



HM Government

The Way We Work

A Guide to Smart Working in Government



CIVIL SERVICE REFORM



Foreword

The Challenge of Reform

It is said that people are an organisation's greatest asset. I strongly agree. The dedication and commitment of our colleagues is one of the best things about working in the Civil Service.

But all too often people are delivering high quality services against a background of outdated IT, poorly designed workplaces and inflexible working practices. People can only realise their full potential, and that of the organisation they work in, if we empower them with the right tools and the right environment. More than anything we have to free-up the culture of work so that people can just get on with it unhindered. This is why the way we work is so very important.

The Civil Service Reform Plan sets out a goal of 'Creating a decent working environment for all staff, with modern workplaces enabling flexible working, substantially improving IT tools and streamlining security requirements to be less burdensome for staff'. The Way We Work will help us realise this goal.

Working smarter means that we have to challenge all the assumptions of our traditional ways of working and bring in new approaches to management and teamwork, with a sharp focus on management by

outcomes. We need to develop skills and shared expectations about how work is done, and be innovative in developing more effective and efficient ways of working.

Transforming the way we work is not a 'nice-to-have'. It is the only way to make sure we provide the services our customers expect and demand – now and in the future.

This book is a guide to smart working in central government. It throws a spotlight on best practice that is really making a difference to the way people work.

We all have our successes – but rarely in all areas. Where people are doing things that are clearly working, adopt them as your own. I encourage you to go for it – and then share what improved!



Martin Donnelly

Permanent Secretary, Business Innovation and Skills, and Chair of the TW3 Delivery Board



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Our aim for this book is to provide a guide to the new ways of working brought in through the Civil Service Reform programme which will enable all parts of the Civil Service to work seamlessly across locations, and at times that are more advantageous to citizens, employees and taxpayers.



1 The vision

The way we work is changing – but not fast enough. In the current challenging climate, most companies and public sector organisations are looking closely at what they do and how they do it.

Now is the time to take steps not only to weather the current economic pressures, but also to plan for the longer term. Working smarter should be at the heart of transforming and streamlining our organisations.

This goal is at the heart of the Civil Service Reform Plan. So we are setting out the vision that by 2015 the Civil Service will be more efficient and a better place to work, where people:

- Focus on outcomes not process
- Are empowered by technology
- Work flexibly and cost-effectively
- Collaborate more effectively with other teams in their own department and other departments
- Maximise productivity and innovation while reducing environmental impact.

We aim to ensure that, by end 2015, we will be well on the way to a Civil Service in which:

- Well-designed workplaces support how people work best, with location options such as shared hubs, hosted space, HQs and home
- Work is being done in a variety of appropriately designed shared settings within those workplaces, no longer tethered to a desk
- IT is usable, convenient and works just as well in and away from the office; and is comparable to the technology people use at home
- Connectivity to colleagues and to data can be provided from virtually anywhere
- Security and access arrangements make it easy and safe to work in a variety of settings
- Leaders embrace and exploit the flexibility, productivity and effectiveness offered by the changes to our workplaces.

Work in the 21st century is about what you do, not where you do it. Strategic use of new technologies enables much of the work we do to be carried out from many other locations as well as offices.

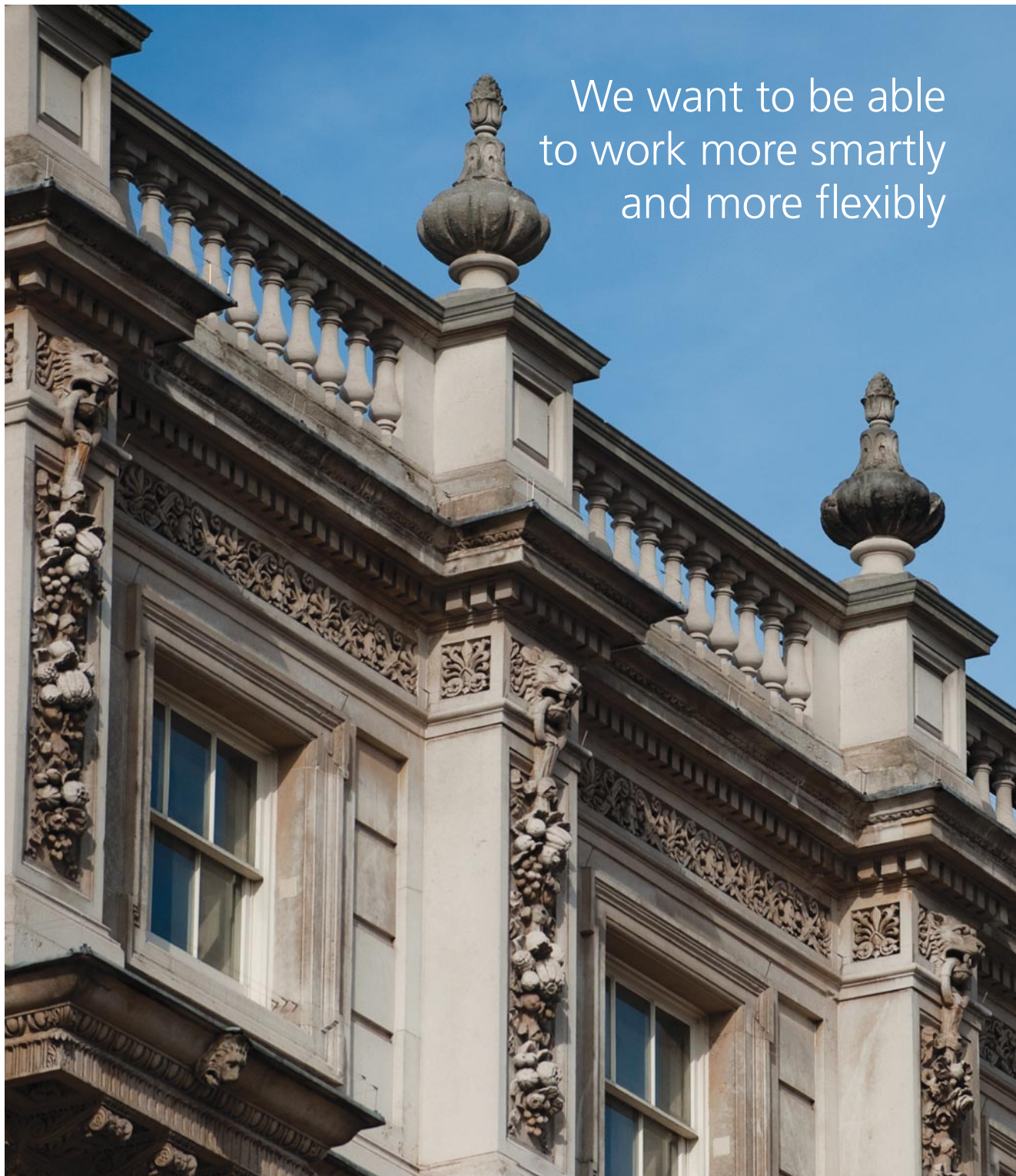
Our aim for this book is to provide a guide to the new ways of working brought in through the Civil Service Reform programme which will enable all parts of the Civil Service to work seamlessly across locations, and at times that are more advantageous to citizens, employees and taxpayers.

We call this Smart Working

The Way We Work (TW3) is the Cabinet Office led cross-departmental programme designed to help realise the Civil Service Reform Plan's aim of 'Creating a decent working environment for all staff, with modern workplaces enabling flexible working, substantially improving IT tools and streamlining security requirements to be less burdensome for staff'.

Transforming the way we work is not a 'nice-to-have'. It is the only way to make sure we provide the services our customers expect and demand – now and in the future.





We want to be able
to work more smartly
and more flexibly

Cabinet Office

The Cabinet Office itself has ambitious plans for transformation linked to IT, workplace and cultural reforms and Richard Heaton, Permanent Secretary for the Cabinet Office leading this programme says: "I am determined to create in the Cabinet Office the best possible working environment, with technology that meets people's needs. We want to be able to work more smartly and more flexibly,

better able to collaborate across all our teams and to be more creative, innovative and productive. In the near future staff will see more choice in the workplaces they can use and the IT they are offered, whether they're in the office or on the move. Their IT will be more like the range of devices and software we are all used to outside work. Like others we're transforming the way we work and I'm pretty sure that when we get this right Cabinet Office will be up there with the best."

2 Key principles of Smart Working

Smart Working is about taking a comprehensive and strategic approach to modernising working practices across Government.

It is based on the following principles:

- Work takes place at the most effective locations and at the most effective times, respecting the needs of the task, the customer, the individual and the team
- Simplified collaboration and connectivity virtually everywhere means sharing information and working with others regardless of location
- Space is allocated to activities, not individuals and not on the basis of seniority
- A Flexibility First approach where flexibility is the norm rather than the exception. Everyone is assumed to be capable of Smart Working without assumptions being made about people or roles
- A shared and agreed approach to Smart Working balances the freedom to choose with the responsibility to meet business needs
- The processes people are asked to work with are continuously challenged to make sure they are fit for purpose
- Managing performance focuses on results and outcomes rather than presence

The outcomes of adopting Smart Working will be:

- Greater productivity and services delivered more effectively
- The costs and environmental impacts of work reduced as space is shared and used more intensively
- People having more choice about when where and how they work, supported and connected by effective and appropriate use of technology
- People have the opportunity to lead more balanced and healthier lives.

What will this mean in practice?

For **departments**, this means a new approach to thinking about the way people work in terms of Smart Working principles.

Smart Working provides a strategic and business-focused framework for adopting smart, agile working as the norm. This means taking a proactive rather than a reactive approach to flexibility, by seeking out the benefits rather than waiting for individual employee requests. Limitations on flexibility need to be based on clear operational need.

Management by results rather than presence – which is best practice in any case – will become further embedded as a core management competence.

Assessing the total costs of how we work should inform decisions about work styles. This includes both the financial costs and the environmental costs (e.g. in relation to use of buildings, resources, and travel). In essence, the footprint of work is reduced.

As a result of the greater flexibility and agility, departments will become more adaptable to change. For example, working in project teams across departments, changes to organisational structure and changes to headcount will become much easier to manage and involve few of the physical changes to workplaces that are currently involved.

Business continuity will be enhanced by the ability to work in an all-electronic environment and from a much wider range of locations. In effect, the office is the network.

For **individuals**, this means being empowered to choose the best times and places to work, varying start and finish times and choosing work settings that suit the nature of the task and personal preferences so that the job can be done well and quickly. Managers focus on the output and employees choose how it is delivered.

As a result, trust-based relationships become central for both employees and managers as people take greater ownership of their work style.

This greater autonomy will increase the opportunity to lead more balanced and healthy lives. Smart working patterns also underpin and add new dimensions to diversity and equality.

In summary there are positive impacts from Smart Working on the 'Triple Bottom Line' – benefits for public service, for people, and for the environment.

An end to wasteful working practices

Wasteful practices are built into traditional ways of working:

- The average UK worker commutes for just under an hour per day – equivalent to 4 years over a working life
- The average full-time employee is absent for 6.8 days per year, 7.9 in the public sector
- There are some 10 million office workers in the UK occupying 110 million m² of office space...
- ...with average occupancy in a traditional office over the working day at around 45%.



The Department of Culture, Media and Sport

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has a high requirement to be adaptable to changing demands and the requirements of its project-based work. Being smart and flexible has given the DCMS the agility it needs.

Since 2007 the DCMS has been on the path of working smarter. Initially going open plan and consolidating four buildings into two, the substantial shift to Smart Working came in 2010 with a move to hot-desking. Since then working smarter has become part of the DNA of the DCMS.

At 100 Parliament Street everyone works in open plan areas, including the Permanent Secretary and the Executive Board. There is a 7:10 desk-sharing ratio. Working is set up to be completely mobile, and everyone is able to work remotely including from home.

'It wasn't a significant culture change for us. People worked pretty flexibly already,' says Paul Walker, Head of IT and Estates. 'We also have flexible resourcing, with project teams brought together for limited periods. About 30% of people are on secondment from other departments. People are always moving around. So the flexibility in the teamworking needed to be matched by flexibility in the organisation of space, and the provision of the right IT tools.'

There are two kinds of work areas: team hubs, e.g. 35 people with a hub of 10 desks, and project tables, where a team is brought together, and disperse when the project is completed. The project tables are set in bays with distinctive graphics to define their identity, and walls that can be written on.

Other activity-based flexible spaces include bars with high stools, study booths, breakout areas with soft seats and acoustic sofas, meeting pods, and a quiet work room with no telephony allowed. The office as a whole has a very modern and informal feel.

Large numbers of staff have a Blackberry as well as a laptop. The whole office is covered by wi-fi. The Department uses an electronic data records management system, and there is no paper filing except for the lawyers.

If people work from home they can access exactly the same systems and information as they can in the office. On some days 15-20% of people work from home or other locations, and most teams have one or two people doing so every day. There are no fixed formulas for working from home: teams work it out amongst themselves – a good example of being flexible about flexibility.

The property savings come to £2.5m per year. But the main value is in having working practices that are completely tailored to the operation of the business.





3 People, workstyles and culture change

Because of the complexities of the changes involved, it can be tempting to see Smart Working as being all about designing offices and setting up new IT. But this really misses the point. While these are key enablers, Smart Working is essentially about people and culture change. It is about bringing about change in the way people work, and empowering them to work in smarter ways to deliver better services.

Change, however, is inevitably challenging and the new ways of working need to be managed well. It is partly about managing work in new ways, and partly about managing behaviours.

Getting smart about flexibility

The Civil Service has a good track record in responding to requests for flexible working. Smart Working takes this a stage further and extends the possibilities for working at different locations and at different times, to increase the effectiveness of how we work.

In many cases, employees will blend different smart/flexible working options, according to the need of the tasks in hand. Enabling this involves a substantial move away from the idea that an individual applies for and is granted a single particular alternative workstyle that is set in stone. All the options are important in terms of equal opportunities and diversity.

