



House of Commons Library

Services for Members' staff

The House of Commons Library provides a range of services to meet the information needs of Members' staff. These include a reference enquiry and documentation service; a range of online information sources; guidance in the use of library resources; and, where appropriate, specialist research assistance. This leaflet briefly describes these services, but further information may be found in the following documents which are available from the Library and on the Intranet: *House of Commons Library: Statement of Services, What is Where in the Derby Gate Reading Rooms* and *Who does What in Research*.

Derby Gate reading rooms

Library facilities for Members' staff are based in 1 Derby Gate, which is at the north end of the Parliament Street building. Two sizeable reading rooms provide a reference enquiry service and guidance in the use of Library resources generally, and you can either telephone or, if you are based in Westminster, call in person. There are PCs in both rooms providing access to a range of databases and other electronic sources via the Parliamentary Intranet. Further PCs and IT facilities can be found in the **e-Library** on the ground floor of Portcullis House.

Authorised Users

You must have a valid photo-identity pass if you wish to visit the reading rooms. Holders of pass categories 1, 1A, 2-8 inclusive, 9A, 9B, 9D, 9F and 9G are permitted access. In addition, Whips' Office staff (category 32) and holders of category 10 and 25 passes may use the facilities provided that they are working for a Member. Visitors and holders of day-passes are not admitted.

Current Affairs Room

Telephone **6767**
e-mail: dglibrary@parliament.uk

The main entrance to the Current Affairs Room is on the ground floor level, and leads to a gallery, where Library staff are based to deal with your enquiries. You will find here general reference books - *directories, yearbooks, encyclopaedias and dictionaries* - and government department *press notices* and *leaflets*. Holdings of recent *newspapers, periodicals* and Library *research papers* are located at basement level.

PCs are available on the lower ground floor and can be used to access a range of electronic information sources including the Library's PRESS and POLIS databases, newspapers on CD-ROM and online services such as *Dod's, Constituency Locata* and *Lexis-Nexis*.

Official Publications Library

Telephone **3838**
e-mail: dglibrary@parliament.uk

The Official Publications Library is on the first floor (Room L101) and contains collections of *parliamentary papers, Hansard, deposited papers* and *government publications*. The statute law collection includes the *public general acts, statutory instruments* and *Halsbury's* publications. Staff in the OPL will deal with enquiries relating to business in both Houses, the passage of legislation, parliamentary and government publications and case law.

Opening Hours

The Current Affairs Room is open from 9.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 9.00am to 4.30pm on Friday. The Official Publications Library is open from 10.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 9.00am to 4.30pm on Friday. During recesses, both rooms are open from 10.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Book & Video Service

Telephone **1515**

You may need to contact the Book & Video Service (BVS) in the Members' Library to borrow books on behalf of your Member. If you do, please try to give as much detail as you can about the book or pamphlet you wish to borrow. The BVS also operates interlending arrangements with other libraries and can obtain books and articles from journals not held by the Library.

Video tapes of certain news and current affairs programmes are borrowed from the broadcasting companies on a regular basis and tapes of other radio and TV programmes on current affairs can generally be obtained on request. Viewing and listening facilities are available (by appointment) in the Palace.

Research services

Staff in the Library's research sections are also based in 1 Derby Gate. They provide a politically impartial research service, responding to requests from individual Members on all subjects, and preparing a range of papers on current legislation and other topics of interest.

You may need to consult research staff or their specialised holdings on behalf of your Member, but unlike the reading rooms, research offices are private, and you should always check with staff in the reading rooms or telephone before going there in person. The names and telephone numbers of individual research staff are provided in *Who does What in Research*.

When you contact the Library's research staff, try to give them as much detail as you can about what your Member wants to know and the context in which the information is to be used. You should also be able to state the date and time when it is required. Research staff do their best to meet all reasonable deadlines and if you give as much information as possible, they are more likely to be able to provide you with a timely response that is appropriate to your Member's specific needs.

Using the Library

We ask you to make yourself known to staff in the reading rooms in 1 Derby Gate before starting to use the Library. We also strongly recommend that you undertake one of our introductory tours, which we give regularly when the House is sitting, and less frequently in recesses. Tours can be booked with the staff in the Current Affairs Room, or by telephoning 020-7219-6767.

In addition, we offer training in the use of the Library's own POLIS, PRESS and EDM databases, and in other networked information services made available by the Library. To find out more, or to book a place on a course, you should contact the Library Help Desk on 020-7219 2345. Details of courses can also be found on the Library web pages.

Photocopying and faxing

The Library does not have the resources to be able to undertake extensive photocopying or faxing. We can, exceptionally, provide copies of individual short items of an urgent nature, but as a rule you will be asked to come to Derby Gate and photocopy material for yourself. If you are based in the constituency, we will try when possible to provide copies of material not readily available outside Westminster, but you must bear in mind our general restriction on photocopying and faxing.

Please...

- try to formulate your enquiries as explicitly as possible
 - do not set unreasonable deadlines
 - be prepared to do your own work when we give you the guidance and resources to do so
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*We welcome any comments on, or questions about, our services. These should be sent to:
Head of Reader Services, House of Commons Library, 1 Derby Gate, London SW1A 2DG
(tel: 020-7219 5556; fax: 020-7219 3921; e-mail parryk@parliament.uk).*