
The background of the page features a series of concentric circles in a light blue color, centered around the text. The circles vary in diameter, creating a ripple effect that fills the entire page.

A Guide to Producing Laid Papers



Working with HH Global on your Command and House Papers

Command and House Papers are documents laid before Parliament. This guide tells you about them, and how to arrange for your Paper to be laid and to provide the copies required to Parliament.

You can use this guide as a quick reference point or for a more detailed explanation of how to produce your papers for laying.

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1. What are Command and House Papers

There are four main types of paper, with slight changes to the wording needed on the covers and title page/page one of your document. It should be clear which type of paper you are producing but if you're not sure, the Journal Office in the House of Commons can confirm what kind of paper it should be.

Command papers (CP)

These set out major policy proposals, consultations, Government Responses, and some independent reviews, laid before Parliament. These papers are presented to Parliament by senior ministers under royal command, and this laying authority must be explicitly stated on the title page, e.g:

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for [your Government department or agency] by Command of His Majesty

House of Commons papers (HC)

These are typically documents such as Annual Reports and Accounts, statutory and policy papers, which must be laid before either the House of Commons or Parliament under specific legislation, such as this example:

Accounts presented to the House of Commons pursuant to section 6(4) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on [date]

Unnumbered Act papers

These are reports and other documents that must be laid before Parliament under specific legislation, such as this example:

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section [X] of the [Legislation] Act [Year]

Unnumbered Command papers

Only produced under very exceptional circumstances, please refer to your Parliamentary clerk. Examples of Unnumbered Command papers include Explanatory Memoranda and Impact Assessment to Statutory Instruments.

2. Who gets involved

Laying, which means making the information contained in the document available to the House and its Members, and publishing a Parliamentary paper is a collaborative process that involves the following teams and also the appointed Lot 1 supplier – currently HH Global.

The teams and roles below are a guide, depending on your organisation and the Paper concerned. Responsibilities affecting Parliament, The National Archives and HH Global, however, remain constant.

Team	Role
Authoring Team/Senior Colleague	<p>The authoring team within a government department or a senior colleague in an ALB or agency is ultimately responsible for the drafting, approval and publication of a paper.</p> <p>They are also responsible for checking that there are no errors or omissions in the paper. While team structures may vary, final approval and sign-off should be made by someone at an appropriate grade.</p> <p>This is usually a senior civil servant who should provide final approval sign off before printing.</p>
Comms Team/Press Office	<p>Your Comms Team or Press Office, will liaise directly with Number 10 to allocate a date for the laying of any Parliamentary paper. This is often referred to as getting a date 'on the grid', which is a plan of all government activity that will happen on any given day.</p> <p>Give your Comms colleagues as much notice as possible, a clear explanation of the item, and copies of any documents you can share with Number 10 in order to get their clearance for a laying date.</p> <p>Your laying date is not final until it has been confirmed by No. 10.</p>
Parliamentary Branch	<p>The Parliamentary Branch team liaises directly with the Journal Office, the Vote Office and other parts of Parliament regarding the formal laying process. They also work with policy teams/senior colleagues on written statements or other supporting documentation.</p>

Team	Role
HH Global	<p>HH Global hold the cross-government contract for producing Parliamentary papers. We offer a 'one stop shop' covering ISBN and page furniture issuance, studio services such as design, typesetting and creation of web accessible and Large Print edition files, printing, Govspeak/HMTL, copy editing and proofreading – and any alternative formats you may need.</p> <p>HH Global also liaise with the House of Commons or the House of Lords to confirm how many copies they may need and print and deliver these – and we produce the Advanced Laying Information twice daily, which is supplied to the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office, to advise the Houses what papers are due to be laid before the House on any one day.</p> <p>Contact: commandandhouse.team@hhglobal.com</p>
The National Archives	<p>The National Archives allocate Command paper (CP) numbers, where applicable. See the CP and HC numbers section for more information.</p> <p>They also provide further guidance on production and publishing of Parliamentary papers on their website or by emailing official. publishing@nationalarchives.gov.uk</p>
The Journal Office	<p>The House of Commons Journal Office is where papers are formally presented for laying before the House of Commons.</p> <p>The equivalent office for papers laying before the House of Lords is the Printed Paper Office.</p> <p>When a paper is laid before Parliament, it is laid in both the Commons and the Lords. Before the paper is laid, you or your Parliamentary Branch colleagues should send front and back cover, title page and copyright page files to the Journal Office for approval, to ensure these are correct before finalising the PDFs for laying or sending the files to print.</p> <p>The Journal Office also allocates House of Commons (HC) numbers where applicable. See the CP and HC numbers section for more information or email journaloffice@parliament.uk</p>

