements for the Restoration and Renewal Programme. Requirements include ratios of gender-neutral facilities, dedicated nursing rooms and multi-faith spaces, for example.
- **Wayfinding and Signage Strategy** – This refers to a strategy for the parliamentary estate to ensure easily understandable signage and easily usable routes through the parliamentary buildings, including the Palace of Westminster. This strategy considered various groups including non-English speakers, those with neurodiverse conditions and visual impairments.
- **Inclusion Passport** – This refers to the House of Lords reasonable adjustments tool to ensure that colleagues who require changes to their work environment receive the support they need. This tool supports colleagues with disability, colleagues who are trans (including non-binary), colleagues who observe daily or frequent religious practice and those experiencing symptoms of the menopause.
- **Action on Race Conversations** – This refers to the workshops which took place at an Office and Senior Leadership level to take forward the findings and reflections from facilitated conversations about race into tangible actions. These actions were then taken forward into Office business plans and strategies for the next year.

Office Initiatives

Building from the foundations of our first I&D strategy, 'Focus on Inclusion' enabled Offices to initiate their own inclusion initiatives and practices. The examples below demonstrate the impact of a localised approach leading to innovation and whether this was part of the business planning cycle or an organic suggestion from a colleague within the Office; each impacts colleagues' experience of the Administration's culture.



Catering and Retail Services



Catering and Retail Services

Prior to 2019, interviews for prospective catering colleagues included a practical assessment in the kitchen followed a few days later by a formal interview in front of a panel. Over time it became clear that the recruitment process didn't suit the roles that were being recruited to, detracting focus from the candidates' practical skills and conducting interviews in an 'artificial' environment which candidates were likely not familiar with. As such, senior leaders within Catering and colleagues from HR worked to create a format which enabled candidates to conduct their practical assessment on the same day as an informal interview taking place in the Head Chef's office with HR representatives – all whilst still in Chef whites.



Parliamentary Archives

As a result of the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement, the Archives conducted an Office consultation to gather ideas and experiences of how to improve the representation and inclusion of Black British history, recognising their influence of how internal and external individuals interact with the House of Lords and Parliament as a whole. The consultation resulted in a number of initiatives, including engaging the National Caribbean Heritage Museums as critical friends to comment on legislation and developing blogs about 20th century Black politicians. As well as this, the Archives is now externally reaching out to engage local cultural heritage organisations in the work of the Archives for tours and exhibitions to demystify Parliament with wider audiences.



Procedural Offices



Committee Office

In order to improve the representation of diverse groups in providing oral and written evidence, the Committee secretariat begin every inquiry with an action plan to agree a range of voices that they will aim to hear from and the steps they will take to enable that. An evaluation of the effectiveness in reaching and gathering diverse contributors is undertaken at the end of every enquiry to continually develop witness diversity. In another big step forward, from January 2021 colleagues began collecting diversity data from all who provide written and oral evidence. This will mean, for the first time, the Committee secretariat will have an accurate picture of who provides evidence, help to identify underrepresented groups, and to measure the impact of the initiative.

Legislation Office

Inclusion and Diversity champions worked with the Education Centre to invite a group of visiting sixth form students to participate in the draw of the Private Members' Bill ballot in December 2019. This presented an inclusive opportunity to promote public understanding of the House and parliamentary procedure, and a chance for the next generation to participate in it directly. The Private Members' Bill ballot is held at the start of each session of Parliament to allocate the order in which the Bills will be introduced.

The session included a presentation and an interactive quiz using wireless keypads for students to answer questions. The session ended with the drawing of the ballot by the students. This is the first time the Education Centre has hosted a parliamentary procedure. The students and teachers were positive about the experience. The session was able to improve understanding and engagement with Parliament in an inclusive and engaging way.