Choosing which styles of work are appropriate depends on:

- Examining the tasks involved in the job role, in terms of how effectively they can be done at different times and in different locations
- The preferences of the employee and being able to meet their aspirations
- The potential of smarter working choices to reduce the financial and environmental footprint of the organisation's working practices
- Any impacts on teamwork that may arise, e.g. how team communications and grouping of tasks might need to evolve to maximise the benefits.

There are of course roles that are quite place-specific. Often these are in local offices in customer-facing roles. In these instances the possibilities for other kinds of time-based flexibilities may be appropriate and may, for example, enable services to be better aligned with customer needs.

In such instances it is often appropriate to look closely at the tasks within a role, as better organisation of tasks may bring more scope for working at more effective places and times. Most roles have scope for some flexibility, and employees should have the opportunity to suggest ideas for working smarter and more efficiently.

Figure 1 overleaf outlines some of the critical choice factors when thinking about the most effective times and locations for tasks. Work may have to take place at a specific time and a specific place ('Specific place' and 'Specific time'). The time of work or the place of work may be varied, and in some cases both.

Round the outside of these time/place combinations are a range of 'critical choice factors'. These are the factors that managers and teams should take into account when making judgements about where and when work should take place.



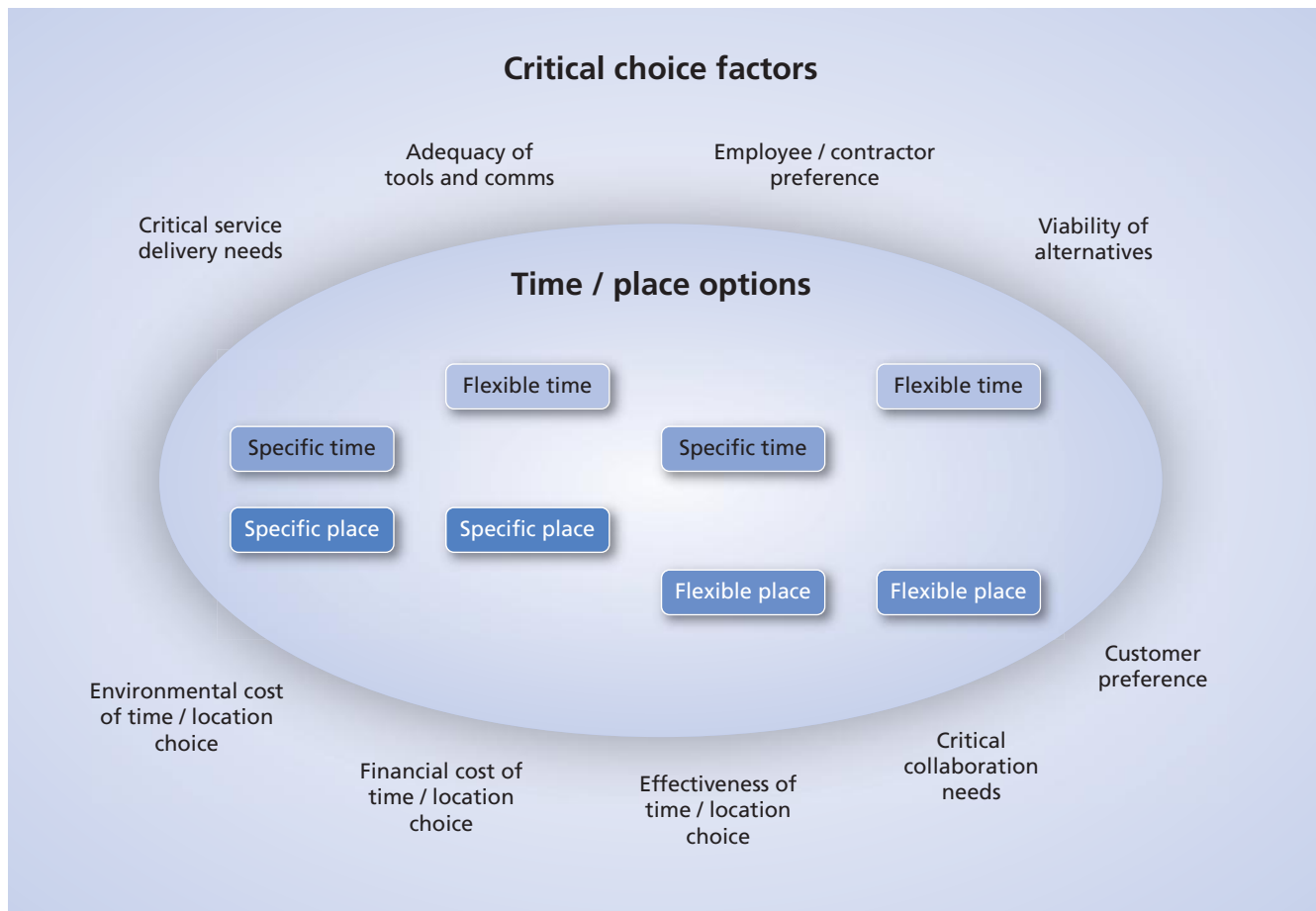


Figure 1: Choice factors for deciding the time and place of work

It is important to challenge old assumptions of necessity around traditional working places and times, and the default position of working 9-5 at the office. Managers and team members should think how changing times and places of work can improve effectiveness, reduce travel and resource use and drive down the cost of work.

Smart Working is for everyone

Smart Working involves changes for the way all people work. It is not a question saying some roles are eligible and some are not. It is true some roles may have more hands-on, place-specific or time-critical components to the work, and this may restrict the range of flexible options that are possible. They will however be working with other people whose workstyle is changing: the nature of the tools they use and the interactions with colleagues are likely to change as a consequence.

So it is not a question of some roles carrying on unchanged in traditional ways of working while others become flexible. At every opportunity we must be looking for ways to improve work processes and be smarter in the ways we work.

One important principle is that work times and locations need to be evaluated on the basis of the tasks involved, rather than whole jobs. It is too easy to say, on the basis of traditional practices, 'This sort of job can't be done flexibly'. Increasingly work has more knowledge-based components and is being untethered from physical resources. This requires new thinking about how, where and when work can be done.

Maintaining flexibility

It is important to avoid as far as possible new working arrangements that inject new inflexibilities that could compromise business efficiency. Examples of this would be people saying they must always work in a local office or at home on a certain day. While respecting existing flexible arrangements, it is important to have the flexibility to alter them on occasion to meet service delivery needs or for essential face-to-face meetings.

It is then the responsibility of all employees to make Smart Working work effectively to deliver both business and personal value.

All of the Smart Working options have an impact on how space is used. Flexible location options will mean that the base office will be used less, though it may be used somewhat more by visitors. Flexible time options mean that the office space will be used differently, with use spread out more across a longer period of time each working day.

Managers need to think through how the changes in occupancy affect the way the office is used. These changes are covered in Chapter 4 of the Guide.

Managing Smart Working

Managers have a key role to play in ensuring that Smart Working is implemented effectively and in setting an example of how it works in practice. Our case studies show examples of senior managers setting the pace with new working practices and leading the way to a new working culture.

On a day to day basis, managing Smart Working means moving away from managing by presence to managing by outcome. This involves different ways of keeping in contact with staff, of assessing workloads and monitoring and measuring performance.

For the team this will involve greater sharing of schedules with colleagues and managers, filing information so it can be accessed by others and updating each other about work-in-progress.

However, we should not exaggerate the changes involved. Many of the management skills required are the same as always, only they need to be applied properly with more discipline so that people working at a distance and in the office are not treated differently or excluded from the team. Managing by results should be the norm wherever work is done. In addition, only in relatively few cases will people be spending most of the time in a different location from their manager and other team colleagues. Over time, however, the amount of working in geographically dispersed and virtual teams can be expected to increase, so management and teamworking skills need to evolve accordingly.

For teams it is important to develop protocols about communication and reporting, so as to work effectively and maintain team cohesion. When working in different locations and at different times, social relationships need to be maintained and appropriate online and offline mechanisms need to be developed, such as buddying and mentoring schemes for new recruits, bulletin boards, instant messaging and social networking.

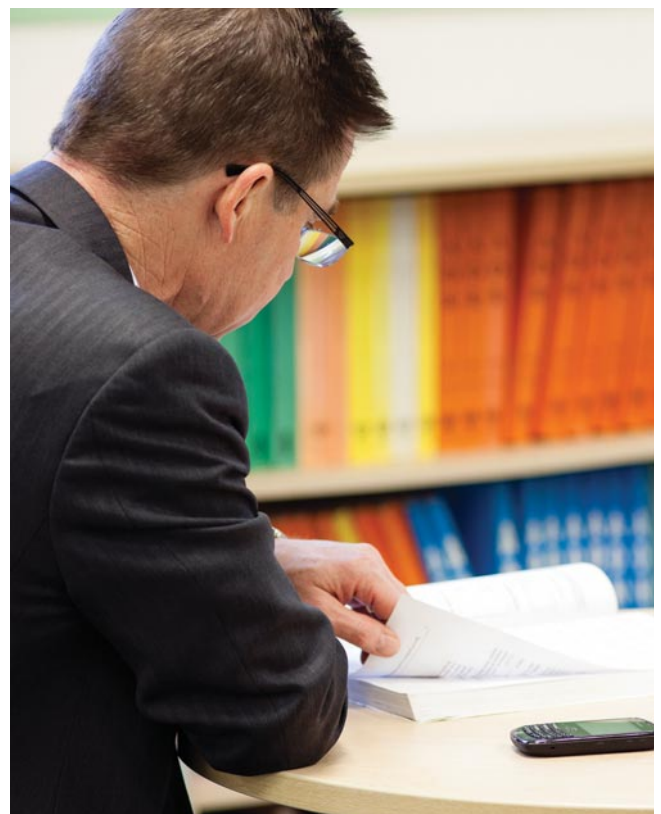
Teamwork protocols

It is important to have clear expectations about what is to be done and about communications within the team.

Protocols should be established to cover:

- A requirement to let others know where and when you are working
- Clear reporting structures
- Sharing of calendars and schedules
- Rigorous use of electronic document management systems, to ensure work is easily accessible
- Being flexible about flexible working – to ensure that no individual is disadvantaged by the choices of others, e.g. in providing office cover or attending evening meetings
- Etiquette in online communications, and behaviour in virtual meetings
- Signposting availability for phone contact or online discussion
- Fairness in use of space when in the office.

Just as with space sharing there needs to be a degree of enforcement, at least in the initial stages, to bring about the changes in work culture required. But experience shows that to a large extent teams should be able to do this themselves, and monitor their own team members' adherence to the standards required.



Rethinking meetings

It is important also to rethink meetings. Routine sharing of information can be carried out through online processes: physical meetings should be reserved for important collaborative work involving activities such as training, brainstorming and decision-making.

The benefits of Smart Working can be undermined by insisting on being present in person for routine meetings. Wherever possible, when employees are working in different places meetings should be held using audio, video or web conferencing. In reaching decisions about holding meetings, attention should always be given to the cumulative effects of meetings, and the need to reduce our need for office space and to reduce the need to travel.

A common complaint within the Civil Service is of having too many meetings or of a 'meetings culture'.

The new ways of working provide an opportunity to:

- Replace physical meetings by online interaction
- Replace 'set-piece' formal meetings by shorter interactions, in person, online or mixed physical/virtual
- Reduce the number of people at a meeting for the whole session, calling people in remotely when needed, or having them primed to respond to questions by instant messaging if needed.

Managers should consider setting targets for reducing the numbers of meetings, to liberate more time for other kinds of work. Following this guidance it should be possible to reduce the number of physical face-to-face meetings by at least one third.

Highly collaborative and dynamic teams

The aim in moving to Smart Working is to create the context in which teams can operate more dynamically, and have better physical and online spaces in which to interact.

Though they may no longer always sit at adjacent desks, Smart Working with new technologies and team protocols should facilitate much more effective sharing of work and enable team members to communicate more effectively than before from anywhere.

It is important to note that the changes affect mainly team members who are mostly based in the office. There needs to be a single culture of working according to shared values and respect for the team as a whole, avoiding a situation where a traditional office culture

dominates amongst office-based staff (e.g. relying on face-to-face interaction and management by presence) while mobile and remote team members operate according to different and more modern principles.

Dealing with problems and issues

Before adopting flexible working practices, people are sometimes worried about issues such as:

- being isolated
- loss of personal space in the office
- difficulties with time management
- loss of team spirit or team effectiveness
- dealing with technology and getting appropriate levels of support when working remotely
- intrusion of work into home life
- 24/7 working
- managing performance
- loss of opportunities for career progression or training.

The evidence from implementations of Smart Working is that many more problems are anticipated than actually arise. Usually this is down to over-estimating the amount of time that people will be out of the office and under-estimating the potential of the modern communication tools for keeping teams in touch with each other.

Once the new ways of working are embedded most people appreciate the greater flexibility and autonomy that Smart Working brings. Few want to return to the old ways of working once they get used to working smarter and have the tools and new work spaces to support it.

All the same, problems can occur as in any traditional workplace. It is the responsibility of teams to look out for each other, and in particular for managers and members of dispersed teams to spot problems and resolve them before they become major issues. These may be teased out through regular conversations, or clues may be spotted in terms of performance.

If necessary, the manager and team member can agree an alternative work style. It is about finding the right work style for the individual, and about providing the appropriate support to overcome the particular problem.

Getting the policies right

Existing departmental policies and guidelines will need to be reviewed in the context of Smart Working, for example:

- flexible working policies should address not only legal requirements but actively promote Smart Working to address work-life balance and business performance issues
- health, safety and security policies need to reflect the more diverse working environments
- equality, diversity and inclusion policies can be stronger if people can work more flexibly
- recruitment policies need to encourage managers to offer smarter flexible work styles wherever practicable.

New guidance for departments is being developed to reflect the incoming legislation.

Work-life balance

Smart Working empowers staff with greater autonomy and the ability to make mature decisions about how they work, always informed by business needs.

This allows employees greater scope to balance or blend work with other aspects of life. It adds new dimensions to work-life balance policies, by creating a strategic context in which to exercise choice. Rather than flexible working being exceptional or seen as some kind of privilege, it becomes a normal way of working. Patterns of work may vary in different stages of an employee's life.

