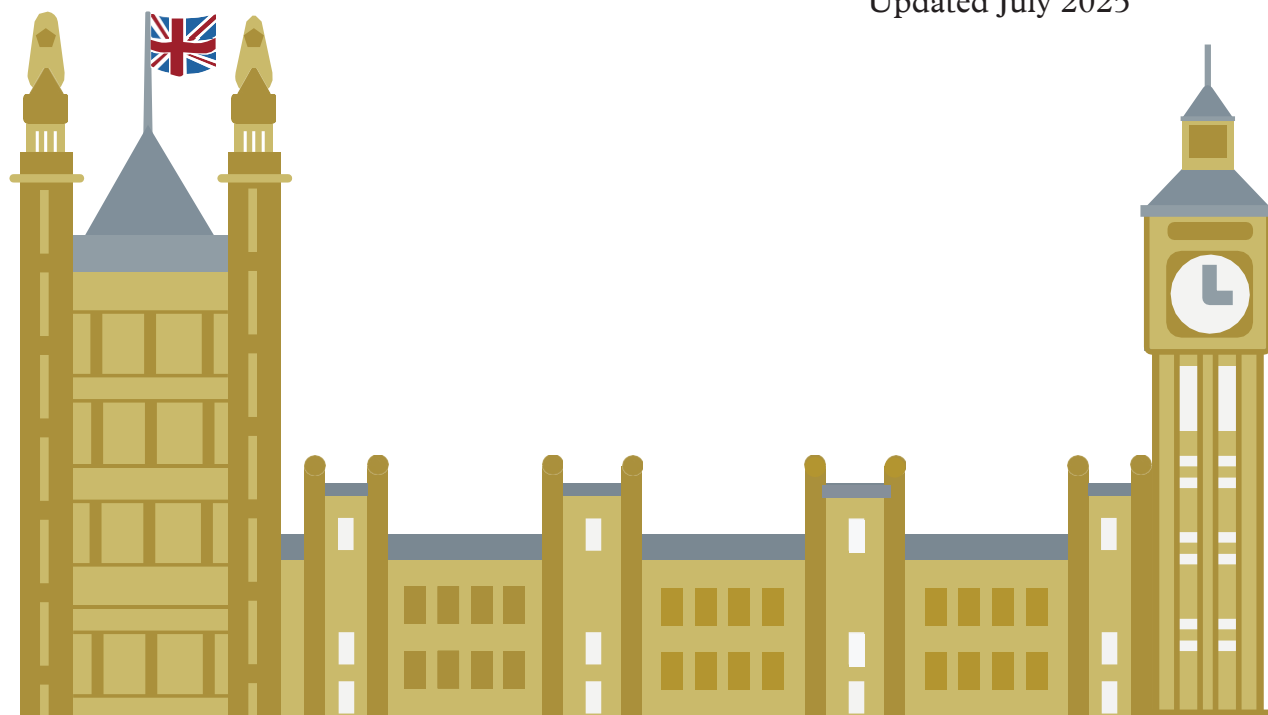


HOUSE OF LORDS

Information for witnesses appearing before House of Lords Committees

Updated July 2025



Contents

Location	3
Committee Corridor	3
How to get there	3
Entering Parliament	3
Accessibility	3
The Committee meeting	4
Before the meeting	4
Beginning of the meeting	4
Questioning	4
Facilities	5
Data protection	5
Declaration of Interests	5
Votes	5
Length of meeting	5
Recording the meeting	5
Following the inquiry	6
People in Committee meetings	6
Layout of a Select Committee Room	7
Map	8

Thank you for agreeing to give evidence to a House of Lords Committee. We want to make the process as straightforward for you as possible, so please contact the Committee staff with any concerns or questions you have.



Location

Committee Corridor

Oral evidence hearings usually take place in one of the rooms on the Committee Corridor in the Houses of Parliament. The Committee staff will email you before the meeting to confirm the time and room number. We ask witnesses to ensure they are ready and waiting outside the Committee Room 10 minutes before they are due to appear.

How to get there

The Houses of Parliament are located in Westminster in the centre of London and are well served by public transport. Westminster Underground station is a few minutes' walk from the public entrance, and there are bus stops nearby. Transport for London's website can help you plan your journey.

Further information on finding the Houses of Parliament, including maps, is at <https://www.parliament.uk/visiting/access/directions>.

Entering Parliament

Please present yourself to the Visitor Assistants or the Police Officers at the main public entrance (marked 8 on the attached map), explaining that you are a witness to a committee. You can show your red digital fast-track pass (or print-out) to bypass queues at security. Please still allow at least 10 minutes to pass through security. If you are being accompanied by colleagues or friends who are not giving evidence, they will not be able to be fast-tracked, so they should leave extra time to pass through security.

