

2022–25

Parliament's Digital Strategy



Introduction

Parliament's previous digital strategy ran from 2016-2021 and focused on a set of aspirations and principles that underpinned an ambition to provide excellent digital services to a modern Parliament.

During a challenging time, Parliament's Digital Service responded robustly to cyber-attacks and matured through the move to cloud computing, using agile multi-disciplinary teams for delivery and, after experiencing challenges, eventually renewed its website in 2020.

As we catch our breaths and move on from a frenetic and successful response to the pandemic, this new digital strategy sets our ambitions from 2022 through to 2025.

This new strategy was developed by colleagues from across Parliament and in alignment with the House of Commons and House of Lords strategies.

This strategy is owned by the Digital Strategy Board – a pan-Parliament body with oversight for Digital in Parliament on behalf of the two Management Boards.



David Smith OBE

Chief Information Officer & Managing Director
of the Parliamentary Digital Service



Context

Parliament is an ecosystem including multiple organisations and business models.

The Parliamentary Digital Service (PDS) is a joint department of the House of Commons and House of Lords. PDS exists to provide reliable digital services that allow Parliament to function and enable Members and staff to work at their best.

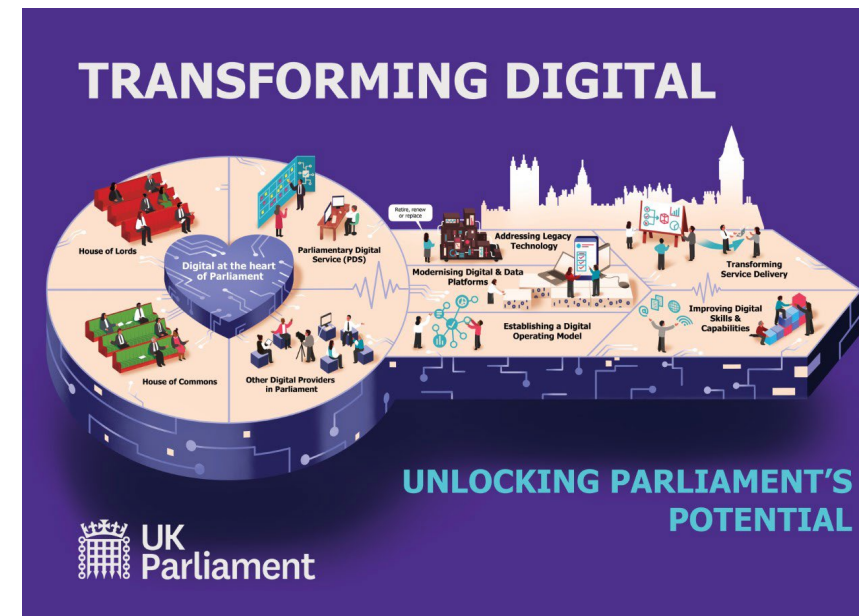
Parliament needs to change its operating model in order to successfully meet digital demand, and affordably and sustainably deliver digital services. The new model must allow Parliament to embrace change and to work differently.

This strategy is intended to support Parliament's key functions of legislating, scrutinising the government, controlling expenditure and representing the citizen.

This strategy is designed to support however the parliamentary estate develops in the future and the recent and rapid extension in hybrid ways of working.

This strategy is a sub-strategy of both the **House of Commons Service Strategy** and **House of Lords Administration Strategy**.

To support the need for improvement within Parliament's overall digital system, the Transforming Digital Programme was established and is scheduled to run from 2021-2025.



Priorities for 2022–25

- 1** Ensure that our digital services are flexible, secure and resilient, in the face of evolving threats

It is vital that the digital services on which Parliament relies continue to be secure and robust, offering the required level of availability. It is essential that services are designed to be aligned to this need, delivering value in an affordable way commensurate to the value to Parliament.

- 2** Keep pace with advances in digital technology to support parliamentary functions and modern working practices, and to engage and empower Members and staff to make the best use of digital

Experience of digital technology as consumers outside of Parliament informs the expectations of Members and staff. We will strive to optimise the balance between the constraints of security and affordability and the imperative to enable the provision of parliamentary services to benefit from advances in digital technology and allow people to work flexibly, in multiple locations in the manner and pace of today.