Team	Role
The Vote Office	<p>The House of Commons Vote Office supplies printed copies of Parliamentary and government documents to MPs and others.</p> <p>Delivery of the printed copies of a Parliamentary paper to the Vote Office is arranged by HH Global.</p> <p>HH Global can also arrange file creation and printing of the Large Print edition of any paper required by the Vote Office to be made available for all Command and House papers.</p>
The Printed Paper Office (PPO)	<p>The Printed Paper Office supplies printed copies of Parliamentary documents to Peers in the House of Lords.</p>
GOV.UK team	<p>All Command and House Papers are loaded onto the GOV.UK website by departments digital comms team. The team will need to be informed of planned new publications, and will work with the policy teams to arrange the supporting web page information, and which formats will be published.</p> <p>If your organisation does not have GOV.UK publishing permissions, liaise with your parent department to arrange publication.</p>
Digital Comms (BSL only)	<p>If you need to produce a British Sign Language (BSL) video, this will need to be uploaded to your department's YouTube channel before the GOV.UK link can be created.</p>

3. Publication Formats

These are the publication formats for a Parliamentary paper:

1. Printed hard copies of all Command and House Papers EXCEPT ALB and agency Annual Reports & Accounts are required by the Vote Office. The Printed Paper Office require copies of Law Commission and Command Papers only. However, the Printed Paper Office will be contacted by HH Global for any high profile publications, to see if they require copies. HH Global will arrange the printing and delivery of these.
2. A fully accessible web-enabled PDF should be made available on GOV.UK and an elay PDF to be sent to the Journal Office for laying.
3. A 20pt Arial Large Print edition of all Command and House papers is required by the Vote Office. If you are an agency or ALB and your document is an Annual Report and Accounts, you should supply a PDF. For all other papers you must supply the 20pt edition as a printed hard copy.
4. HTML (or Govspeak for publishing on GOV.UK).
5. An open text format (similar to a Word document, but that can be opened by any word processing software) may be requested but is not obligatory.

HH Global can provide all the above formats as required.

4. Briefing HH Global

Ask us to send you the latest version of the HH Global Briefing Form

Use the form to request services from HH Global including:

- studio services such as typesetting or creation of a 20pt Large Print edition
- ISBN and page furniture issuance and production of House copies
- printed copies for your own team or stakeholders
- any alternative formats.

Complete as much detail as you can – it's the starting point to get HH Global involved, and to allocate you a job number and point of contact. We'll send you a cost estimate and indicative schedule based on your brief and once we get your Purchase Order, our work on your paper can begin.

5. Planning

It's wise to build in some contingency on final dates for cleared text from policy/senior colleagues. Make sure you leave enough time from the date your colleagues and ministers will give final sign off of the document text, and allow for the studio services, printing and binding your documents. Liaise with your HH Global Account Manager to agree a workable schedule.

Get early agreement to timings from senior colleagues

Once there is agreement to publish a Parliamentary paper, production is arranged to meet the paper's laying and publication date – which in most cases will be fixed.

The production process might be complex with short or frequently changing timescales. Occasionally working outside normal business hours may need to be considered.

When a paper is in production, it's essential to keep everyone involved informed of progress, or any potential issues, particularly those that may impact timelines. Ensure that key contacts, including your HH Global Account Manager, have your correct contact details, and that you have theirs.

Agree a schedule that allows enough time to circulate and check proofs. Overrunning projects mean greater expense. Be aware that timelines may change, but the laying and publication dates are usually fixed.

Timings for a Parliamentary Paper

The timeline below suggests a typical schedule for a Word to PDF requirement. If you require additional services from HH Global, such as typesetting or design, please contact your account manager for a full schedule, as timings can be significantly longer.

You may want to create your own schedule or ask HH Global to help with key dates.

You'll need to allow more time if you are also producing the paper in HTML/Govspeak or alternative formats, such as Audio, BSL or Easy Read.