Traditional approaches to flexible working historically bracketed flexibility with parental and other leave arrangements. Integrating Smart Working into the DNA of organisations enables organisations to take a proactive and supportive approach to maternity and paternity leave, and arrangements for carers as well.

A new culture for 21st century working

The Way We Work (TW3) involves developing a new Smart Working culture.

It is not about doing things in the old way with some new technologies and redesigned offices – it is about new ways of working using new tools, new processes, and new approaches to management and teamwork. This requires different types of behaviours and different expectations about how work is done.

The new working culture will be developed through embracing practical measures. For example, a more collaborative culture develops from sharing space and resources more effectively and through having different kinds of meetings; a trust base culture is developed by developing new techniques and protocols for teamwork and through managing by results; being open to further change becomes a habit of mind when people feel empowered to challenge and improve processes and behaviours.

These are the ways in which Smart Working will become embedded in the Civil Service. TW3 is supporting these changes with tools, training and guidance.



Continuous challenge and improvement

Central to Smart Working is a constant quest to improve working practices and business processes as new opportunities emerge. It involves challenging current ways of working and asking questions such as:

- Why are we doing *this* (at all)
- Why are we doing this *here*?
- Why are we doing it *in this way*?
- Why are we doing it *at this time* (rather than another time)?

It is about challenging the assumptions of necessity around traditional or habitual ways of working.

Having identified practices and processes that could be done differently, the next questions to ask are whether using Smart Working techniques there are ways of doing these things that are:

- Faster?
- More flexible?
- Lighter (i.e. less heavy on resources – time, energy, physical resources)?
- More in line with customer needs?
- More in line with employee aspirations?

People are encouraged to propose new ways of working that will deliver benefits. Focusing on practical questions in this way not only delivers benefits, but will help to embed Smart Working behaviours and mindset.

Engaging with better ways of working at BIS

A key feature of the BIS 'Ways of Working' programme is the role of users as both architects and builders. The programme has been designed in consultation with people across the Department, based on survey evidence to inform direction.

The core work areas are being led by user groups, not senior leaders nor the corporate centre. Arriving at solutions designed by and fit for users is the primary goal. Typical of the approach is a continuing programme to simplify processes. A call for ideas resulted in over 800 being nominated and half of BIS then voted to select the priority five.

Staff-led groups have taken forward specific ideas for improvements in IT processes and hardware, use of meeting rooms, booking systems and remote working. Ninety change agents across the Department act as advocates and a focus for conversations between employees and the Ways of Working Team.

Having the evidence to support change has been central to designing solutions. Although many people think their role is 'desk bound', a space audit showed the overwhelming majority of people spent less than 50% of their time at their desk. Currently the change team are transforming shared spaces to encourage and support more collaborative and innovative ways of working.

'Being open and transparent has been key to bringing people on board. People have been

involved every step of the way,' says Greg Champlings, Deputy Director, Ways of Working. 'And the new spaces we have introduced have been enormously popular. We're trying to promote innovation and collaboration, but to support people working this way you have to provide them with the right tools and spaces. We are trying to tackle the culture of non-stop formal meetings which is the bane of most of our lives.'

IT changes are intended both to modernise working practices and support greater mobility. Lightweight laptops and smartphones are the essential kit, supported by desktop keyboards and large screens in the office and secure remote access when away. Desk phones are being phased out in favour of smartphones.

All these changes are working towards the change programme's vision to enable staff 'to work effectively anytime and anywhere.'



Smart Working incorporates the full range of flexible working options. These broadly fall into two areas: flexible place and flexible time.

Flexible place options include:

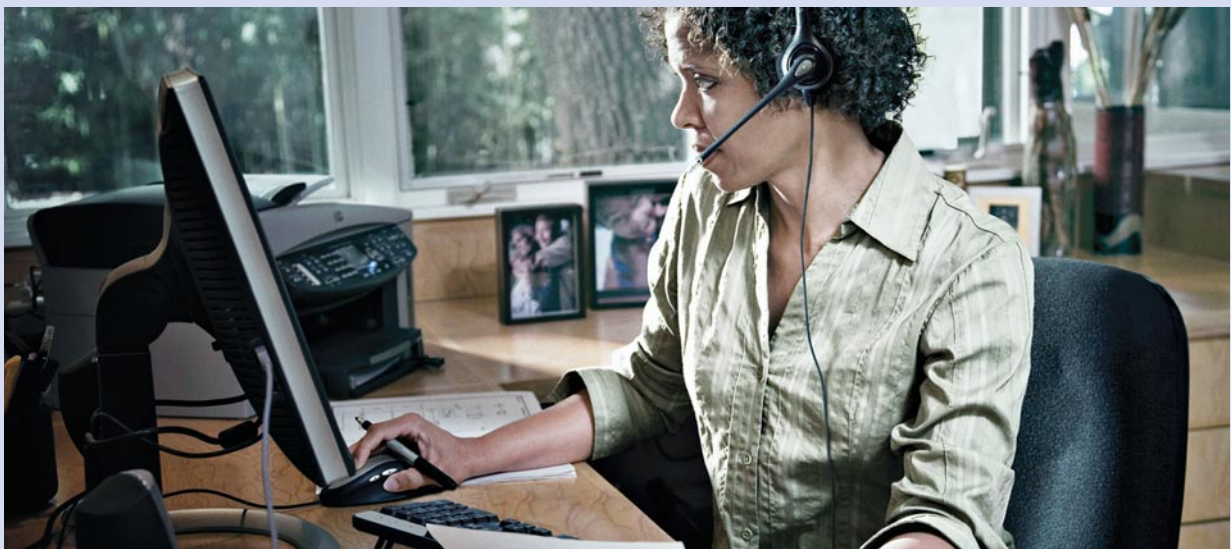
- **Mobile working:** Employees who work in many places need to be empowered and equipped to work when travelling, in public settings, and touching down in offices as needed.
- **Sharing space in the office:** Employees do not have a permanent desk, but choose a work setting appropriate to the task in hand (see Chapter 4).
- **Working from other offices:** Staff may choose to work from other offices – offices belonging to the organisation, third party serviced offices or partner/client offices, as appropriate.
- **Working as virtual teams:** To prevent relocation or frequent travel, staff work flexibly as virtual teams, using online communications and collaboration techniques.
- **Working from home:** When employees regularly work from home it is typically for 1-2 days per week. Some roles may be based at home full-time. More mobile staff may work using home as a base rather than, or as much as, using the office as a base.

Flexible time options include:

- **Flexi-time:** employees can vary start and finish times. Sometimes this is limited by a 'core hours' requirement.
- **Time off in lieu (TOIL):** TOIL is a form of flexible hours working that allows hours to be varied

across days, by paying back extra hours worked on one day with time off on other days.

- **Annualised hours:** employees are contracted annually to work a set number of hours, which can be worked flexibly over the 12 month period. This is useful for coping with peaks and troughs in work, as well as for meeting personal requirements.
- **Compressed working weeks:** employees work their standard working hours in fewer days – e.g. one week's hours worked in four days, or two weeks' worked in nine days. There are a range of patterns of varying complexity.
- **Term-time working:** this enables staff who are parents to work around school terms and holidays.
- **Part-time working:** staff are sometimes recruited on a part-time basis, while others seek to reduce their hours, with pro-rata reductions in pay and benefits. It is typically associated with parenting responsibilities, but surveys indicate this is an option of interest to older workers who are thinking in terms of phased retirement.
- **Jobshare:** this is a particular form of part-time working, where two (or occasionally more) people share a full-time job.
- **Self-rostering:** teams take control of their own shift patterns and cover arrangements, which can be especially valuable in roles that are very location-specific or have a 'hands on' requirement.
- **Career breaks:** the option to have a career break or sabbatical to pursue professional or personal development.





4 New environments for new ways of working

The Way We Work (TW3) aims to create attractive and inspiring work environments across Government that support the new work styles, increase the adaptability of space, and increase business performance. A smart and flexible approach to office design seeks to achieve these benefits while at the same time achieving significant savings and efficiency gains.

Adopting the principles of Smart Working will also enable a range of new working environments beyond the traditional office.

Unlike traditional offices, which are based on having ranks of personally allocated desks, smart office environments should have a mix of work positions and meeting spaces where work activities can be carried out.

While one of the aims of TW3 is to have offices utilised more efficiently and to save costs by eliminating wasted space, it is also an aim to use under-occupied space to provide alternative non-desk work spaces that are closely aligned to the needs of modern Smart Workers.

As desk-based tasks can increasingly be carried out from anywhere, the need in offices is less for ranks of workstations, and more for a mix of other functional spaces such as:

- flexible meeting spaces – small meeting rooms, breakout spaces and café areas
- space for quiet and concentrated working
- spaces for confidential work and phone calls
- touch-down spaces for people working on the move
- team tables
- resource areas
- special project areas
- flexible multipurpose spaces.

How much is your office used?

- A traditional office used 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday is used only 30% of the time
- Holidays account for 12% of an employee's time
- Typical desk occupancy is around 45%
- Office costs per desk are around £5k on average, rising to £10k in London

Time to do the maths on empty space!

Desk-sharing and clear desk protocols

The following are suggested protocols that can be adopted or adapted to ensure that space-sharing works effectively:

1. Use of space is determined on the basis of the activities being carried out.
2. Space is not to be allocated on the basis of seniority, habit or personal preference.
3. Where team priority zones are designated, this should be seen as non-exclusive team-space, available also to other employees of the organisation as the need arises.
4. Non-team members working in specified team areas should be made to feel welcome. This will help to break down silos and encourage cross-team working.
5. Staff should use the appropriate space for the activity – e.g. informal meetings should not take place at desks but in break-out areas or meeting rooms.
6. If your plans change, rethink your space requirements and move to a more appropriate work setting.
7. Calls or discussions with private or confidential subject matter should be held in a workspace designed for privacy.
8. Work-in-progress should not be stored on desks, but in team storage or project areas.
9. Personal items should be stored in lockers, and only located on desks during periods of active occupation.



10. If a desk or other work area is to be left unoccupied for more than 2 hours the desk should be cleared for use by others.
11. When a desk or other work area is vacated it should be left completely clear for use by other members of staff.
12. Teams are advised that exceptions to these protocols should be few, and based on genuine need, e.g. reasonable adjustment for staff with disabilities, or a specialist function that requires a particular location, e.g. receptionist.
13. Finally employees who are allocated personal desks should still abide by the clear desk policy and expect others to use their desks when they are absent.

Understanding space requirements

It is essential to have an evidence-based approach to understanding the amount of space needed in the office, and the mix of different kinds of spaces. This should typically be based on:

- An accurate space audit, measuring how space is occupied across the working day over a number of days
- An analysis of how, when and where work is carried out
- An analysis of work processes and technology use, and how changing these impacts creates opportunities for change in the workplace

- A storage audit and an assessment of the scope for storage reduction
- Consultation with staff to understand their working practices and preferences
- Mapping of the relationships and interactions between departments and teams.

Space audits in government offices with traditional working practices have shown average desk occupancy levels of well under 50% over the working day.

The main value of a space audit is that it will deliver objective figures in terms of how often desks are occupied, how often they are “claimed” but with no one at the desk, and how often they are empty.

Figures of less than 45% average occupancy are normal for professionals and managers in most “pre-smart” office environments. Because of the impact of meetings, site visits, training, leave and sickness average occupancy for admin and support staff rarely rises above 60%, despite what most managers would expect. Peaks may be around 60% for managers and professionals and around 80% for administrative staff, but are rarely higher. Individual teams will show higher peaks, but these peaks do not occur at the same time: this is the main reason why staff often have a perception of higher occupancy than the data shows.

The end result can provide indisputable data showing that space is not being used efficiently and that resources are being wasted – vital for developing the business case for change.

Modern, more mobile working practices and current flexible working options lead to a lower overall requirement for desk space. Smart Working staff surveys (see Chapter 7) will provide evidence of enthusiasm on the part of staff for greater flexibility, and for higher levels of trust to manage their own work styles. This will lead in time to further reductions in demand for desk space, and adaptations in the office to support more flexible work styles.

The evidence gathered from these analyses underpins the design of new office space. The number of desks will reduce, and more collaborative spaces will be

introduced. The exact proportions will depend on the evidence gathered locally. The government’s National Property Controls require that all departments and their agencies should meet an average space usage target of 10 square metres per FTE for occupied space on their administrative estate by December 2015 (8 square metres for new office space). This can be achieved effectively through Smart Working. Some organisations in the public and private sectors are able, because of the way they work and the work they do, to work comfortably providing 5 or 6 desks per 10 FTEs including the Government Property Unit in the Cabinet Office which, at the time of writing, works on a ratio of 5 desks per 10 FTEs in its London HQ.

It is important not to be rigid about such a ratio at team level though, as: 1) requirements will vary across teams, and provision should be based on actual need rather than an average figure; and 2) office design can remain excessively focused on desks, rather than the range of alternative work positions. A highly mobile team, for example, may need many fewer desk positions than average, but need more in the way of collaborative space (e.g. breakout space and project areas). In both cases, opportunities for efficiency and good design may be missed.

1 <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/pam/property-asset-management-in-government/estate-rationalisation/national-property-controls>



Sharing work positions

As the number of desks is reduced to align more closely with actual occupancy, desk-sharing solutions will need to be introduced. But it is important to note that sharing space is not all about desks. The DCMS and DfT case studies, for example, show how these departments use a mix of desk and project table settings for regular work in the office.

Smart Working does not envisage ‘hot desking’ policies that move people all around the building from one day to the next, dividing people from their teams.

Maintaining team cohesion and joint access to nearby resources is important, and space sharing arrangements that are agreed by colleagues in teams are more likely to work well. The Smart Working development process encourages team involvement in the design of new office environments.

However, it is a key principle that while broadly defined team “zones” can be useful, these cannot be exclusive spaces. To increase occupancy levels and achieve the savings necessary to support new working styles, vacant work positions must be open to people from other teams to use, without their being made to feel that they are intruders or that they are violating someone else’s personal space. The results should be one of non-exclusive team-based space sharing.

