

# Review of Facilities at Holyrood: Summary Report



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The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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# Introduction

Providing facilities that are safe, accessible and support dignity is a core responsibility of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) in its roles as an employer, workplace provider, service provider and public authority.

The SPCB must comply with a range of laws, including protections against discrimination and the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010, and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

As the national Parliament, our overriding aim is to balance the needs and legal rights of all those who work at and visit Parliament in an inclusive and welcoming way. In so doing we recognise that staff and visitors have multiple protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act, and/or cultural beliefs, as well as privacy and dignity considerations which should be considered.

This report presents the findings of the Review of Facilities at Holyrood. It provides an evidence-led assessment of current provision across the estate and establishes a clear basis for the next phase of work. The review forms part of the SPCB's wider commitment to ensuring that its facilities, services and working environment are inclusive, welcoming and responsive to people's needs.

# Background and scope

The review sits within the context of the Inclusive Parliament Review, which is intended to ensure that everyone working at, or for, the Parliament has a voice in the future design and delivery of facilities, policies, and services.

Since 2021, the Facilities Management (FM) office has regularly assessed workplace effectiveness as part of the Building for the Future strategy.

Previous surveys have provided valuable insight into how Holyrood's facilities support users and have informed priorities for service improvement and investment. These surveys covered workplace facilities, remote support and the Garden Level Restaurant.

The first phase of the review was a discovery phase, using recognised methodology to gather the views and experiences of Members, SPCB staff and Members' staff. This report draws on that evidence, together with operational insight, diversity data, and the Accessibility Audit. The findings are further supported by an updated Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), strengthening the basis for inclusive and evidence-based decision-making.

# Background and scope

The review was undertaken in line with the agreed Terms of Reference.

These required a comprehensive assessment of the provision, designation, and accessibility of toilets, changing rooms and showering facilities across the estate.

## In particular, the review considered:

- how well existing facilities meet people's needs in practice.
- whether the SPCB's interim approach remains proportionate, inclusive, and evidence-based.
- barriers affecting accessibility, confidence, and dignity.
- the clarity of signage, layout, and information.
- the evidence required to inform future options.

Taken together, this provides a robust, evidence-led assessment of current provision and a solid foundation for the next phase of work.



# Key findings

Our current provision is designed to meet capacity and complies with relevant requirements.

The review shows that while many people report a positive overall experience of facilities at Holyrood, that experience is not consistent for all. Differences in confidence, comfort and dignity are evident, particularly in relation to accessibility, privacy, and choice. In some cases, these differences are felt more prevalently, by colleagues who are disabled, neurodivergent, or trans or non-binary.

The key findings of the review are as follows:

- **Accessibility and usability:** While facilities are available, access in practice is influenced by suitability, layout, and user confidence.
- **Privacy and dignity:** Single-occupancy facilities play an important role and the Parliament is likely to benefit from increasing its single-occupancy provision to further support privacy and dignity.
- **Wayfinding and information:** Inconsistent signage and information can make it more difficult for users to identify appropriate facilities with confidence.
- **Maintenance and condition:** Overall cleanliness is positive, but maintenance is less consistent, particularly in showers and changing areas.
- **Choice and consistency:** The availability of different facility types does not always translate into the perception of meaningful choice for users.

# Key findings

The findings suggest that compliance alone does not determine the quality of the user experience.

Design, clarity, consistency and user confidence are all critical factors in shaping how people experience the facilities at Holyrood. This highlights the need for a more consistent and inclusive approach to facilities provision. This includes ensuring that provision is coherent, intuitive and supports confidence for all users.

The review also confirms that the SPCB's interim approach, providing a mix of single-sex, gender-neutral and accessible facilities, remains an important part of meeting a range of needs. However, the evidence identifies areas where the approach would benefit from greater clarity, consistency and further supporting measures to ensure it works effectively in practice.



## Phase 2

This report does not set out final decisions. Rather, it provides the evidence base for Phase 2 of the Review, which will be taken forward by the Director of Operations and Digital.

Phase 2 will build on these findings to develop and assess options for improvement. Any proposals will be proportionate, evidence-based and deliverable within the constraints of the estate. They will also be informed by inclusive and accessible design principles, so that options are both practical and technically robust. Options will be assessed against consistent criteria, including privacy, accessibility, safety, usability, value for money and legal compliance.

Facilities Management will continue to review and assess facilities as part of its ongoing Building for the Future programme of work. This will help ensure that provision remains responsive to user needs, informed by operational insight and kept under continuous improvement.

In taking this work forward, the Director of Operations and Digital will continue to ensure compliance with relevant health and safety, building and equality requirements, taking account of Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance.

The SPCB's interim approach will continue to be kept under review in light of the EHRC Code of Practice, which is currently under parliamentary consideration and, if approved, will be brought into force on a date set by the UK Government. Findings from Phase 2 will be reported to the SPCB to inform consideration of next steps.

# Conclusion

This is a sensitive and, for some, deeply personal matter. During Session 7 of Parliament, the SPCB will continue to approach this work with care, respect and transparency, with the aim of securing practical, proportionate and inclusive outcomes.

The overall objective remains to ensure that facilities at Holyrood support dignity, accessibility and confidence for everyone who uses the building, now and in the future.

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