What	Who	When
Paper commissioned	Minister, Authoring Team	-8 weeks
Placeholder publication date discussed with Press Office	Authoring Team, Press Office	-7 weeks
Draft your paper	Authoring Team	-7 weeks

What	Who	When
Agree roles, sign off level and timescales (sign off should be SCS level where possible)	Authoring Team, stakeholders	-7 weeks
Send briefing form to HH Global	Authoring Team	-6 weeks
Discuss clarifications, including any graphs, tables, etc.	Authoring Team, HH Global	-6 weeks
Design and production cost estimate submitted	HH Global	-5 weeks
Send your Purchase Order to HH Global	Authoring Team, Budget Holder	-4 weeks
Draft sent senior stakeholders for comment	Authoring Team	-4 weeks
Obtain Command (CP) number from the National Archives OR House of Commons (HC) number from the Journal Office* *Send an email to the relevant address, stating the title and proposed laying date to request a number	Authoring Team	-3 weeks
Confirm Number 10 grid date	Authoring Team, Press Office	-2 weeks
Send draft text for GOV.UK holding page to web team	Authoring Team	-2 weeks
Confirm with the Journal Office that your document's back and front cover, title page and copyright page are acceptable for laying	Authoring Team	-2 weeks
Contingency time for comments from senior stakeholders	Authoring Team, HH Global	-12 days
Ministerial clearance (if required)	Minister, Authoring Team	-10 days
Final draft to HH Global for conversion	Authoring Team	-10 days
Final sign off: checked for errors at SCS level	Authoring Team	-8 days
Confirm okay to proceed with HH Global	Authoring Team	-7 days
Printing	HH Global	-6 days
Confirm final GOV.UK page wording	Authoring Team	-3 days
Send PDFs and other online versions to GOV.UK team	HH Global	-3 days

What	Who	When
Prepare GOV.UK pages – but these are not published yet	GOV.UK	-2 days
20pt Large Print PDF copy to the Vote Office	HH Global	Laying day
Embargoed hard copies to Parliamentary Unit, ministers and policy stakeholders (if print copies requested)	HH Global	Laying day
Hard copies to the Vote Office (Commons) and the Printed Papers Office (Lords) if not Arms Length Body Annual Report and Accounts	HH Global	Laying day
E-lay ready PDF emailed to the Journal Office and Printed Paper Office (as appropriate) for E-laying	Parliamentary Unit	From 9.30am
Email advance copy to remaining ministers, and other email recipients	Authoring Team	After 9.30am
Confirm that paper has been laid in Parliament	Parliamentary Unit	Laying day
GOV.UK pages and versions of the paper goes live	GOV.UK	Laying day
HH Global confirm final costs, ready for billing	HH Global	+2 days

6. CP and HC Numbers

If you're laying a Command or House of Commons Paper, you'll need to be allocated a CP or HC number and an ISBN.

Command paper (CP) numbers

Send a brief email to official.publishing@nationalarchives.gov.uk explaining:

- which department you're from
- the draft title of the Command paper
- what the planned publication date will be
- requesting a CP number to be allocated.

Command paper numbers are valid for one month.

If a paper is not laid within the month, advise the National Archives as soon as possible so that the number can be withdrawn and if relevant, a new number allocated.

How the numbering system works

Each 'prefix' code runs from 1 to 9999. When a series gets close to 9999, a new prefix is created.



The National Archives introduced a new series, with a 'CP' prefix. CP 1 – 9999 applies to Command papers laid from 1 January 2019.

For Command papers laid before 1 January 2019, look for a Cm number instead.

House of Commons (HC) numbers

Send an email to journaloffice@parliament.uk

- with a subject header “HC number request from [name of the department you’re from]”
- the draft title of the House paper
- what the planned publication date will be
- asking them to allocate an HC number
- one sentence outline or purpose and content of paper.

Timing

House paper numbers are sequential, restarting at the beginning of each Parliamentary Session which normally starts around May/June.

The Journal Office will only allocate an HC number when there’s less than a month to go before your publication date.

If the expected publication date changes, you must let the Journal Office know but the HC number will still be valid unless the paper is laid in a different Session to the one originally planned.

Multi-volume papers

In the unusual event of publishing a House paper as two (or more) separate volumes, each must carry a title page. The laying letter and each title page should make it clear that there is more than one volume. If the same HC number is being used for a multi-volume document, the volumes should be numbered as HC123–I, HC 123–II, HC123–III, using uppercase roman numerals to differentiate each volume (same process applies for Command Papers).