Space design needs to allow for fluidity of movement. As well as sharing positions within a team zone, there is likely to be some touchdown space for visitors, for staff touching down briefly, e.g. between meetings, and for meeting peaks in demand.

Any approach that allocates 1:1 desks to most of a team with a handful of hot desks for people working more flexibly should be avoided. ‘Hotdesking at the margins’ rarely works. This is because people who are mobile and newly formed teams find themselves squeezed for space while allocated spaces lie empty. It will also not achieve the space savings necessary to introduce more innovative and varied ‘activity-based’ settings and can be divisive of the team in terms of perceived fairness.

As well as helping to clear the way for more collaborative space, space sharing can help to break down barriers between teams, and help to end ‘silo working’.

Space-sharing needs also to take into account the needs of staff with disabilities for any specialist IT or ergonomic equipment.



Again, new arrangements must be careful not to focus excessively on desks. As our case studies show, some teams may be based in project areas or at team tables, allowing greater flexibility to be combined with team or project identity.

Open plan and activity-based settings

Bearing in mind that there will be a range of other work settings, open plan should be the default setting for desk-based work. Wherever possible, private offices should be removed as they are very wasteful of space and can hinder good collaborative working practices.

However, open plan does not mean having vast open spaces with ranks of desking. Good design can create identifiable team areas, where desks are interspersed with other flexible work settings such as confidential rooms, break-out spaces and tables for nearby teams to use.

In the new office settings, greater emphasis will be on shared mixed-use spaces where people can work together. As much work involving computers and telephones can be carried out from almost anywhere, the focus in office work will shift towards interaction between colleagues.



The Department for International Development

At the end of 2012 The Department for International Development moved into 22 Whitehall, occupying offices that are about half the size of their previous building, with 800 people now working in offices that previously accommodated 600. A key part of their challenge has been to move to smarter ways of working and create a modern working environment while respecting the character of a historic building – and all in a tight three-month timescale. The project has reduced property costs by £7m a year.

The office move has been used as a catalyst for change in working practices. Before the move a space audit showed 50-60% average desk usage. This provided the confidence to move to an average desk-sharing ratio of 8:10 – with 7:10 in the open plan areas, whilst making best possible use of the cellular offices in the historic buildings for shared desking and meeting rooms. No member of staff has a private office, with the Permanent Secretary happy to work in the open plan areas and use the other activity-based settings as needed. So the change process has enjoyed strong support from the top.

The old canteen has been turned into 'The Exchange', a communal meeting space to promote collaboration, and includes a café and flexible space



for informal meetings. A number of small and informal meeting spaces have also been created throughout the building.

DFID has put a lot of effort into communications to support the change, with user representatives, discussion forums, design groups, presentations and displays. There has been much team discussion about protocols. For instance, the clear desk protocol includes the requirement to log off if away from a desk for more than 3 hours and if only in for a meeting, staff shouldn't tie up a desk, but work in one of the alternative spaces.

The Department also moved to an all-laptop environment, and installed wi-fi throughout. There is flexible telephony, so staff can log on at any desk and also transfer calls to a mobile or home phone. There are well-used video-conferencing facilities in nearly all meeting rooms.

According to Gary James, Head of Sustainable Facilities Management, 'The evaluations we've carried out show that the changes have gone down well with staff, who appreciate the modern, uncluttered working. And we've created an adaptable workplace that can accommodate future changes at minimal cost.'

Choosing the right space for the task, allowing users to adapt that space to meet their own needs and making sure people can communicate and interact with one another in the way they need to are all vital components of Smart Working environments.

Our DCMS case study provides an example of how to set up good project environments to support fast-changing and highly collaborative teams. Such spaces

will be flexible and reconfigurable according to the needs of teams located there.

Space audits indicate that in most organisations the design and number of meeting rooms is not fit for purpose. The demand is for more flexible meeting spaces, for the most part to be occupied by small groups of people.

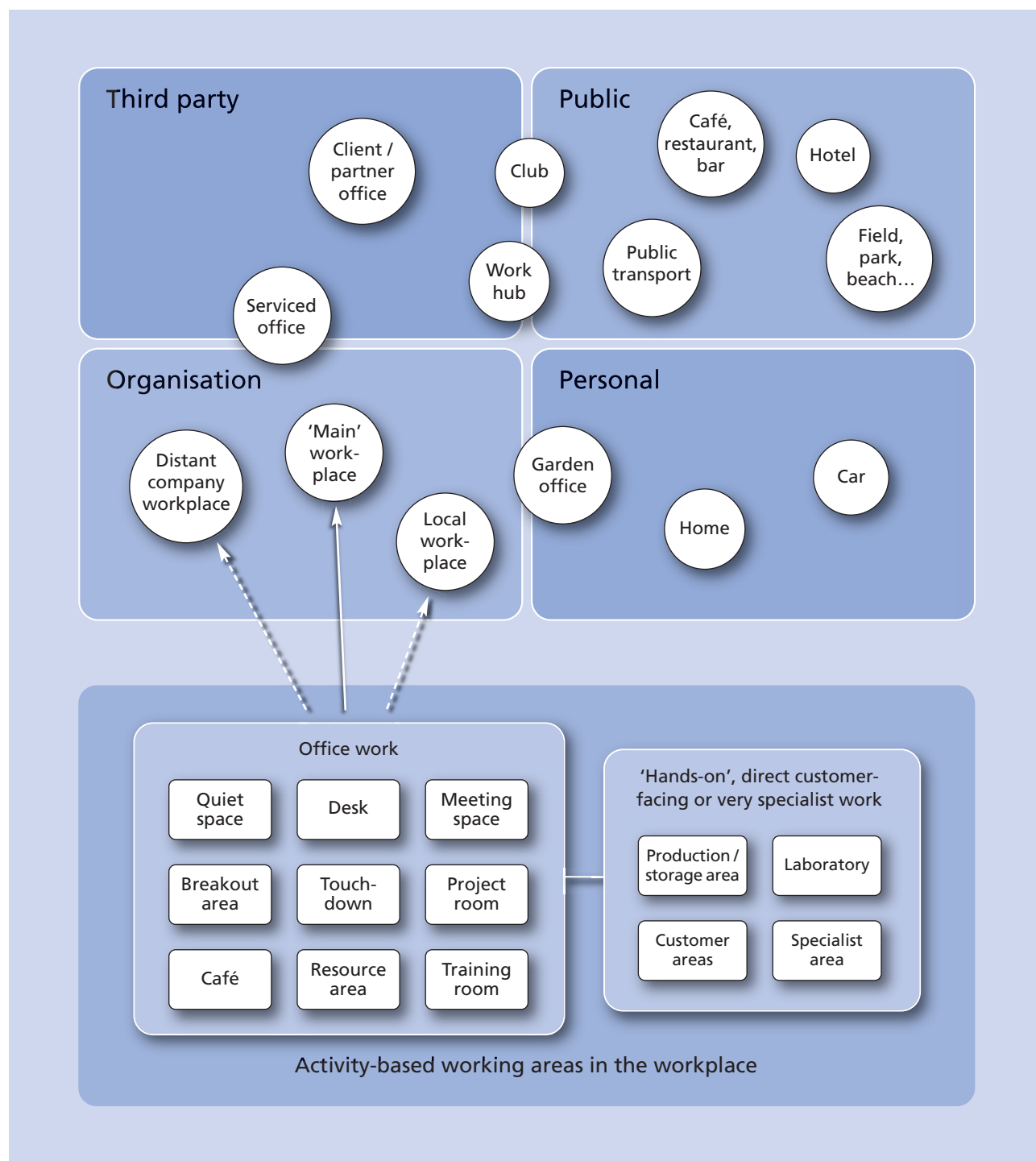


Figure 2: Settings where people choose to work, in and beyond the office

A range of different meeting spaces is therefore part of the mix of 'activity-based' work settings that typically include:

- Formal, bookable meeting rooms, in a range of sizes
- Ad hoc meeting rooms, with a time limit for use (e.g. 15 minutes)
- Two-person confidential meeting rooms or pods, e.g. for appraisals – can double as a space for confidential calls
- Breakout areas for informal ad hoc collaboration, around tables or in areas of reconfigurable soft seating
- Non-bookable quiet work spaces
- Resource areas
- Project areas

With Smart Working, space is used according to need and is related to the tasks being undertaken, rather than being allocated on the basis of status.

Clear desk policy

Successful space-sharing requires a 'clear desk policy'. This means that personal items – including 'personal professional' items – must be cleared from all desks and tables when vacated. These items should be stored in personal lockers and team storage respectively.

Even those who work only in the office should be part of the clear desk policy, not only to allow all desks to be available for use but also to maintain the quality of the working environment and a consistent storage and security discipline.

There are different approaches to this, depending on local circumstances. It is generally not good practice to allow someone to book or lay claim to a desk for a whole day when during that day they may be gone for hours at a time. Typically a threshold of two or two and a half hours is applied. That is, if the desk is to be left unoccupied for such a specified period, then it must be cleared for someone else to use.

Booking systems

Offices may consider space booking systems, primarily for meeting rooms. Desk booking systems will not be required in offices where teams can work out their own arrangements, but may occasionally be appropriate in some high footfall 'hub'-type settings.

Meetings spaces will include a mixture of bookable and non-bookable spaces, and the default position for smaller, non-confidential meetings should be to use the wide range of break-out and informal spaces that should be provided if the workplace has been properly designed for Smart Working. This leaves bookable meeting rooms for the occasions when they are really needed.

A key problem with space booking systems is that space is often booked for longer than is needed, so measures need to be taken to ensure that space is released when not needed, and cannot be 'blocked out' for long periods. Clear desk thresholds should still apply.

People sometimes focus on booking systems because they worry about potential lack of space. But in well-planned Smart Working implementations there will be adequate space to cope with peak demand. People may work in touchdown positions, other alternative work settings and spare space elsewhere in the building which is under-occupied. People will often choose these alternative settings anyway, preferring them for particular pieces of work and so relieving pressure on the team area. Shared calendars and instant messaging applications can be used to identify where people are working. A location board system – e.g. magnetic or stick-pin – is a useful and simple-to-manage alternative, so that staff can find out where their colleagues are and where there are available seats.

When there is extensive desk-sharing and people are working in distributed teams, it can be useful to develop a 'concierge' role as part of a reception or administrative support function. The concierge manages the smooth working of the flexible workplace, shared resources such as printers, space booking and release processes, and keeping track of where and when colleagues are working.



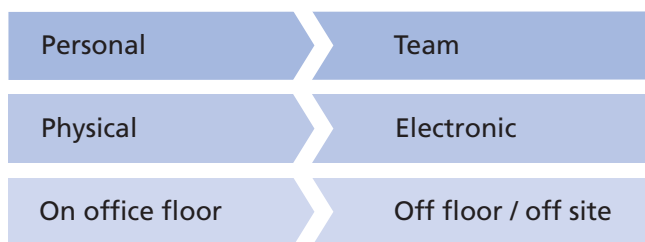
De-cluttering offices and smarter storage

A key constraint on the introduction of Smart Working is a dependency on paper documents and other physical resources. While there are some statutory obligations to retain paper documents, the reasons for using and generating paper are becoming less and less compelling in an age of electronic-based working.

Typically in organisations where there are crowded, untidy and inefficient offices, people complain of lack of space. But space audits usually find they do not have high levels of desk occupancy: instead they are crowded with “stuff” that is not rationally organised.

In most departments where paper-dependency is high there are significant space savings that can be made by reducing duplication, archiving, and moving to electronic-based working.

In developing smarter working practices, there are essentially three trajectories for reforming storage practices:



In a space-sharing environment there can be no personal shelves of storage allocated to individual desks, nor can there be permanent desk pedestals. Files and resources used for professional work should be kept in team storage areas – this is good practice anyway, reduces duplication and makes resources easier for other people to find.

Personal storage should be in lockers provided. One technique is to use boxes that can be used to transport necessary items from locker to desk and back. Mobile pedestals are another alternative.

Increasingly, the use of paper processes is being replaced by electronic ones. There is still some way to go in most departments before we reach the Holy Grail of the ‘Paperless Office’. All the same, it is important as an aspiration to move towards.

The use of electronic processes is essential to Smart Working, and ‘untethers’ people from the office, enabling more effective working from other locations.



It also enables a rethink and helps to challenge assumptions about the location of work for those involved in process work. Many organisations, for example, now have home-based call centre or data processing workers.

If remaining in physical format, as much storage as possible should be moved off the office floor. Office space is extremely expensive, and must be prioritised for human interaction, not storage.



Working beyond the office

A growing proportion of work is being undertaken beyond the office, for example in:

- Other people's offices: clients, suppliers, business partners, shared offices, etc
- Cafés, hotel lobbies and airport lounges
- Trains, planes, buses and cars
- Homes

The ability to work anywhere is made possible by laptops, tablets and other smart devices with wireless internet connections and by mobile phones.

The main issues are to do with security, confidentiality, safety and health.

Security concerns relate both to personal security (e.g. using portable equipment while driving, or the risk of being mugged) and data security.

Safety concerns relate primarily to the prolonged or incorrect use of Display Screen Equipment (PCs, Laptops, tablets etc).

These kinds of issues are sometimes raised as reasons for not working more flexibly. The key principle is the same as for homeworking: the employer's duty of care is the same wherever employees are working, whether in the employer's workplace, at home, on the move or in some other 'third place'.

This means that people need to be properly equipped and trained to work in these other places, and a mechanism needs to be in place for proportionate, periodic assessment of risk.

It's the intention of the Civil Service Reform Plan² and the new Government Security Classifications system³

that there's greater emphasis on personal responsibility, reducing expensive and overbearing technical controls. This requires proper training to assist employees in handling sensitive information, and auditing to verify employees are acting responsibly.

People should be trusted to carry out their roles and given the responsibility and training to do so securely, together with technical and physical security controls that help defend individuals against threats that they themselves cannot reasonably defend.

