

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

ALASDAIR MACKENZIE
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

The Education and Engagement Service in the Houses of Parliament exists to provide free training for the public, specifically for groups who want to engage with Parliament. This might include engaging with their Member of Parliament, a Member of the House of Lords, or getting involved with Select Committees. 80% of the time is spent working with target audiences who are statistically less likely to engage with parliament. These include:

- Women
- Young people (aged between 16-24)
- Black and Ethnic Minorities
- People with disabilities
- LGBT

Alasdair Mackenzie, Community Outreach and Engagement Manager, manages the team on a national basis and has been working with terptree to facilitate wider engagement with the Deaf Community.

Alasdair first discovered terptree in 2016 when Victoria made contact clearly talking about the importance of deaf customer experience. He told us “The articles came in the post, with key points highlighted and a handwritten commentary on what had taken place. The first gave an example of a Deaf person receiving poor customer service, which was followed up a week later with an article with the reverse – a coffee shop going the extra mile to service their Deaf customer needs. We were suitably intrigued, as we had no idea who these had come from. When Victoria Williams (Founder of terptree) called me, we jumped at the chance to engage with her and terptree.”





When asked how working with terptree had benefited his team, Alasdair explained that it has enabled them to reach a larger audience than before because of the links that Victoria and terptree have into the Deaf community.

“It’s really helped us to think more about accessibility. Charlotte, the Community Outreach Officer for London and the South East, is writing an equality analysis looking at the needs of all our target groups. As a result of engaging with terptree, we want to look at using material such as film clips and getting these out to as many people as possible, Victoria and terptree are trusted in the Deaf community and this is really important to us to be able to work with a partner who has this reputation. We see an ongoing role for terptree in providing more support for the ‘How Parliament Works’ sessions. We are also keen on collaborating with terptree further on podcasts so that we can keep engaging with our target audiences. “

“The first thing that happened was Victoria came to meet with the team here to tell us about the work terptree do with the Deaf Community.

After that I visited terptree’s office on a historic day (the day of the Brexit referendum) to provide some training to the terptree team on how Parliament works. Victoria invited me to join her weekly podcast that day and I was delighted to get involved.”

At terptree, we were also delighted that Alasdair provided his input to our podcast and were excited about working with his team to reach a wider section of the Deaf Community.

Alasdair told us about the work terptree has carried out with the Houses of Parliament. “terptree provided interpreters to provide access to two of our ‘How Parliament Works’ training sessions, which were filmed so that they could reach a wider audience. We run these sessions every month, and have had them interpreted in the past, but we have never filmed them. This proved so successful that we are looking to engage with terptree to interpret these sessions at least once or twice each year.”

Alasdair told us that he would happily recommend **terptree** because of the working relationship that has been very quickly established. “We are a small team of seven and have to use commercial suppliers to support our work. We are completely impartial and independent of any political party, and it is vital for us to work with a trusted partner who can give us access to a wider audience. What’s great is that **terptree** bring a wider social and community dimension to the party, and this is key for us in the work we are doing, and plan to do, to increase engagement with Parliament.”



Hi, I’m Victoria, Founder of terptree. Call us today to find out how you can attract, serve and retain deaf customers and offer a world class deaf customer experience on 01635 886 264.



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