Library

Motivated by the events of 2020 and the experiences of colleagues within the Library, a project was created to draft an Inclusive Language Style Guide to support Library colleagues with current best practice and guidance with inclusive words/phrases. The guidance ensures that there is consistency in the team's outputs which works towards making inclusion and diversity central to everyone's work; challenging old ways of thinking that get in the way, and holding each other to account for meeting our diversity objectives. At the same time the Library's information management team began another piece of work reviewing and revising the language used to describe the collections, both in terms of sub-collections currently named after benefactors and the industry-standard language used in library catalogue records.

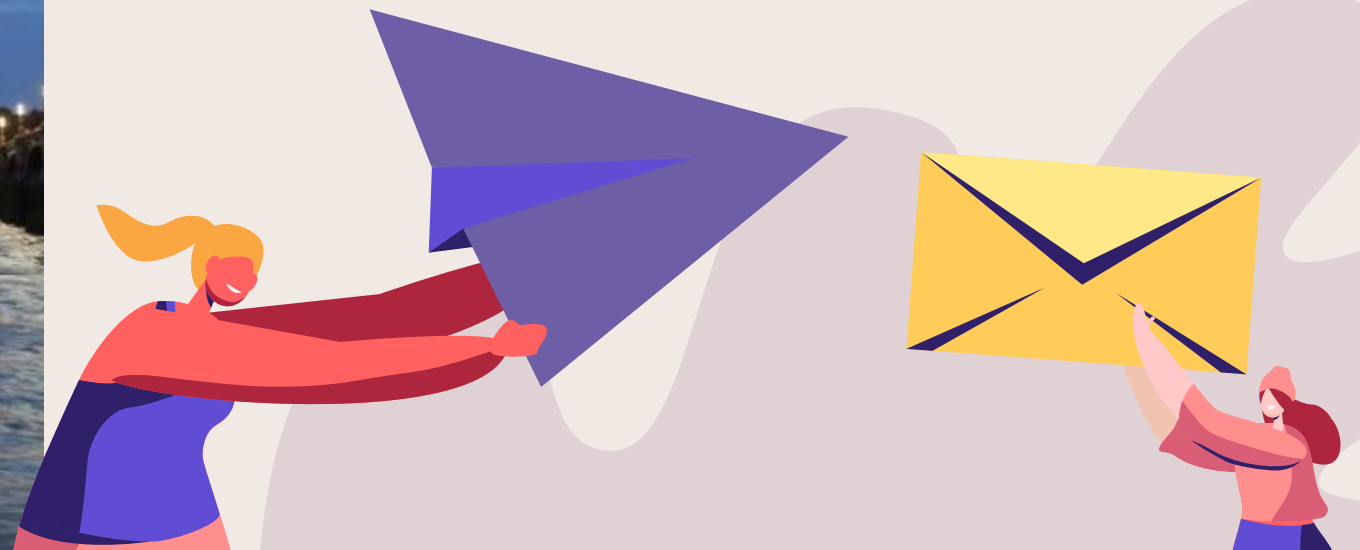


Communications



All of our communications teams work inclusively in their day-to-day working, including the Enquiry Service and Internal Communications team, who make the workings of the House and Administration accessible for all. They use plain clear language, avoiding words and terms that exclude colleagues and members of the public, to explain how the House of Lords carries out its work.

The Marketing and Digital Communications team work to ensure that opportunities for building a more inclusive culture are shared widely, such as sharing the #MixedRaceFaces campaign to highlight the differences in colleague's experiences across Parliament. Furthermore, inclusion and diversity is embedded in the House of Lords image policy and brand guidelines. For example, the House of Lords red has been adapted to meet the needs of colour-blind people.



Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
Benchmarks	Stonewall Index	Benchmark completed	Complete	Benchmark complete - Results released in March 2020 (64th position - highest new entrant to the index for 2020)
Benchmarks	Inclusive Employers Standard	Higher score achieved	Complete	Benchmark submitted - Result achieved in September 2019 (Gold status - first in the UK to achieve this status)
Benchmarks	Top 50 UK Inclusive Employers	Benchmark completed (2020)	Complete	Benchmark completed - In 2019, HoL ranked 23rd, in 2020 HoL ranked 28th and in 2021 HoL ranked 15th in the index. (Top 50 employers appear on the list)
People	Adopt a Press Pause system into our recruitment process. This will be trialed with HL8+ posts which are advertised externally during 2019	System developed; progress monitored	Complete	Press Pause launched and implemented. Pilot review conducted and programme extended to June 2021. Now includes HL7 roles and commits to sharing roles HL1-6 internally for two weeks before going external
People	Refresh diversity monitoring form with current best practice including the introduction of social mobility questions	Form reviewed and changes implemented	Complete	Questions included within our monitoring form from November 2019
People	Compare the data collected from the staff survey 2016 to the data collected in 2018 to identify trends and build specific actions for areas of concern	Trends identified, action plan in place	Complete	People Survey completed and analysis reports published including diversity data analysis reports
People	Launch an inclusion calendar; a programme of lunch and learn style awareness raising events and campaigns run on an annual basis	Programme completed	Complete	Calendar of events published, initiatives and events delivered
People	Review memberships and the effectiveness of external advertising boards we use to determine where we get diverse pools and the best results	Review conducted; list updated	Complete	Recruitment review completed

Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
People	Develop and launch a replacement for the school-aged work experience scheme focused on social mobility by 2020	Scheme launched	COVID Interrupted	COVID-19 interrupted the launch of the first cohort. All groundwork was completed and students were assigned placements. Work is underway to re-launch programme in a virtual format
People	Continue to run and develop the Mencap Work Experience Scheme	Case studies	Complete	2019-2020 cohort interrupted by COVID-19. 3 completed placements, 3 interrupted placements and 3 pending new students. 10 roles created (7/12 Offices), 5 Offices were left without placements
People	Map the inclusion experience at HoL against our employee life cycle to identify key opportunities to enhance our culture	Findings reported on actions agreed	Complete	HR specific consultation groups delivered, all elements of colleague life cycle examined. A report has been published with recommendations for each area. The HR team has committed to taking forward these recommendations
People	Review the 'keeping in touch' process from an inclusion perspective, including for people on outward secondments to identify any improvements that can be made and create an action plan	Feedback improved	Complete	The review has taken place, the recommendations have been drafted and a pilot is currently being outlined with the Director of Library Services
People	Create job shadowing opportunities (could be introduced as part of the career communities project)	Shadowing programme launched	Complete	The I&D team have defined the job shadowing process and have developed guidance, this guidance can be found within the Administration's Career Development Brochure
People	Drive changes identified by the Gender Sensitive Parliament Audit	Action plan created and delivered	In Progress	Report written for the Commission outlining progress towards the recommendations of the Audit
People	Spot check job description and recruitment process at random; identify opportunities to gain wider diversity within the candidate pool	Checks completed once every two months	Complete	A spot checking process is now routinely conducted between the HR Operation's team and the I&D team. Job descriptions are checked for accessibility and checked against inclusive language guidelines and changes are made when appropriate
People	Working differently' scheme review - work with the Business Improvement and Change (BIC) team to understand what difference the project has made to our culture and how I&D can support	Findings reported on actions agreed	Complete	The I&D team have worked closely with Communications, HR and BIC colleagues to ensure colleagues views and expectations are understood through the use of pulse surveys and engagement initiatives

Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
People	Work with the Business Disability Forum to audit and improve our policies and practices in terms of reasonable adjustments and accessibility	Audit completed, resulting in an action list being published	Complete	The Business Disability Forum have completed their recommendation reports, following facilitated focus groups and individual interviews with colleagues. The recommendations from this report have been actioned by the I&D team
Performance	Sign up to the Business in the Community - Race at Work Charter	Signed up/ commitments in place	Complete	Race at Work Charter signed and feedback received
Performance	Review the use of Inclusion Passports, to ensure they are being used by colleagues, create case studies	Case studies created, awareness raised, review completed	Complete	Inclusion Passport case studies have been published. The I&D team have received external recognition for the tool. As a result this tool has showcased the tool externally to other organisations and the tool is now being used by organisations in public, private and charity sectors
Performance	Develop our Inclusion Champions to ensure they are confident to deliver inclusion messages to their teams	Champion review completed	Complete	Inclusion champions review completed, and existing champions re-engaged
Performance	Inclusion and diversity celebrated within the House of Lords Priorities Awards	Launch awards, feedback reviewed	Complete	The House of Lords Priorities Awards are now an annual event celebrating the successes of colleagues throughout the Administration. The awards have proven to be popular with the number of nominations increasing year on year
Performance	Make the Equality Analysis (EA) process more visible, tell the story of changes they have advised, including case studies and evidence of how EA's have made us more inclusive	Greater number of EAs, case studies produced	Complete	The intranet page has now been updated with examples of EAs. Review and consultation complete. Work continuing with Commons D&I to digitise form and embed mitigating actions within the template
Performance	Review the Talent Management Programme (TMP) with the aim to improve or replace it	TMP successfully delivered	Complete	Talent management Programme delivered
Performance	I&D objective to be added into the appraisal process, options will be provided by HR	Objective included in new system	Complete	In the 2019-2020 PDR cycle all colleagues were measured against an inclusion objective, each member of the Management Board also committed to multiple personal inclusion objectives which are published on the intranet

Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
Performance	Develop a suite of guidance for colleagues and line managers on various inclusion related topics including courageous conversations, inclusion leads to innovation, inclusive appraisals guide, good feedback guide	Guidance launched	Complete	Guidance Launched on the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramadan • Menopause (and a dedicated intranet section) • Inclusive Communications • Inclusive Language • Inclusive Meetings Checklist • 'Courageous Conversations' has been incorporated into the 'Conducting High quality conversations' training course • Inclusive appraisals guidance has been incorporated and merged into the appraisal guidance and training • Inclusive Events Checklists • Feedback Five Tips for Objective and Inclusive Feedback • Inclusion leads to innovation: Research guide COVID-19 specific guidance created and shared including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Inclusion Toolkit' created with HoC D&I
Performance	Work with L&OD to inform the Leadership Development programme	Programme launched	Complete	I&D have consulted and fed into the programme's tender process and content, course to be launched following completion of tender process
Performance	Gender and ethnicity pay gaps measured and actions undertaken to narrow the gaps	Published plan, actions on-going	Complete	GPG and EPG published with actions agreed to reduce the gaps
Performance	Develop an inclusive sponsorship programme	Launch programme and monitor its results	In Progress	A business case/ report has been written by the I&D team but as yet the HR team (L&OD) is not in a position to take this forward
Performance	R&R - training and running spot checks for the supply chain	Spot checks acted on and recorded	Complete	Gap identified - I&D, EPPR and L&OD now engaged in Strategic Estates Working Group for establishing Modern Slavery policy and supplier diversity review/spot checks

Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
Performance	Career communities "meets ups" weave in inclusion for excelling in your role	I&D session delivered; materials produced	Complete	The I&D team have contributed to career community events and continue to offer time and resources to career communities, guidance has been shared with all career communities
Place	The Access and Inclusion Steering Group will advise the R&R project team and Board to make inclusive decisions	On-going support	Complete	The Access and Inclusion steering group is now firmly established, it has published inclusive design guidance and continues to be consulted throughout various design stages of both R&R and ad-hoc building and design projects. List of projects consulted on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lords decant • Option X • Fielden House refurbishment • Signage and branding • Committee room updates
Place	Create clear signposting documents for teams to fill out and display allies/ champions/ wellbeing roles	Sign produced	Complete	Posters signed off and now displayed in relevant tea points/ communal spaces/ on Office SharePoint sites
Place	Purple Spaces, working with the BIC team to ensure the purple rooms are accessible and are increasing levels of inclusivity	Findings reported on actions agreed	Complete	Surveys completed and suggestion boxes in place, issues routinely reported, and improvements made
Place	Pulse Survey on use of space and opinions of new spaces	Survey completed	Complete	The I&D team have worked with the BIC team, with Communications colleagues and HR colleagues to form an insight group, producing pulse surveys and regular engagement opportunities
Place	Access review - limit the number of restricted areas as much as possible	Trends identified, action plan in place	Complete	Positive feedback has been received following the Board's decision to drop the grade restriction on the terrace




Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
Place	Provide support and advice for Offices using new spaces particularly where teams have made the transition to open plan spaces	On-going support	COVID-19 Interrupted	Offices have been provided with advice and support on inclusive online meetings, training has been rolled out and advice published within the suite of tools available within the Inclusion toolkit
Place	Art and signage review - identifying areas where improvements could be made	Findings reported on actions and agreed	COVID-19 Interrupted	<p>Signage review completed with Facilities and Strategic Estates colleagues. Initiated in MBH with guidance created as part of the Estate Wayfinding Strategy</p> <p>Art review yet to be completed and has been delayed by COVID-19, however the I&D team are now working with the Lord Speaker's Advisory Panel for Works of Art and in the Speaker's Advisory Committee for Works of Art in the Commons to support the setting up a Collections Advisory Group</p>
Place	Collaborate with ParliGender to improve breast feeding facilities	Facilities improved	Complete	ParliGender have worked with I&D to make recommendations for improvement in this area. These recommendations have been completed by the Property and Office Services Team
Place	Conduct an audit of Committee rooms and meeting rooms on the Lords estate to determine proposals for improvements	Audit undertaken	COVID-19 Interrupted	Work is on going on this project and the Access and Inclusion Steering Group have been consulted on areas such as this by the R&R project team
Profile	National Inclusion Week initiatives - promote our inclusive culture and raise awareness internally and externally	Measure the impact of social media campaigns, measure the level of staff engagement with NIW campaigns	Complete	Since 2019 a comprehensive selection of events and engagement opportunities have been delivered, including: virtual coffee catch ups (linking colleagues from across the parliamentary estate), interactive workshops, lunch and learn sessions and social media campaigns
Profile	Reach Level 2 and Level 3 of the Disability Confident scheme	Level 3 gained (by 2021)	Complete	Level 3 Leader status reached

Annex I - Focus on Inclusion 2019-2021 Action Plan

Workstream	Action	Measure	Progress	Progress Notes
Profile	Inclusion starts with 'I' communication campaign	Campaign launched and reviewed	Complete	Following the Inclusion Spotlights campaign in early 2020, the 'Inclusion starts with 'I': Quarantine Edition' was launched during lockdown and gathered examples of individual and team efforts to demonstrate inclusion
Profile	Share stories from our Mencap Work Experience scheme	Case studies produced	Complete	Testimonials from all participants have been collected. In 2020, the I&D team were invited to share the Administration's experiences at a learning disabilities conference to encourage other organisations to create similar schemes. Case studies have also been shared to promote this scheme
Profile	Host a series of roundtable thought leadership events sharing and learning from other organisations	Attendance and feedback monitored	Complete	Three roundtable events have been hosted involving both external and internal participants, the I&D team also participate on panel events and webinars to promote best practice externally
Profile	Develop presence as a centre of excellence in the I&D sector by speaking at events and sharing our story	Events hosted and attended, learning shared	Complete	Throughout the length of the Focus on Inclusion strategy, the I&D team has presented and contributed at external events to raise the profile of the House of Lords Administration's inclusion work

Key

-  - Complete
-  - In progress
-  - COVID-19 affected action

Summary

Out of the 45 actions included within the strategy, 40 have been completed, one is currently on-going and four actions have been altered due to COVID-19, but on those four actions progress has been made. This indicates that we are broadly on track to deliver all actions but two (Inclusive sponsorship programme and an accessibility audit of Committee rooms) by the close of the strategy. These actions are beyond the scope and control of the I&D team.