The aim has to be to enable rather than prohibit – that is to enable people to work safely wherever is the most effective and efficient location to get the work done. People will have the flexibility to work in a wide variety of locations.

Government departments are increasingly taking advantage of shared workplaces, as our case studies of Apex Court and the Home Office illustrate. At the moment departments tend to have their own base areas with shared communal and meeting facilities. This should evolve over time towards areas of shared desking or 'co-working'. The new One Public Estate strategy should give more opportunities for this kind of sharing, including with local government and other partners. The Natural England case study provides an example of this.

At local level there are an increasing number of 'Workhubs' – places for touching down and collaborating, sometimes supported by public funding. Using local workhubs could reduce employees' need to travel and increase the opportunity to reduce central office requirements while finding local bases closer to citizens and partners.

² <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Civil-Service-Reform-Plan-acc-final.pdf>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

Sharing space at Apex Court, Nottingham

Between June 2011 and May 2013 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has established a multi-occupied Civil Service hub at Apex Court in Nottingham.

Reductions in the Civil Service estate in the East Midlands over the period have seen staff from 9 separate buildings moving to Apex Court. This has reduced the cost of the government estate by £1m per annum and by over 4,000sqm.

Apex Court now houses around 370 staff – from BIS, Defra and the Cabinet Office working in open plan environments and using shared facilities.

Rowena Limb, Chair of the Senior User Group commented, "From early in the project at Apex Court we established a Senior User Group to engage the leaders of all teams who were moving in. The Group established our working protocols, agreed the use of space in the building and ensured effective communications to staff. A Cross-Departmental Working Group was also set up and staff have been engaged in addressing both early and continuing challenges. We are building good relationships across teams, aided by open-plan working environments and we are keen to look further at how far we can share expertise and work collaboratively in the future."

Increasingly social activities are being arranged to ensure good linkages between staff working for different departments and the office has already held a number of office-wide charity events.

The home workplace environment

When people are working more than occasionally from home, it is important that their home workplace environment is set up properly with a desk and appropriate chair, and suitable lighting. If a member of staff is designated as a 'home-based' worker then the department's policies may specify the required furnishing and set up of the home 'office' environment.

There are no specific health and safety regulations for homeworking as such: all the provisions that apply in the workplace apply wherever an employee is working. In general, however, the evidence is that working from

home does not carry substantial additional risk, and where it reduces travel it plays a part in reducing risk. Even so, it is necessary for everyone to be aware of the regulations that need to be observed and how to optimise their remote work spaces ergonomically and safely. There are issues of good practice that are mainly a question of common sense and taking ownership for one's way of working.

The Health & Safety Executive has published a helpful booklet on Homeworking⁴.

When working at home, people should be fully contactable and able to connect to all office systems and processes. The ideal scenario is one of seamless connection, with the computer integrated with the office network and the phone acting as if it were an extension within the office.

It is also important that home-based working has a 'professional face'. While it can help staff achieve a better work-life balance it is important that home does not intrude into work, e.g. having domestic interruptions when on business calls.

The reverse also applies – employees need to feel in control of the home/work interface, and not feel pressured into allowing work to intrude into their personal time.

Implications for property strategy

Smart Working, it is clear, has very significant implications for every organisation's property strategy.

As the nature of work changes and organisations use a wider mix of physical and virtual spaces for doing business, real estate needs to become a flexible resource to be deployed according to the changing requirements of the business.

In the short to medium term, the opportunity is there for organisations with an extensive property portfolio to reduce the amount of property they have and to consolidate on the best performing and most strategically located buildings.

This may bring capital receipts, but most importantly will reduce the running costs of the organisation as many of the case studies show. There will probably be changes to strategy in terms of escaping from longer leases and greater use of third party offices.

4 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg226.pdf



The nature of property strategy will also change as Smart Working is implemented. Traditional approaches connecting buildings to headcount and restructuring need to be rethought: as well as enabling concentration on the best-performing and most appropriately situated assets, the new approach enables a degree of 'spaceless growth' and radically reduces the costs of internal moves.

Smart Working also provides an effective and increasingly important way to comply with the National Property Controls and government's workplace standard.

The development of a strategy that embraces Smart Working requires the integration of expertise in people, property, technology and business process improvement into a single vision, so that the smart workplace can continue to evolve as new opportunities for business improvement and cost savings emerge.

⁵ Working Beyond Walls <http://resources.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Working-beyond-Walls.pdf>

'OneTeam work' at Defra

Defra, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, launched a new Estates Strategy in 2011, taking advantage of lease exit opportunities.

The Defra Network has reduced its London office floor space by half, with retained offices fitted out to a design approach that adopts the recommendations of the publication 'Working Beyond Walls'⁵ where desks are utilised on an average 80% ratio.

A flexible approach to working is supported by Defra's standard use of laptops and mobile technology. Further steps have been taken to reduce storage and support flexible occupation with all pedestals removed in exchange for personal lockers installed nearby floor entry points. Stationery has been centralised and storage reduced to 1.1 linear metres per person.

Desks and bench desks have the same IT kit to support all members of staff sitting anywhere in the building to work. The culture of 'work is an activity not a place' and 'OneTeam work' have been promoted and adopted from the Permanent Secretary down to all staff. This culture aims to remove boundaries between teams and improve collaboration between different business areas including NDPBs.

In London, additional capacity to the 1,465 desks was created by installing 161 new work settings that support short term work for those visiting the building. New project space, an expanded business centre and more meeting rooms also support a wider range of business needs. The new furniture solutions are innovative and attractive and because they have power integrated and access to Wi-Fi throughout the office they are well used.

Decision making on the changes was achieved by regular contact with the business through a stakeholder group. A wide variety of different communications and workshops were used to communicate the physical works and the behaviours we wanted to encourage. The impacts are monitored through post-move surveys.

New WINE in new bottles at Natural England

As the successor to three separate organisations when it was created in 2006, Natural England inherited 67 offices and traditional working practices. From 2009 the WINE – Working in Natural England – programme began to introduce Smart Working and office rationalisation.

WINE aimed to reduce the number of offices to 22 by 2014. Natural England now has 25 offices, and is on track to meet the target. This has generated £3.3 million of savings per year, and reduced office space from 45,000m² to 25,000m². Total savings by 2015 are set to be £4.56m and 21,000m² of space.

The Carbon Reduction Challenge set by government for the public has been a key driver. Natural England set an ambitious reduction target of 50% CO₂. Audited savings are 2650 tonnes of CO₂ – a 61% saving against a 2007 baseline.

Natural England is an outward looking organisation with a highly mobile workforce. Smart Working is the natural way to increase the effectiveness and productivity of the workforce, as well as delivering efficiency and environmental savings.

New workstyles have been introduced for the 2,500 staff, with flexible, multi-site and home-based workers. Around 20% of staff are contractually home-based. Staff with an office base operate on

an 8:10 desk ratio, with every desk a flexible desk. Touch-down spaces are available for people coming to an office for short periods, plus a range of activity-based settings such as meeting pods and breakout areas. There are no private offices for management, with the CEO and Executive sitting in open plan.

Touchdown space is also negotiated with external partners such as local councils and wildlife trusts on a grace and favour basis. This helps to strengthen local ties. Staff can also touch down in other Defra family offices. The principle remains the same: touchdown is limited to occasional use, and is not an office base.

There has also been a major purge on paper, with an offsite archive service for closed files and a working guideline of one linear metre per person for team storage, with personal storage moving to Lockers rather than pedestals. A single mail hub in Worcester takes care of post for home based staff.

Remote meetings have become a normal feature of working life, with both teleconferencing and web conferencing.

According to Carole Joseph, Estates & Facilities Manager, “Changing the culture is one of the biggest challenges. There’s always a fear factor beforehand, because it’s unknown. Once people have been doing it for a while, it becomes the norm and everyone settles into a new routine”.



5 Technologies for Smart Working

Effective use of new technologies is central to Smart Working and The Way We Work (TW3).

With the right technology choices, people can work more effectively in the office and away from it, using the internet, broadband and wireless communications to work at the most effective times and locations.

Modernising IT for people

Government IT must be focused on empowering employees wherever and whenever they work with productivity tools, collaboration tools and access to systems and data.

The 'device of the future' for government users will increasingly be the same as the devices people use in everyday life – easy to use, flexible and almost 'invisible'. Government needs people to become 'digital natives' and users want the same rich experiences in work as they have at home.

The aim is to have devices that:

- provide a great user experience
- are secure
- are independent from content and services
- require minimal or zero support.

Transferring this consumer technology vision to the workplace has been successfully proved by many progressive organisations and is integral to TW3. In time this may include approved employee-owned devices.

Becoming 'Digital by Default' in how we work

The government is committed to modernising services by making them available online – Digital by Default.

This has implications for the way we work in delivering services. Over time, this will reduce some of the requirements to work in particular places and at particular times.

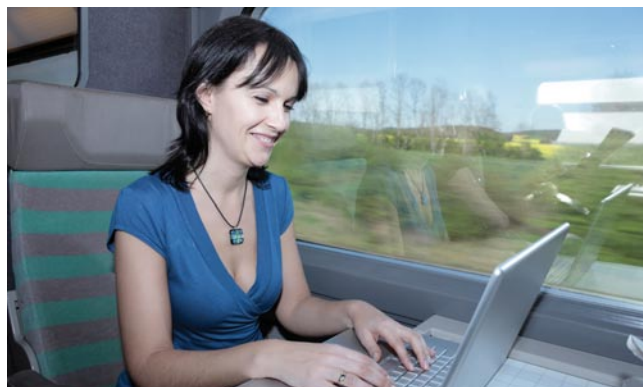
Many processes that used to require manual intervention are becoming automated and the need to re-process information supplied by citizens and partners is being reduced. These kinds of efficiencies should free up time from routine process work to enable people to work more effectively in front-line services. The Home Office case study provides an example of the benefits that can be achieved.

"Government's aim is that, as much as possible, the public sector workforce will be able to work from any location on any suitable government or non-government end user device."

End User Device Strategy, 2011

As the front end of service delivery is supported by digital services, so the behind the scenes work of administration and team interaction should increasingly be 'digital by default', with other channels of interaction, such as physical face-to-face meetings, coming into play where they add significant value to the way we work.

Smart Working depends on moving towards a digital by default working environment. Anywhere where work is done becomes, in a sense, part of 'the office' and so common systems, processes and tools should be available to all staff wherever they are working. In this way 'the office is the network'.





What is Modern IT for the Civil Service?

IT modernisation in government aims to have technology that people are proud of, and that makes government work elegantly for citizens.

Government's guidance for departments *End User Device Strategy: Design and Implementation*⁶ published in February 2013 establishes the technology, commercial and security principles for designing the modern IT infrastructure. Detailed definitions of the interoperability and security standards were also published at the same time and by using these guides departmental change programmes can be designed that are aligned to government IT strategy.

In strategic terms, it means getting 4 basic things right⁷:

For departments moving to Smart Working people will need IT that supports them wherever they are working. This includes different places in government buildings, as well as outside the office. This means technology that supports mobility.

It does not mean that people are necessarily expected to be mobile and work outside of offices – but it provides the capability to do so. The capability to be mobile and work in new ways underpins the potential benefits of Smart Working.

Increasingly there is no difference in the technologies people use whether they are in an office, with their clients, at home or on the move.

Area	Approach
User Experience	We need to design services with users' needs in mind – and that goes for our own technology as much as it does for what we produce for the public
Proportionate Security	Security should be proportionate to the risk, and for the vast majority of government business, this means using controls in the same way that a well run commercial business would
Sustained Value	Making sure that value can be sustained after something has been bought. This means designing for change, and opening up access to all types of suppliers, including open source or small businesses
Consumerised IT	We need to make it possible to use the kinds of general, commodity technology that works well for consumers and for other businesses

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175621/EUD_Design_Implementation.pdf

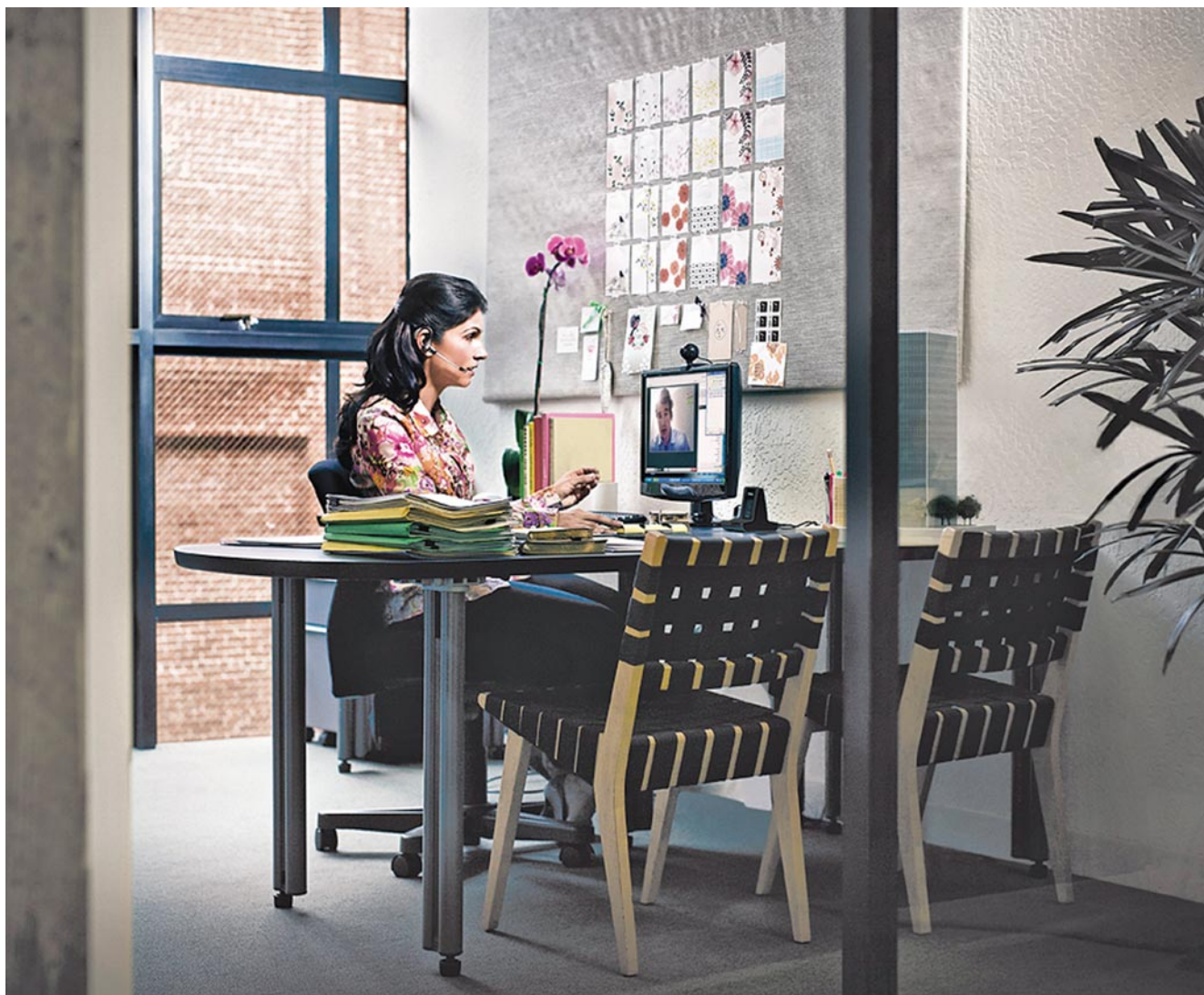
⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/technology/end-user-devices.html>