- 3** Make digital more sustainable and scalable by updating our operating models and identifying opportunities to improve ways of working

Our current operating model needs to evolve to meet the demand of Parliament's users on digital services to make digital delivery both affordable and sustainable. We will identify ways to work differently and embrace change, in particular through approaching our financial model in a new way.

- 4** Enable Parliament to make best use of its data and information securely

Digital services must be designed to protect, improve the quality of, and enable value to be gained from, Parliament's data and information assets. The two key disciplines of information management and security must be balanced and encapsulated in those digital services with the least intrusion and restriction on the user. This will be enabled by having robust, reliable, secure and timely infrastructure capabilities and standards in place for processing and storing Parliament's data.

Making the strategy a reality

To support this we will:

1. Define, agree and manage enterprise standards for IT and digital

We anticipate a future where Parliament's digital needs continue to grow, and where the ability for PDS to meet all of these needs is impossible (as is already the case).

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 a clear set of IT and

digital standards. 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.

2. Deliver digitally enabled business transformation to Parliament's core services

Through the vehicle of our Transforming Digital Programme, we will continue to work with specific areas of Parliament to transform and improve the delivery of services. We've already started to improve how we resolve IT issues for our customers, and how we support the end-to-end journey for new joiners to Parliament.

Next up we will be working with the procedural teams in Parliament to improve our approach to delivering and maintaining core parliamentary digital services, ensuring key systems are reliable and sustainable, better meeting the needs of Members (wherever they are working) and ensuring there is more transparent and accessible data on the work of Parliament and its Members.



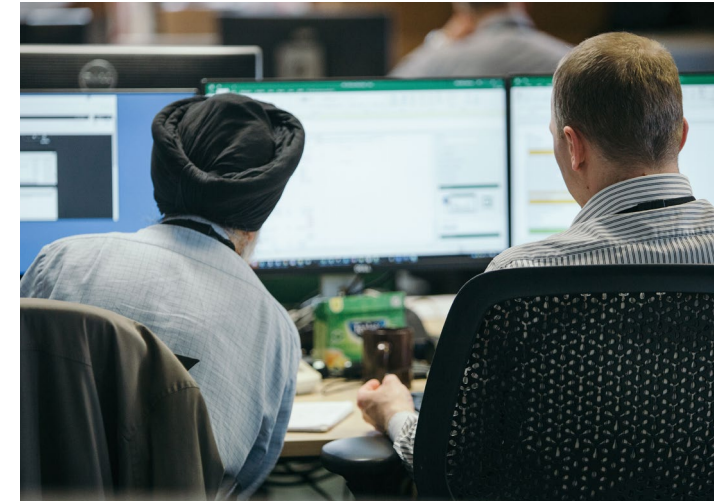
Making the strategy a reality

To support this we will:

3. Ensure improvement in data availability, quality, and accessibility

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

We will build a new modern cloud-native open data integration platform with associated procedural data services (fed by our published APIs), replacing legacy data technology as we go.



4. Continue to reduce legacy technology

We've made great progress in the past year to understand our legacy technology estate, and we now routinely assess and prioritise investment to tackle the areas that present the greatest risk or are major customer pain points.

Our next steps are to continue to tackle this prioritised list whilst also addressing some of the systemic causes of significant build up.

Making the strategy a reality

To support this we will:

5. Continue to build digital skills

For Parliament to be able to meet its digital potential, we need to be able to recruit and retain digital talent, in particular specialist skills such as cyber security experts and software engineers. We need to become more competitive in the market and expose the exciting work we do here at Parliament.

We will create a new pipeline of digital talent and mechanisms for retaining existing talent in PDS and the Houses. We will introduce a

new skills and capability framework which demonstrates how employees can develop their careers in digital within Parliament and be recognised appropriately for the skills they bring. We will continue to build digital skills for everyone and will further integrate digital leadership skills into existing development programmes.

6. Improve digital culture and community

Given the culture of Parliament, and the multiple organisation and supplier environment that we operate in, active, respectful, and open collaboration across our communities is essential.

That means greater integration of business and digital roles, and a recognition that having the right behaviours, skills, and relationships when developing digital solutions is absolutely fundamental to achieving good outcomes.



Measurement & review

Further to the approval and publication of this strategy, a measurement framework will be developed and monitored by the Digital Strategy Board.

This strategy will be reviewed annually – and where appropriate – updated to reflect evolving priorities and progress.