You should then proceed to the Committee Room. Parliamentary staff can provide directions.

Accessibility

If you have any access requirements or require any reasonable adjustments, including provision of this information in another format, please contact the Committee staff in advance of the meeting. If you need to be accompanied by a specific person(s) as a reasonable adjustment, please let the team know, so they can also be issued a fast-track pass. For more information about accessibility, please visit <http://www.parliament.uk/visiting/access/disabled-access/>.

The Committee meeting

Before the meeting

When you arrive at the Committee Room you should wait outside in the Committee Corridor as most Committees have short private meetings before the evidence sessions start.

When the Committee is ready a member of the Committee staff will show you to your seat and indicate where you can place coats and bags.

You may be asked to give evidence alongside other organisations or individuals. If this is the case, you will be notified before the meeting.

Sometimes Committees hold several evidence sessions in one day. If this is the case, you are very welcome to arrive early (or stay behind afterwards) to watch the other sessions from the public seating in the Committee Room.

Beginning of the meeting

Once you are seated, the Chair will formally welcome you and any other witnesses and ask you to introduce yourself. You may also be invited to make an opening statement, should you wish to. This should be brief (less than two minutes).

Questioning

The meeting then proceeds with the Chair and Members of the Committee asking questions.

In the week ahead of the meeting you can normally expect to receive from the Clerk a list of questions which provide a framework for the evidence session. They are prepared by Committee staff for the Chair and other Members of the Committee for guidance and to enable witnesses to prepare for the meeting, but there is no guarantee that Members will use them or follow the order in which they appear.

Members may not ask all the questions on the list and they may add others; the list is intended only to give an indication of the areas that may be covered.

Members and witnesses speak through the Chair. All Committee Members will have a nameplate in front of them, which you can use as a guide if you need to address them by name. It is preferable to keep answers short and succinct. Except by prior arrangement with the Committee staff, you should avoid using handouts or slides as these can pose difficulties for the transcription of the evidence (see below). You should avoid relying too heavily on prepared answers, although you may refer to notes.

Please remember to speak clearly as the acoustics in some of the Committee rooms are poor: the Chair may remind you of this.

Declaration of Interests

On the Committee's website you will be able to view a list of Members' interests which are relevant to the inquiry.

Members may also declare relevant interests when speaking for the first time in the public meeting.

Votes

If the House of Lords is sitting at the time of the Committee meeting (Monday to Wednesday afternoons and Thursday from 11 am) it is possible that there will be a division (vote). A bell will ring if there is a vote and the Chair will briefly adjourn the meeting in order to allow Members to go and vote.

Length of meeting

Oral evidence sessions vary in length but generally last between 40 and 90 minutes. The Committee staff should be able to give you an indication before the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, the Chair will thank you on behalf of the Committee and a member of the Committee staff will show you out of the room. Committees often have a short private meeting after a public meeting to reflect on what has been heard.

Recording the meeting

A full transcript of the meeting will be taken. Committees place an uncorrected transcript on the website. You will have an opportunity to make minor corrections, and an updated transcript will subsequently be placed online.

All public meetings are webcast live, and are subsequently available to watch on www.parliamentlive.tv. Some meetings may also be broadcast on BBC Parliament.

Facilities

You will find lavatories half way along the Lords Committee corridor, which are signposted. There is a water fountain outside the lavatories. Water is provided in the meeting.

The Jubilee Café provides refreshments for all visitors to the Palace of Westminster, and is located immediately after you pass through security.

Data protection

Information on how the House of Lords administration collects and processes personal data on those who give evidence to Committees can be found at <https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/data-protection/lords-data-protection-information/>.

Following the inquiry

The Parliament website (www.parliament.uk) has links to each of the Committees, where you will find lists of forthcoming meetings, transcripts of oral evidence and further details about Committee work.

People in Committee meetings

Members: All Members of the Committee are Members of the House of Lords. They are appointed by the House to serve on that particular Committee. Some Committees also have the power to co-opt other Peers on to a Committee for the duration of an inquiry. Any Member can ask questions of witnesses. Members sit around the horseshoe table (see diagram of Committee Room). Any other Peers who are not Members of the Committee can attend and also ask questions.

Chair/Chairman: One Member of the Committee is appointed by the House as the Chair. Members of the Committee ask questions through the Chair. The Chair sits at the head of the horseshoe table.

Clerk: A member of staff of the House of Lords who heads the Committee team. The Clerk is responsible for administering the inquiry, providing procedural advice to the Committee as necessary, preparing briefing for the Committee and helping the Chair to draft reports. Clerks sit at the table next to the Chair, but they (and the other members of staff, listed below) do not speak during public evidence sessions.