In practical terms, the range of technologies for Smart Working is likely to include:

- Laptop rather than desktop computers that support greater mobility of work both within and away from the office
- Alternatively, 'thin client' technology that allows users to log into their desktop at any terminal, and can be replicated with a 'thin client' application operating from a laptop or home computer
- Tablets which are increasingly being used to support working away from the office, and we can expect their functionality as business tools to continue to develop
- Smartphones which are already almost ubiquitous and increasingly overlap functionality with tablets
- Wi-Fi networks in offices and many other public and private locations
- 3G or 4G mobile phone networks using embedded and mobile Wi-Fi devices
- Cloud storage and application hosting allowing access to data and applications from anywhere without having to download or return to an office to update.
- Electronic document management and records systems that replace paper processes and can be accessed from anywhere
- Remote access technologies that allow employees to access their corporate networks, including legacy applications, securely from home and on the move
- VOIP (voice over internet) telephony to enable people to use their computer as a telephone
- Conferencing technologies – audio, video and web conferencing, mobile and static
- Online collaboration and social networking technologies that let dispersed teams work together on 'live' documents, chat to one-another (e.g. instant messaging) and organise projects, tasks and timetables in a shared virtual space

Technology strategy and choosing the right technologies for staff need to be based on a rigorous assessment both of operational and user needs, and an awareness of the ever-increasing possibilities as technologies evolve.





Technologies for teamwork over distance

One of the major concerns that people express about Smart Working is about maintaining the integrity of teams and preventing isolation and ‘atomisation’ of the workforce.

There are effective technologies for remote meetings using web, audio and video conferencing techniques that are used extensively in leading organisations. These not only enhance productivity, they also contribute to the bottom line through business travel savings. Solutions chosen need to be flexible to allow people to participate from any location as long as they have access to an internet connection. They must also be simple to set up and make it easy to include additional participants as needed. They will be most effective when combined with active initiatives to ‘rethink meetings’.

Unified communications (UC) are also becoming increasingly important for virtual teamwork. UC integrates into a single user interface services providing both real-time communication (voice telephony, instant messaging, video conferencing) and non-real-time communication (voicemail, email SMS and fax).

It incorporates call control to route calls/messages according to the selected preference or status of users, and may include advanced features like speech recognition and text-to-speech software to convert messages from voice to text or vice versa.

Organisations that embrace UC may dispense with desk phones, as calls are routed to portable devices such as laptops or smartphones. This streamlining of devices can offer both increased productivity and cost savings.

Using instant messaging and ‘chat’ solutions – often bundled with other communications software – enables teams to keep open channels while working, allowing people to dip in and out of conversations as needed. Typically, a user would leave the service running in the background while working on other things, switching focus when a break is needed or when you need to ask a specific question. Anyone on the team would be able to respond with information, suggestions of other people to talk to, and so on. Because it is network based it will also work regardless of geography so distributed teams can continue to communicate as if they were in one room.

These solutions are also useful for 'presence management', so users can indicate their availability status and, if necessary, their location.

Investment in these and other technologies that provide on-line information, interaction and community supports the principles of Smart Working as well as delivering cost savings. Promoting their use is a key part of taking a practical approach to changing behaviours and achieving the desired cultural change.

Technology and the work environment

Technologies need to be appropriate to a range of working environments, and enable staff to work comfortably as well as productively. For example, using laptops for prolonged periods requires the use of a laptop stand and/or additional properly positioned screen, with possibly a separate keyboard and mouse. When working on the move, in transition between meetings or for lively collaborative work with colleagues, working directly on a mobile device is easy and convenient.

The acoustic environment needs also to be considered. In noisy environments there need to be alternative settings for dealing with phone calls and concentrated work. In environments that are too quiet it may be important to provide background noise. Wireless headsets that enable mobility, noise cancellation capabilities and/or 'white noise' may be important considerations.

Meeting room technologies should be designed for ease of incorporating colleagues, partners and customers who are not physically present. This should include audio and screen or surface technologies that support collaborative working with remote participants. They should also support paperless meetings by enabling participants to access all information on screen and to transfer control of the screen to different participants, whether physically present or not.

Technology also has an important role to play in the day-to-day management of Smart Working. For example online booking systems can help optimise the use of meeting rooms and other valuable resources and self-service HR systems streamline the management of flexible working arrangements. Moving from paper to electronic processes and records is an essential part of this transition and an approach to paper reduction is outlined in Chapter 5 on Smart Workplaces.

Cloud computing and virtualisation

On 5th May 2013 government announced its 'Cloud First' policy. When procuring new or existing services, public sector organisations should consider and fully evaluate potential cloud solutions first – before they consider any other option. This approach is mandated to central government and strongly recommended to the wider public sector. Departments remain free to choose an alternative to the cloud if they can demonstrate that it offers better value for money.

The 'cloud' is basically the internet, and by using the cloud departments in the future won't need to host their own IT at all. Software and applications will be provided as a service rather than installed on computers, which will enable greater adaptability and agility as technologies evolve or circumstances change. Most people are familiar with using the cloud through their mobile phones and tablets using mobile web applications, streaming video and on-line storage such as photo galleries.

With everything accessed over the internet, there is no need for any permanent local storage or applications on any device people may be using. In this sense, even the staff working in the office will be 'remote workers'. The office may still be a good place to be based and to collaborate with colleagues, but it will no longer be the only or even, in some cases, the best place to do most of our work.

A related trend in corporate IT is towards 'desktop virtualisation'. What this means is that, rather than running their own programs, user computers run all their applications through a server. Support and upgrade costs can be cut dramatically and flexible location working is supported automatically.

'Thin client' technology is being used in several departments. This means that the computer used at a desk has little independent capability but instead operates as a 'dumb terminal' accessing information and systems on a remote server. A thin client application can also run on a 'normal' laptop or PC and operate like a thin client device while the user is logged on.

A department does not need to embrace cloud computing and virtualisation before they can start to develop Smart Working. But any technology that helps people to work more effectively and efficiently wherever they are needs to be considered.

It is also important that organisations do not develop IT strategies for cloud computing in isolation from a wider approach to Smart Working. Through Smart Working the IT strategy can be linked to savings in property and travel, as well as potential increases in productivity.

The Home Office

Modernising IT, rationalising estates and introducing shared services have been central to introducing Smart Working at the Home Office.

As a large department with a wide range of responsibilities and activities, major efficiencies have been achieved by introducing shared business services (transactional HR, Procurement, Finance), IT and Estates. The introduction of ERP services is on track to achieve net savings of £123m by automating processes and putting them online, driving standardisation and simplification across the organisation.

Moving processes online – e.g. annual leave, sick leave, absence, expenses, performance and more complex HR activities too – has driven out waste and speeded up processes. This has improved experiences for staff, hugely increased compliance and created much more visibility around spending.

According to Fiona Spencer, Director of Transformation, 'It's not just about digitising what we do, but also about thinking everything through from a digital customer perspective. We're getting to the stage where working smarter is natural: we've got used to it. People coming in from other parts of government often experience a culture shock. So one tip is to make sure you think about acclimatising incoming staff and organisations to your smarter ways of working.'

Virtualisation of processes makes these systems accessible wherever people are working. Desktops have also been virtualised, enabling staff to work anywhere. This was one of the key goals for a major IT change programme recently completed by the Home Office.

The 'Extend & Blend' programme had four aims:

- Cutting IT service costs by around 25% over five years – which has already been exceeded
- Delivering more efficient, accessible IT services, with greater mobility and flexibility
- Modernising IT systems, making them more reliable, resilient and sustainable
- Putting in place a strategic platform for use by other parts of the department and for future development.

As well as supporting 'anytime, anywhere' working, Extend & Blend is set to deliver net contractual savings of £142.9m plus significant further efficiency and other benefits estimated at £165.3m, against investment of £72.3m.

The flexibility brought about by improved IT is also reflected in changes to Estates. A five year programme is consolidating buildings, and reinforcing the Department's established model of regional hubs. Sharing of estates services, introduced in 2008, has saved £70m in facilities costs alone over five years, with further savings expected going forward. Desk-sharing and the provision of touch-down spaces, coupled with flexible IT, enable staff to work in any centre. There is more to come in modernising spaces with a greater emphasis on collaborative work, with further reduction of paper and adoption of smarter ways of working across all parts of the Department.

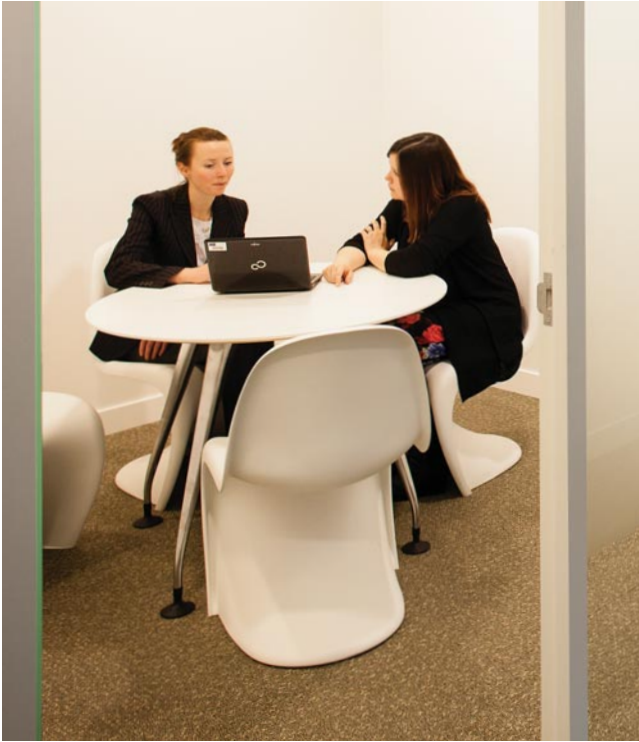
There is a further catalyst for change with the move to share space at Marsham Street with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). There will be common shared meeting, breakout and other collaborative spaces, with more touchdown places and open access Wi-Fi. The innovation is set to continue.

Security

Smart Working throws up new areas of risk in terms of data security and physical security. The risks need to be managed, and should not be used inappropriately as reasons to restrict business, mobility and innovation. Security should be proportionate to the risk, and for the vast majority of government business, this means using controls in the same way that a well-run commercial business would.

Policy and technology play a part, but managing risk is primarily about taking personal responsibility for proportionately protecting the official information and assets being used.

This includes keeping them physically safe when in transit and securely storing all devices and information – including both papers and electronic information – both when working and when work is finished. It means protecting information from being overlooked when working in public areas, and choosing working locations with an appropriate level of security to work in.



When working from home it is the responsibility of individual people to make sure information is safe, and that household members understand the need for the security measures taken.

People should consider the sensitivity of the information they will be working on and handle it in line with departmental policies. When working remotely, employees are still required to comply with all relevant legislation such as the Data Protection Act (1998).

Generally, information should not be stored locally but in shared document/records systems. When data is captured in the field and the user is not in a position to connect directly with central systems, it should be transferred to the shared system as soon as possible so others can access it.

Departments will have different policies on the use of personal IT equipment for official business. This will differ between organisations depending on the sensitivity of the work involved.

Apart from the physical security of devices and documents, the ability to work in an increasing number of alternative government buildings can give rise to new risks alongside the opportunities and benefits. One example would be being alert to an intruder trying to tailgate someone with a pass into a secure area, and being prepared to challenge.

It is important to act appropriately in other office settings in terms of protection of information and property, and to develop a social awareness of security – watching out not just for oneself but for everyone.

Each Departmental Security Unit (DSU) can provide specific security advice and guidance for people in their department and must be informed of any security incident as soon as possible whether it happens in the office or away from it. Government's policy statements and guidance for departments are contained in the *Security Policy Framework*⁸.

Wider involvement in technology decisions

Non-technical staff may shy away from dealing with technology issues. This contrasts with office design and

flexible working policies, where everyone seems happy to take a view and fight their corner.

However, with the focus now on user needs and as people in general become familiar with using IT in their daily lives people should be encouraged to think about the possibilities offered by new technologies and get involved with IT teams in working out how to use IT to improve the effectiveness of their work.

The key principles are that:

1. Business need, in the context of Smart Working, has to drive the strategy for IT and for the technology procurement decisions for working both in the office and beyond
2. IT strategies need to be integrated with property and people strategies in order to maximise the business benefits of Smart Working.

By inviting more people to propose and contribute to IT solutions government will encourage innovation and the Government Digital Service will support departments and teams in finding the best technologies to support their business needs.

⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/security-policy-framework





The Government Digital Service

The Government Digital Service are leaders in developing digital public services for citizens and businesses. Initially formed out of existing government departments, their tools were expensive, with security constraints that made working effectively challenging or impossible. As GDS formed, it urgently needed digital tools that would enable it to work with agility and enable effective and easy collaboration both internally and externally.

GDS selected the web-based Google Apps for Business for their office productivity and collaboration needs, using both Apple MacBooks and other laptops and devices of their choice. Google Apps provides email, word processing, spreadsheets, presentation and diagramming, calendar, blog and wiki functions, social working and also online video conferencing.

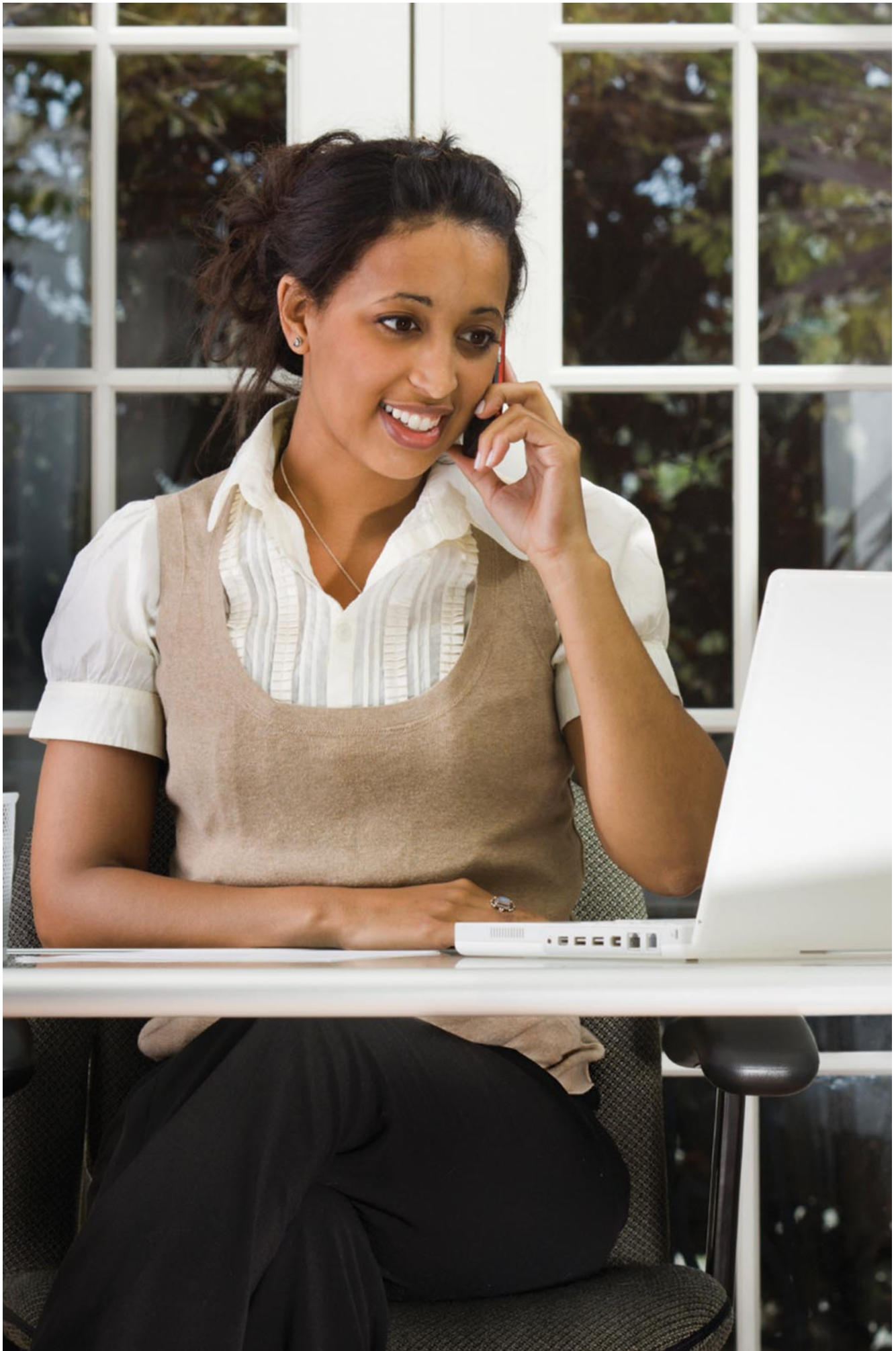
Network connectivity is achieved through any wireless route to the internet, be it a café Wi-Fi hotspot, home broadband or the office network. Support and updates operate as with any commodity consumer cloud service. Updates take place seamlessly without any need for internal or outsourced IT function.

The solution was found to be 80% cheaper than the alternative available system, with 100% of users expressing preference for using the GDS solution.

Users find access to digital and online tools and services, including the ease of adopting new tools, both pleasant and productivity-enhancing. A pure web-based productivity solution enables users to collaborate freely amongst colleagues and with those outside government. It also liberates them to work with a wide range of current and future tools and devices, because there is no dependence or lock-in to any particular device, supplier or tool. And it liberates them to work from any location too.

The use of cloud services minimises the need for internal IT and the associated expense and disruption of technology procurement, testing, deployment and service management. A key benefit of pure web digital services with zero footprint on user's devices is that there is effectively no need for technical integration with its associated costs, complexity, and technical risks.

On the security side, users rarely need to access RESTRICTED material, but when they do they use accounts hosted by other departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions or Cabinet Office for this purpose, and can use a small number of accredited shared terminals to do so. The ratio between RESTRICTED terminals and users is approximately 20 to 200 (1 to 10), and is expected to be brought down further by both challenging the need for such terminals, and also by making applications available without the need for a RESTRICTED terminal.



6 Smart, sustainable and healthy

Environmental sustainability

Most, if not all, departments are taking initiatives to make their office buildings more sustainable. These need to be complemented by the development of more sustainable working practices.

The biggest component of the carbon footprint of work for most organisations relates to travel – primarily in the commute journey.

Greening the office and greening the home count for little if at the end of the day we are still building and running too many offices and requiring people to make unnecessary journeys.

The carbon cost of work in the UK

- Every year UK workers clock up 80 billion car miles commuting to work
- The typical carbon footprint of a workers in an office is around 1.5 tonnes of CO₂ per year
- Business travel accounts for around 70 trips per worker per year, with an average distance of around 20 miles. 69% is by car.
- Mobile workers using company cars clock up an average 6000 miles per year.

Source: Department for Transport and RAC Foundation

Becoming a sustainable organisation is not just about engineering solutions and complying with new building standards. It involves changing behaviours and assumptions about how we work.

Having the UK working population travel billions of miles each year to spend time using computers and telephones – work that can be done from anywhere – is an intrinsically unsustainable thing to do.



The decisions we make on a daily basis about where we work, where we expect our colleagues to work, and the ways in which we communicate can increase or reduce our need for travel, our energy consumption and consumption of physical resources.

Saving carbon by eliminating journeys

A study by Oxford University's Transport Studies Unit⁹ evaluated the comparative impacts of teleworking versus office carbon impacts. This proposes a typical carbon cost of using a room for home-based telework as being 173kg CO₂ per year if one day per week, and 865kg per year if five days per week (costs of heating and lighting a room plus equipment energy use).

This is about half the carbon per person of working in a modern office and a quarter of the carbon cost of working in a poor-performing office. And there are further savings to be achieved in travel reduction.

The following table shows miles, time and CO₂ saved per year by not driving to an office.

Average savings from avoiding commuting:

Annual savings	1.5 days per week	5 days per week
Distance	1175 miles	3915 miles
CO ₂	365 kg	1187 kg
Time	61 hours	203 hours

Calculated on basis of 45 working weeks per year, and average UK commute distances

⁹ Banister, Newson & Ledbury (2007) *The Costs of Transport on the Environment: The Role of Teleworking in Reducing Emissions*. Transport Studies Unit, Oxford University.

Saving travel through virtual meetings

- Aviva UK has calculated that the full CO₂ cost of a full meeting of the executive committee is 6.4 tonnes. Telepresence is now being used to replace these face-to-face meetings.
- BT teleconferencing replaces 340,000 trips 54,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year – around 40kg of CO₂ for each call that replaces a physical meeting
- Use of conferencing technologies at Vodafone has led to a reduction of 12,000 tons of CO₂ from business mileage

Sources: CBI (2010) *Tackling Congestion, Driving Growth: A new approach to roads policy*. Case Studies from Lake (2013) *Smart Flexibility*. Gower Publishing.

Using online conferencing (audio, video, etc.) is already saving some organisations tens of thousands of business miles, saving costs and increasing productivity as well as playing a role in saving the planet.

Taking a practical approach: setting targets

The figures quoted here on organisational savings are based on measured studies, not wishful thinking.

Departments can take a practical approach to target setting for travel reduction, both for business travel and for staff commuting. Targets can be of the form: 'We will reduce our travel for (specified kinds of) meetings by x% by this date', or we will reduce business travel in our department by x% per year over the next 5 years'.

Similar targets can also be set for reducing consumption of other resources, such as paper. Bringing in electronic processes and centralised printing should be accompanied by paper reduction targets. Such targets need to be reinforced through cultural change programmes.

Reducing waste in office space

Realising the environmental savings when people move to working smarter critically depends on reducing office requirements, as per the guidance in Chapter 5 above.

Unless this property rationalisation takes place, the risk is that by keeping unused space in the office plus working from home and in other places, energy use will actually increase. This could entirely erode the savings made from reducing the need to travel.

Savings can often be made by better office design and more modern choice of furniture. Recycling is good for the environment and may be financially necessary. However, too strong a focus on using existing furniture even when it is outdated or inappropriate can constrain the options for space saving, energy efficiency and improving work effectiveness. This is where the overall whole life carbon saving return on investment needs to be considered alongside the financial returns and other business benefits.

Making smart offices more sustainable

Designing new offices or refurbishing existing ones also creates the opportunity to make the buildings work smarter, as well as their occupants.

The different, and more intensive use of offices means that there will often need to be changes to building services – and this means a chance to make the building itself more sustainable.

Potential wider impacts in the UK

It has been calculated that if the 40% of employees who could work from home did so for two days per week, the country could:

- Reduce road travel by 6.3 billion miles/year
- Reduce greenhouse gases by 6.2 million tonnes/year –
- Save the average commuter 11 working days of travel per year – and over 4 working weeks for longer distance commuters

Source: Telework Research Network (2011) *The Shifting Nature of Work in the UK: Bottom Line Benefits of Telework*



The Office of Rail Regulation

Smart Working at the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) focuses on creating more opportunities to interact and collaborate. At the same time, changes to the offices in Holborn will reduce the costs of operation by enabling half a floor to be sublet to another organisation. The project will pay for itself just on this basis in less than three years and make savings in running costs beyond that. The wider organisational benefits are yet to be quantified but expected to be incremental and significant.

The new Smart Working office layout alleviates pressure on meeting rooms by creating a number of new smaller rooms for 1 to 1s and quiet working. There is a modern break-out and kitchen area for more collaborative working, touchdown points for those in the office for a short time and a more comfortable environment for visitors to work or meet with staff.

“We’re having a big push to become more online-centric,” says Operations Director Tom Taylor. “We’re getting rid of the blockers to working smarter, e.g. introducing paperless processes and trialling new IT. And we’re challenging practices that have never been questioned, like excessive paper storage, in-trays and presenteeism. Senior leadership buy-in is really important – it requires someone senior to be an agitator and an exemplar, or even an evangelist.



That helps overcome obstacles.’ Tom’s team have chosen to have paperless meetings – consciously setting an example from the top.

The ORR are aiming to reduce business travel costs through the introduction of new technology and working practices. The new layout at One Kemble Street will facilitate remote meetings by providing for more small private working spaces reducing pressure on meeting rooms and reducing the need for staff to travel for meetings. About a third of the staff are mobile, and the ability to work remotely reduces the need to travel back to base.

It’s all about giving staff greater autonomy to challenge how and where they work, to maximise their productivity.





The Greening Government Commitments have set a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings and business-related transport by 25% by 2015 (from a 2009/10 baseline).

Social sustainability

Working smarter can also bring benefits to society, by:

- Extending work opportunities into more remote areas and to disadvantaged groups
- Enabling people with disabilities or caring responsibilities to work in places or at times more suitable to them
- Indirectly supporting local communities and services by enabling people to work at or nearer to home
- Enabling people to dovetail volunteering activities with their work commitments.

These can also have benefits for employers, e.g. in retaining staff when they relocate, being able to recruit from a wider pool of applicants and being an employer of choice.

Healthy working

Full-time employees spend almost half of their waking hours working, travelling to and from work or thinking about work. It therefore makes good business sense to take care of their health and fitness.

According to the report 'Working for a Healthier Tomorrow'¹⁰ the annual economic costs in the UK of sickness absence and worklessness associated with working age ill-health are estimated to be over £100 billion. Around 175 million working days are lost each year, effectively adding around £650 to the annual

employment cost of each employee. On top of this, staff with poor health under-perform when they are at work and this is often compounded by employers providing unhealthy working environments.

Alongside other initiatives to promote a healthy workplace, departments should promote flexible working practices that can reduce absence and in particular reduce stress.

A significant proportion of absence from work is due to minor ailments that make the thought of commuting and sitting in an office with colleagues unbearable – being able to work on occasions from home can have a significant impact on 'sick leave'. Similarly many people struggle to get to work when their children, disabled or elderly relatives are ill and need their attention. Smart Working can ease this problem.

People are more productive and happier in offices that are tidy, clean and well cared for. Air quality and lighting can have a profound impact on mood and performance. In redesigning environments for Smart Working, the need to create healthy workplaces needs to be taken into account.

This can mean designing in areas for relaxation in offices. But it can also mean using local alternatives including potentially other departments' offices closer to home that can encourage people to walk or cycle when they need to access office facilities.

