

# Press release: Draft bill to restore and renew Palace of Westminster published today

The bill to restore and renew the Palace of Westminster has been published in draft today (18 October 2018) – implementing the decision taken by Parliament to move forward with a full programme of work.

The [Draft Parliamentary Buildings \(Restoration and Renewal\) Bill](#) establishes the statutory bodies responsible for the work to ensure value for money for the taxpayer, whilst securing the Palace of Westminster as the home of the UK Parliament for future generations.

It also ensures Parliamentarians are consulted and given a vote on the design, cost and timing of the work.

Andrea Leadsom, Leader of the House of Commons, said:

I am pleased that the publication of this draft bill allows the programme to make progress. It marks the next step in Parliament's efforts to protect the Palace of Westminster as the home of our democracy for future generations.

Following agreement by MPs across all parties, we are supporting Parliamentary Authorities to deliver on that decision, and press ahead with this work.

The government's role is to ensure taxpayers' money is protected, and the measures in this draft bill reflect our determination to ensure the delivery of the restoration and renewal programme runs to time and represents the best value for money. There can be no blank cheque for this work.

The draft bill gives effect to the resolutions voted for by Parliament earlier this year, to create a governance structure for the project by setting up a Sponsor Body, a Delivery Authority and an Estimates Commission.

These bodies will be able to make strategic decisions on the restoration and renewal programme.

The Parliamentary Works Sponsor Body will have overall responsibility for the restoration and renewal programme and is comprised of a mixture of Parliamentarians and external experts.

It will also be empowered to form a Delivery Authority – a non-profit company that will put forward proposals for the restoration works and ensure they are delivered on time and to specification.

This two-tier approach, as used in the successful London Olympics project, was approved by Parliament as the best structure to deliver a value for money programme.

The bill also establishes a Parliamentary Works Estimates Commission which will review and comment on the Sponsor Body's cost estimates and lay them before Parliament.

This bill also gives the Treasury powers to scrutinise and comment on the annual estimates for the funding of the programme. The National Audit Office will also be able to undertake audits and value-for-money reviews.

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park, Leader of the House of Lords, said:

As an important parliamentary project, the publication of the draft bill will give members of both Houses, and other interested parties, an opportunity to scrutinise the approach being taken to the governance of the Restoration and Renewal Programme before the bill is introduced.

We welcome the forthcoming Parliamentary scrutiny to ensure that the draft bill achieves the aim of ensuring that the Restoration and Renewal Programme will be sufficiently independent, transparent and accountable to Parliament and to the public.

The decision to take forward these works was made by MPs across Parliament as a result of serious structural, mechanical and electrical, fire safety and asbestos issues in the Palace of Westminster, which cannot be resolved outside a major programme of refurbishment.

Unless significant restoration work takes place, major, irreversible damage may be done to the building, and the risk of a significant building failure is increasing every year.

1. On 31 January 2018, the House of Commons approved a resolution that work should commence on the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster.
2. The resolution required that 'immediate steps be taken' to establish a Shadow Sponsor Board and Delivery Authority, and that their 'statutory successors' be established by legislation in due course.
3. A resolution in identical terms was approved by the House of Lords on 6 February 2018.
4. The UK Parliament's Restoration and Renewal Programme was established to tackle the significant work that needs to be done to protect and preserve the heritage of the Palace of Westminster, and ensure it can continue to serve as home to the UK Parliament in the 21st century.
5. Both Houses of Parliament decided to create a Sponsor Board in shadow form in July, with the following members:
  - Elizabeth Peace CBE (Chair)
  - Lord Carter of Coles
  - Lord Deighton KBE

- Rt Hon the Lord Geidt GCB GCVO OBE
- Neil Gray MP
- Brigid Janssen
- Rt Hon Sir Patrick McLoughlin MP
- Marta Phillips OBE
- Baroness Scott of Needham Market
- Mark Tami MP
- Simon Thurley CBE
- Simon Wright OBE

6. For more information, please contact the Restoration and Renewal Media Relations Team on 020 7219 8716 or email [restorationandrenewal.comms@parliament.uk](mailto:restorationandrenewal.comms@parliament.uk)