Committee Operations Officer: A member of staff who provides administrative support to the Committee, and who is often involved in communicating with witnesses before and after the meeting. They may sit at a side-table near the door, to greet visitors to the meeting.

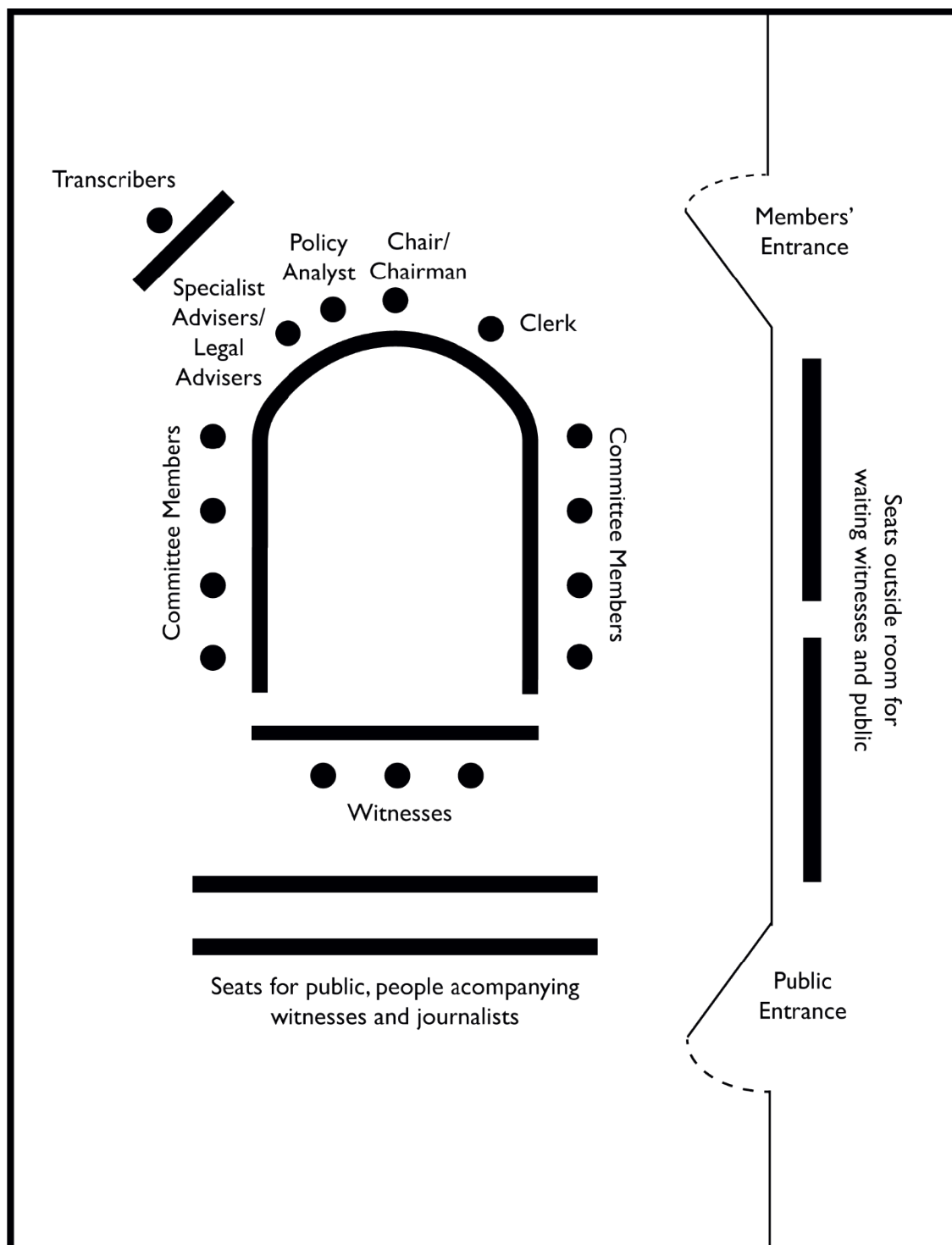
Policy Analyst: A member of staff who provides policy expertise and research support to the Committee, and who may assist the Clerk in drafting briefings and reports. They normally sit at the table with the Clerk and Chair.

Specialist Adviser: For most Committee inquiries the Committee appoints one or more Specialist Advisers. These are experts in the field of the inquiry who provide independent advice to the Committee about policy relevant to the inquiry. They will often be involved in helping the Chair draft and review the Report. These Advisers sit at the table with the Committee.

Legal Adviser/Legal Assistant: Members of staff of the House of Lords who provide expert legal advice to the Committee. They normally sit with the other staff at the table. They only participate in inquiries that raise specific legal issues.

Transcriber: They produce the verbatim report of the evidence session. They will usually sit at a table to the side of the horseshoe.