7. Copies and Distribution

Printed hard copies of all Command and House Papers EXCEPT ALB and agency Annual Reports & Accounts are required by the Vote Office. The Printed Paper Office require copies of Law Commission and Command Papers only. However, the Printed Paper Office will be contacted by HH Global for any high profile publications, to see if they require copies. HH Global will arrange the printing and delivery of these.

Print edition

Parliamentary Branch	Please check if your Parly branch requires printed copies
Owning Minister	Please check if the Owning Minister requires a printed copy

Large print copy

A printed hard copy 20pt Large Print edition is required by the Vote Office for all Command and House Papers EXCEPT Agency Annual Reports and Accounts. A print-ready and Elay PDF 20pt Large Print edition should be provided for Agency Annual Reports and Accounts.

Digital copies

Secretary of State
Permanent Secretary
Ministers – the Owning Minister may also require a hard copy
Communications/Press Office
The Journal Office needs a print PDF for laying
Parliamentary Branch requires both a print PDF and a fully accessible web PDF for publication on GOV.UK

Printed copies required by the Vote Office or the Printed Paper Office are arranged and delivered by HH Global and are separate from the above distribution list.

8. What you might expect to pay

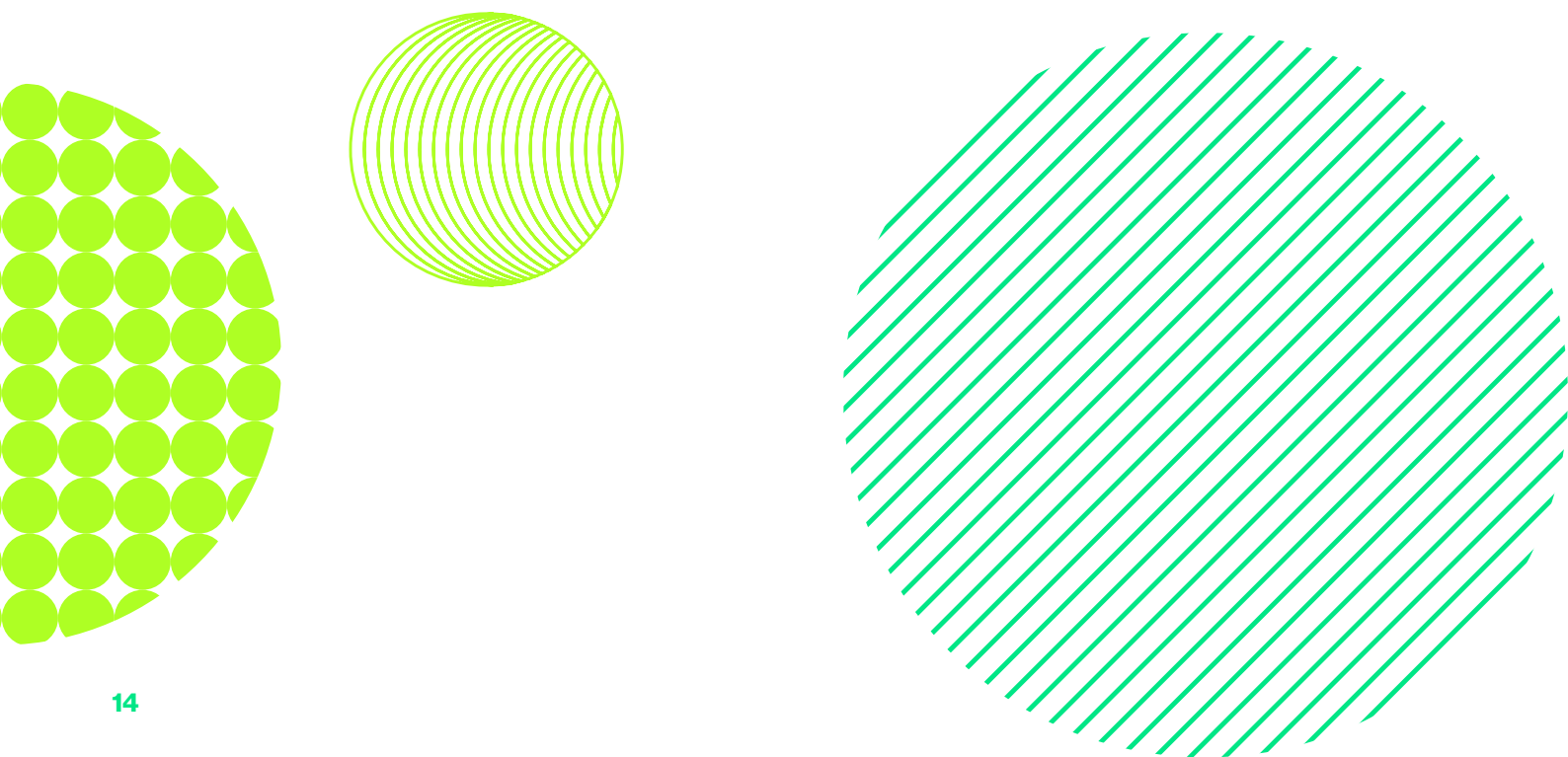
Design costs

A simple file conversion to turn your formatted and final Word document into a print PDF will be the cheapest and quickest studio service. Design, typesetting, creation of web, 20pt Large Print and other formats will increase the cost. All our costs are based on a contractually agreed ratecard, which will be reflected in the quote you receive from HH Global. Costs start from a few hundred pounds for a Word to PDF conversion of a short document and increase according to the length and complexity of the document and your requirements.

Print costs (if printed copies requested)

Print costs depend on the number of pages, mono or colour print, how many copies and the weight and type of paper used for your document. Our print costs include the delivery of printed copies to Parliament. Additional delivery charges will apply for deliveries of client copies.

- Print copies may be required for key stakeholders. Other users should access the online PDF version of the document published on gov.uk.
- Documents will be printed on paper that contains a minimum of 40% recycled content and which meets the requirements of the contract under which the printing service is provided.



9. Publishing on GOV.UK

Authoring teams should notify their GOV.UK digital communications team around three weeks before the expected laying date. The team will work with you to draft any supporting information on the page where the paper will be hosted, ready for publication.

Once the signed-off paper has been sent to print, you are required to supply your GOV.UK digital communications team with:

- Print PDF version for laying and publishing on GOV.UK
- Fully accessible web PDF that has any images ‘tagged’ and is coded to be used by screen-reader and other assistive technology.

If alternative formats, such as Audio or BSL are being published, the GOV.UK team will work with policy and other contributors to also create links to the department’s YouTube (video) and Soundcloud (audio) pages.

A copy of the completed GOV.UK page with all the files and links should then be held ready. No publishing, to GOV.UK or any other web location should be made until there is confirmation from the Parliamentary Branch to the Authoring Team that the paper has been laid.

Older papers

As policies and priorities change, previously published Parliamentary papers may be superseded. Superseded documents should never be removed from GOV.UK as this will result in the paper no longer being searchable. If a document is superseded, organisations should archive the GOV.UK page which the document was originally published page on which the document was originally published.



10. Accessibility

The publication must comply with the Equality Act 2010, and you must provide materials in alternative formats when requested.

Due to the manpower these formats need for their creation, costs can be significant. Costs for alternative formats can be sourced/supplied on application.

The main thing for policy teams to consider when deciding on alternative formats is the **likelihood** of a request for the paper in a different format.

This will be in addition to the 20pt Large Print edition covered in section 9.

Production

Alternative formats are also produced by HH Global, sometimes through sub-contractors. They are:

- Fully accessible web PDF, compliant with required WCAG standards, which must be produced from the signed off print PDF and submitted to the Journal Office at the time of Laying.
- British Sign Language (BSL) and audio versions are usually produced from the signed off full version of the paper. In some cases, this may mean they're not available on exactly the same day as the paper is laid. This allows for the time required to create a script for the signer and subtitles to use. This needs to be the final version, as making amends would mean re-writing the script and re-booking the signer.
- Braille and Easy Read can be started from a draft version, in advance of final approval, as amends are easier to be actioned.