Layout of a Select Committee Room



The precise room layout may differ slightly for some meetings.

Map



By Rail
Nearest stations are Charing Cross,
Victoria and Waterloo (20 - 30 minutes walk)



Underground
Westminster (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines)

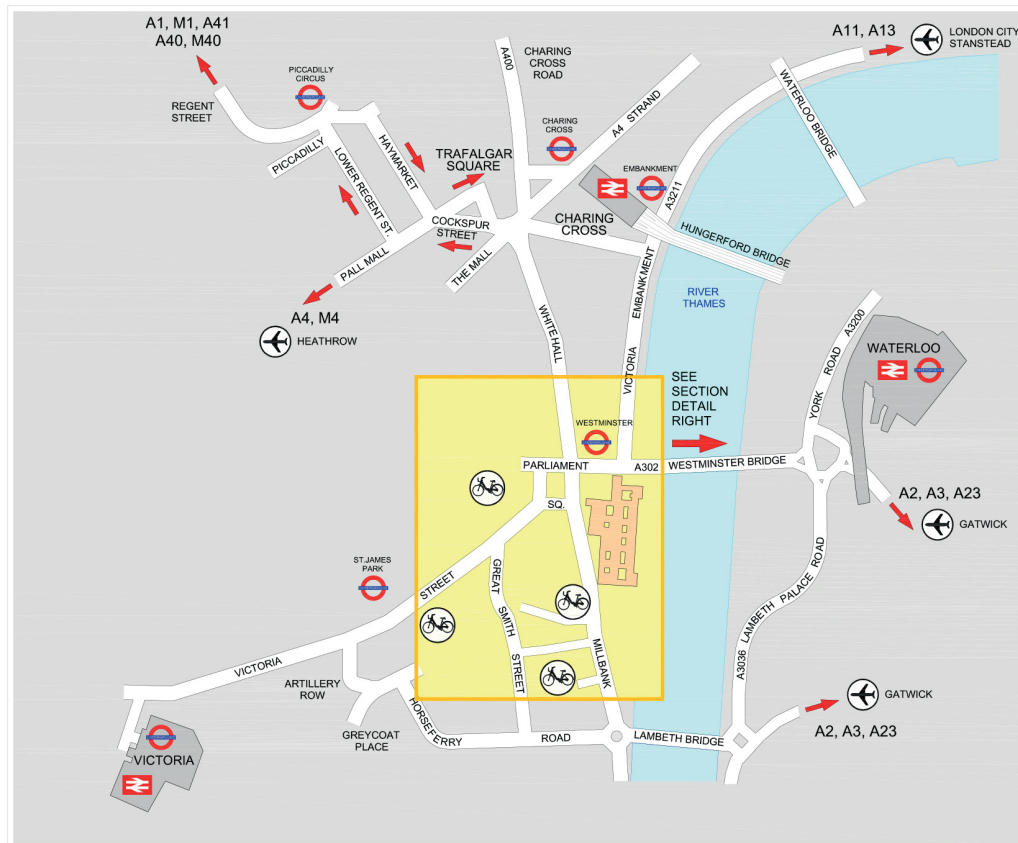


By Bus
Buses 11, 12, 24, 26, 87, 88, 148, 159, 211, 453, N3, N11, N26,
N44, N53, N87, N109, N136, N155 & N381 all stop nearby.

Use of public transport is advised as
there are no public car parks located nearby
and meter parking is expensive and scarce.



Santander Cycle Hire Docking Station



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT Strategic Estates

KEY

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (A) RICHMOND HOUSE | (1) NORTH ENTRANCE (VEHICLES ONLY) |
| (B) NORMAN SHAW NORTH | (2) DERBY GATE |
| (C) 1 DERBY GATE | (3) 1 PARLIAMENT STREET PASS OFFICE |
| (D) 1 CANON ROW | (4) HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT SHOP |
| (E) NORMAN SHAW SOUTH | (5) PORTCULLIS HOUSE MAIN ENTRANCE |
| (F) PORTCULLIS HOUSE | (6) TOURS TICKET OFFICE |
| (G) 1 PARLIAMENT STREET | (7) CARRIAGE GATES |
| (H) PALACE OF WESTMINSTER | (8) MEMBERS' ENTRANCE |
| (J) PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION CENTRE | (9) CROMWELL GREEN (VISITOR) ENTRANCE |
| (K) MILLBANK HOUSE | (10) ST. STEPHENS ENTRANCE |
| | (11) PEERS' ENTRANCE |
| | (12) BLACK ROD'S GARDEN PASS OFFICE |
| | (13) EDUCATION CENTRE MAIN ENTRANCE |
| | (14) MILLBANK HOUSE MAIN ENTRANCE |