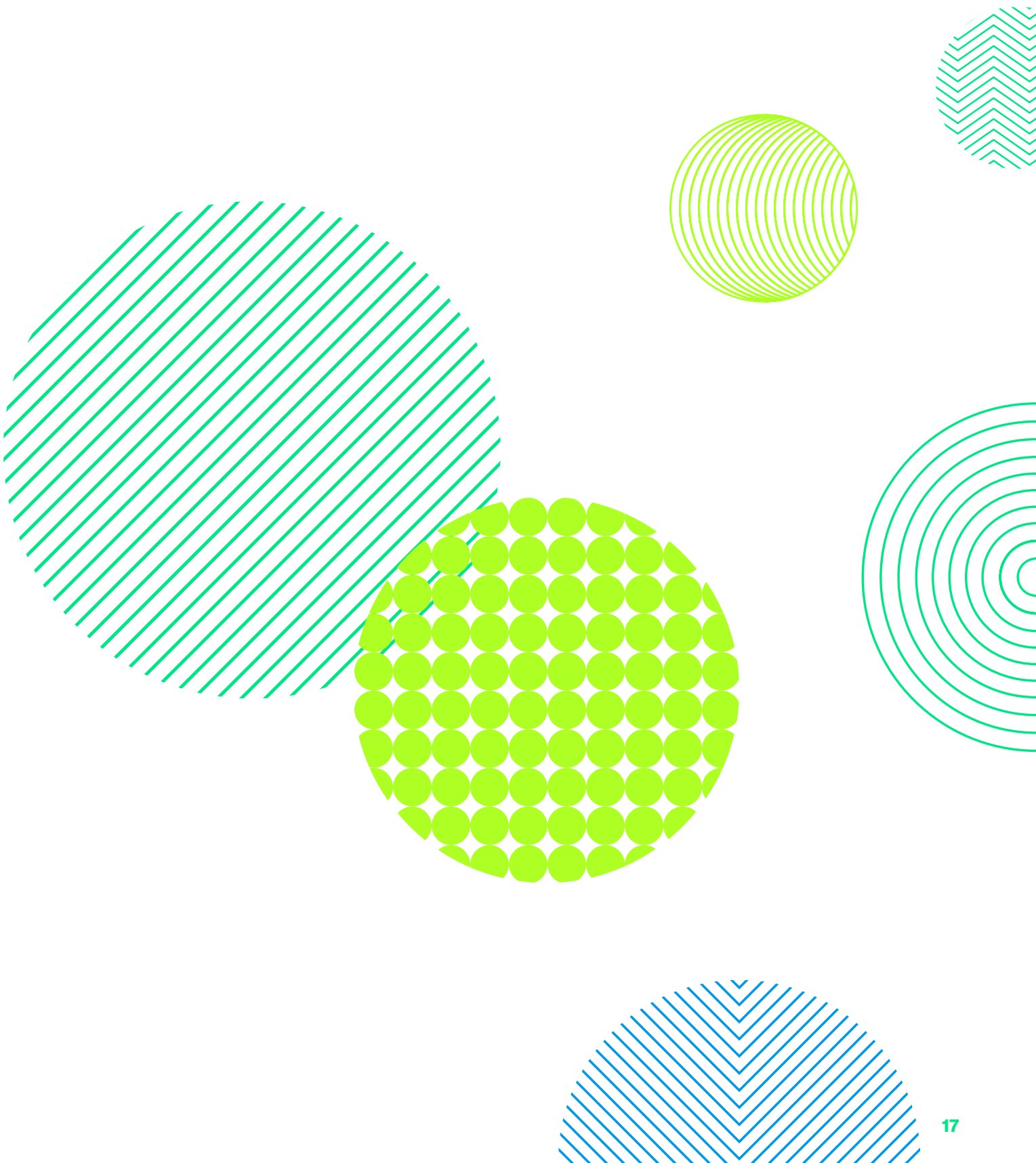
The requirement for alternative formats should be discussed at the start of your planning, to allow HH Global to provide quotes and advise on timings.

As a physical product, Braille copies are generally held by the owning authoring team and mailed out on request. All other alternative formats are published on GOV.UK alongside the main PDF of a paper.

If you opt to produce a British Sign Language (BSL) video, this will need loading to the department's YouTube channel before the GOV.UK team can create the online link.

11. Other Languages

Generally Papers are only produced in English, except where there is a requirement for Welsh, Braille or British Sign Language (BSL). HH Global can help you with all your translation needs – please make sure you request this on your briefing form, if it's required.



If you would like any more information about producing a document for laying, or if you want to know more about how HH Global can support your document production, please contact the Command and House Papers Team at HH Global at commandandhouse.team@hhglobal.com

Thank you.