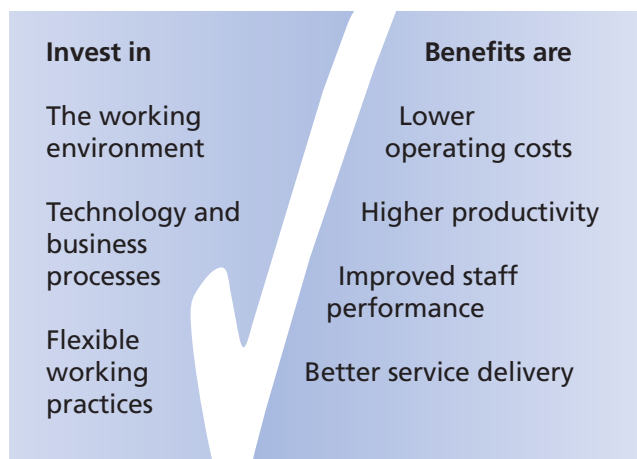
Impacts on health and happiness are factors that can be measured, and should be included in consultation before Smart Working and in evaluation after implementation.

¹⁰ Black, C (2008) *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow*.

7 Making the case and implementing change

It is vital that the move to Smart Working has strong support from the top. Without strong messages coming down, individual managers may resist or introduce compromises that will in the end lead to the failure of the project. So the vision and the broad direction of the changes need to be clearly understood by everyone at the outset and throughout implementation.

The business case for Smart Working should be relatively straightforward to represent:



In addition, non-financial benefits can include improved environmental and social sustainability and better employee health and wellbeing.

In summary, investing in a combination of new working environments, technology, business processes and more flexible working processes *can* deliver substantial business benefits.

Planning and rolling out the changes

Implementing the changes will involve close liaison between senior leaders, the estates and facilities, IT and HR functions in a department, working with the management of the teams undergoing the transition and is likely involve rethinking the culture and management practices of the department. It will be necessary to form an inter-disciplinary programme team to manage the changes and as a business transformation programme rather than simply a property project.¹¹

It is recommended that programmes are run in accordance with government guidance on Managing Successful Programmes.¹²

A plan will need to be developed detailing the costs, timescale and risks.



¹¹ This can be no more than a brief summary to point out the main component tasks of putting together a business case for Smart Working and implementing a change programme to help get started in the right way. More advice is available in *Working Beyond Walls* <http://resources.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Working-beyond-Walls.pdf>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-practice-and-methodology-projects-programmes-and-portfolios>

The following is a simple ‘timeline’ for implementing Smart Working:

1. Work with senior team to understand the possibilities, and agree the Vision
2. Establish senior team to drive the change programme forward
3. Gather the evidence – desk occupancy, workstyles, travel, productivity, staff preferences, technology use, customer locations and needs (etc)
4. Consult staff, staff networks and Trade Unions
5. Prepare the business case,
6. Identify and address any health and safety and equal opportunity and diversity issues
7. Set targets and priorities
8. Plan any changes to technology, working with IT team
9. Plan any changes needed to the office space, working with the property and facilities team
10. Run awareness raising and training sessions with managers and teams, working with the HR team
11. Develop any specific local protocols for Smart Working
12. Set up a fast-track pathfinder/trailblazer implementation to learn from, and make any appropriate modifications
13. Roll out the changes to the rest of the organisation
14. Continue culture change processes and training
15. Evaluate, and monitor progress for lessons learned as well as any necessary reporting
16. Modify further in the light of evaluation findings

The importance of top level support and enthusiasm

We have stressed the importance of consultation and getting staff buy-in and enthusiasm.

Implementations that are purely cost-driven and ignore staff aspirations and the importance of culture change will run into trouble.

However, experience shows that one of the biggest barriers to success is lack of engagement at the top level. Our case studies highlight the importance of top level support and example-setting.

Any Smart Working programme needs to have clear and dynamic support at CEO level. Without this projects can often die the death of a thousand compromises as programme managers struggle against powerful interests who may resist or seek to divert projects into their own pet schemes.

The vision has to be clearly endorsed and communicated. The message is ‘This will be done. We’ll consult on and adapt the detail, but the vision and principles are not in question’. This empowers the programme managers to move ahead confidently.

Outside of the Civil Service, there have been a number of high profile implementations where director-level

staff row back on their own working practices – e.g. reintroducing personal offices for themselves or not allowing flexible work for staff working closely with them. ‘Do as I say, not as I do’ is a message that will undermine the success of Smart Working.

Can’t do it all at once?

We strongly advocate a strategic and comprehensive approach to change. But we recognise that not all departments are in a position to do everything in one go.

In circumstances where there is limited scope for investment in new IT or refurbishment of premises, it should be remembered that much can be achieved in moving towards new ways of working using existing technologies more effectively and placing more of an initial emphasis on cultural change.

But it also needs to be remembered that under-utilised space, inefficient processes and unnecessary travel constitute major ongoing costs. Savings not achieved can have a negative impact on the ability to deliver front-line activities. The same goes for underachieving on the productivity front by not moving to more effective working practices.

When the business case identifies significant savings, it is worth reminding people of the weekly or monthly cost of not realising those savings.

A systematic approach to making the Business Case

Successful implementation of Smart Working involves a systematic approach consisting of:

- Gathering evidence
- Consultation
- Analysing the work people do
- Calculation of costs and savings (business case)
- Establishing key metrics
- Planning and delivering the changes to IT, communications, premises, HR policies, etc.
- Training
- Evaluation.

Evidence gathering

Before planning major changes to how people work, it is essential to pull together accurate information about where and when people work, how much space they use, the resources they use and the people they need to interact with.

The evidence needs to be gathered in a systematic way.

A **space audit**, ideally carried out over two weeks in a non-holiday period, will enable you find out actual space occupancy, how much time desks are 'claimed' but not actually occupied, meeting room occupancy, use of break-out spaces and kitchens, etc. It will also show peak demand.

It is best if the survey is carried out at frequent intervals throughout the day. Relying on just one or two observations during the day will probably inflate average occupancy and not record times of peak occupancy.

A staff survey (see also below), carried out over two or three weeks to maximise response rates, should be

used to harvest additional practical information about work styles. This should include details about where and when people currently work, the amount of travel, their use of technologies and other resources, whether their work involves external interactions with the public and partners, or is primarily internally facing, and whether it is subject to peaks and troughs of demand. Workstyle analysis will need to be based on a clear picture of who works where and why – information that can be surprisingly tricky to pin down in many large organisations.

A rigorous **storage audit** (see Chapter 5) needs to be carried out.

A programme of **structured interviews** with senior management and stakeholders is important to identify key operational requirements, current styles of working, key issues and changes in strategy and/or headcount that may impact on changes to Smart Working. Managers may hold radically different views, and the process may also highlight the need for management training and awareness-raising.

For a fully integrated programme involving redesigning the office, there also needs to be an **assessment of the office layout and building services**, to see the scope for change, identify constraints and provide a basis for both modelling possible new work environments and identifying the costs of change.

Initial evidence gathering should include a **technology audit**, to identify what forms of Smart Working existing technology can support, and the investment that may be needed to support more extensive Smart Working.

To provide a baseline for future evaluation of the impacts of change, it is helpful to gather data on absence, staff turnover and staff satisfaction.

From this an accurate picture of current ways of working can be drawn, and a baseline established that will help in future evaluation of the impacts of the project.



Consultation

Consultation about Smart Working has three main aims:

- Playing a part in the evidence gathering process (as previous page)
- Finding out requirements and aspirations for new working patterns
- Involving people and Trade Unions in the process of change, to motivate them and to ensure buy-in and success.

Involving staff will stimulate further discussion within departments and teams about the practicality and impacts of different work styles, how (if adopted) they need to be managed, and what kinds of new tools, processes and training might be needed.

Extensive consultation with people – the users – should be the foundation of making sure that new environments, IT and working practices meet their real needs and support them in doing their work as well as possible.



Analysing the work people do

One obstacle to implementing Smart Working is making assumptions about how work has to be carried out. For example, some people might say “This role has to be based in the office”, or “I always need my team close at hand”.

Some jobs may be site-specific or time-specific. But it is important to analyse the various tasks involved in the job. When analysed, some tasks will prove to be more ‘location-independent’ than others.

It is also important to analyse what is tethering tasks unnecessarily to the office and/or the desk, and whether that can change in the context of Smart Working. For example, is it over-reliance on paper processes, an excessive ‘meetings culture’, traditional management styles, or lack of remote access technologies? If so, strategies can be developed to modernise the processes or cultures involved.

Calculation of costs and savings

Data will be needed about the costs of running the office on a per-person and per-sqm basis. Scenarios can be developed around different work patterns and sharing ratios and the potential savings can be calculated.

The costs and environmental impacts of travel – both business travel and commute travel – should also be calculated.

Costings will also be needed for investment in new IT, any alterations to premises, training in new systems and processes and for supporting cultural change.

A cost/benefit analysis and a business plan can then be put together, looking at the potential savings and the investment required to achieve those savings through working smarter.

Business savings for employers

Findings from the *Shifting Nature of Work in the UK* report (2011) show that businesses could:

- Save £550 for every employee who works an average two and a half days per week from home
- Save £4.2 billion in property costs (on the basis of a 20% reduction)
- Save £3.2 billion from reduced absenteeism

Establishing key metrics

Moving to Smart Working involves having a clear idea of the benefits that are to be achieved. Working from the evidence gathered, metrics would be likely to include:

- Increased productivity
- Improvements in business outcomes
- Improvements in the specific business processes and working practices targeted for change
- Cost Savings
- Energy Savings / Carbon Reduction
- Office space reduction
- Improved staff satisfaction with space, IT and management culture
- Travel reduction – both business travel and commute travel
- Reduced absenteeism
- Improved staff retention
- Improved wellbeing.



Department of Health

Being able to adapt to organisational change is central to working smarter at the Department of Health (DH). In particular, the Health and Social Care Act has brought about many changes in DH and its Arms Length Bodies (ALBs), including the need to accommodate six new ALBs.

According to Robert Edmondson-Jones, Director of Information Services, 'As well as responding to structural changes, we have had to save money, hit efficiency targets and make better use of the resources we have – and do it all very quickly. Our aim is to have a dynamic estate and IT that enables people to do what they need to do'.

The transformation programme has reduced overall estate running costs by £27m. 22 leases have been surrendered, and £9.5m has been raised from 24 property sales.

Each DH directorate now has fewer desks than people, with a range of flexible spaces: project areas, bigger meeting rooms, touchdown desks, unbookable quiet rooms and breakout areas.

There is also a health & wellbeing centre with a managed fitness suite. The aim is to make the DH a great place to work, and to live by the principles they advocated in their policy work.

Changing the way people work includes harnessing the potential of the latest IT developments. A new outsourced shared IT services contract is based on a new vision for a 'secure multi-tenant private cloud' for the Department and the ALBs. The solution is scalable, modular and flexible. It delivers not only an improved infrastructure for modern working but also one which can evolve and rapidly adapt to future changes. New access arrangements enable staff to work from terminals in any building.

As well as supporting more remote and collaborative working, there has also been a new approach to video communications to increase efficiency and reduce travel costs. The aim was to embed videoconferencing into day-to-day business processes. New VC systems have been installed that make meetings more flexible and reduce routine travel between sites. The next phase is to integrate wider access to desktop video for local teams.



Training and awareness-raising

Smart Working may fail to realise the full range of benefits if managers and staff are not properly prepared for working in new ways and for playing their part in developing a Smart Working culture.

Training and awareness-raising for managers should include:

- Understanding the benefits of new ways of working
- Understanding the flexible and smart working options available
- Understanding the linkages between new technologies and the possibilities for new working practices
- Understanding how to involve and motivate staff to implement Smart Working
- How to manage a dispersed workforce
- How to manage by results rather than presence
- New approaches to empowerment and trust
- Performance issues resolution
- Equality and diversity issues
- Dealing with communication issues
- Understanding the pitfalls and issues that may arise, and how to deal with these.

Training and awareness-raising for teams should include:

- Being clear about the type of workplace culture that it is hoped to develop
- Understanding the benefits and goals
- Understanding roles and responsibilities

- Developing skills and understanding in working more flexibly:
 - working with less direct supervision
 - communicating with colleagues and partners
 - time management
 - monitoring and reporting arrangements
 - health and safety in new working environments
 - responsible risk management for personal and data security
- Working in a 'non-territorial' environment – sharing space and resources, and choosing appropriate work settings
- Working with Smart Working technologies and understanding the processes for having issues resolved.

Evaluation

To understand whether Smart Working has achieved the benefits anticipated, an evaluation study should be carried out around 9-12 months after implementation and thereafter on an on-going basis using Balanced Scorecard and efficiency and effectiveness benchmarking.

It is vital that baseline metrics have been established in order for the evaluation to be robust. The achievements can then be evaluated against this baseline. Where necessary, further changes can be made where expected targets are not met, or where further consultation and feedback show that there are particular difficulties or issues.

Smart Working will also continue to evolve, and involves openness to future change. So the evaluation process has to take account of new possibilities for increasing flexibility and agility. It should take account of new technological possibilities and the changing context in which the Civil Service operates.

Department for Transport

Following its advocacy and experience of flexible working during the Olympics, the Department for Transport has embarked on a journey into Smart Working.

‘It’s really about moving to a much more modern and professional environment, and people really respond to that when they see it. It’s about better and more flexible ways of working. One of the biggest challenges is getting people to see it’s about business change not just about workspace,’ says Head of Property Malcolm Twite.

So the change team at DfT worked hard to gather compelling evidence for change and in getting everyone on board to work smarter. An initial audit of space based on entry cards found that there was a minimum of 300 desks unused every day, and desk occupancy at around 50%. The case for using space better was overwhelming.

The programme is transforming the three key areas of People, IT and Property, which are tackled in that order. A big effort is being put into communications, engaging everyone in designing their new space and in agreeing new and smarter ways of working.

The changes are being made without any dedicated decant space. Instead staff indicate with slips of paper when their desk will be available for others to use. So teams find and coordinate their own space to work. This two week period without a team zone provides a good opportunity to start working more flexibly if they are not already doing so.

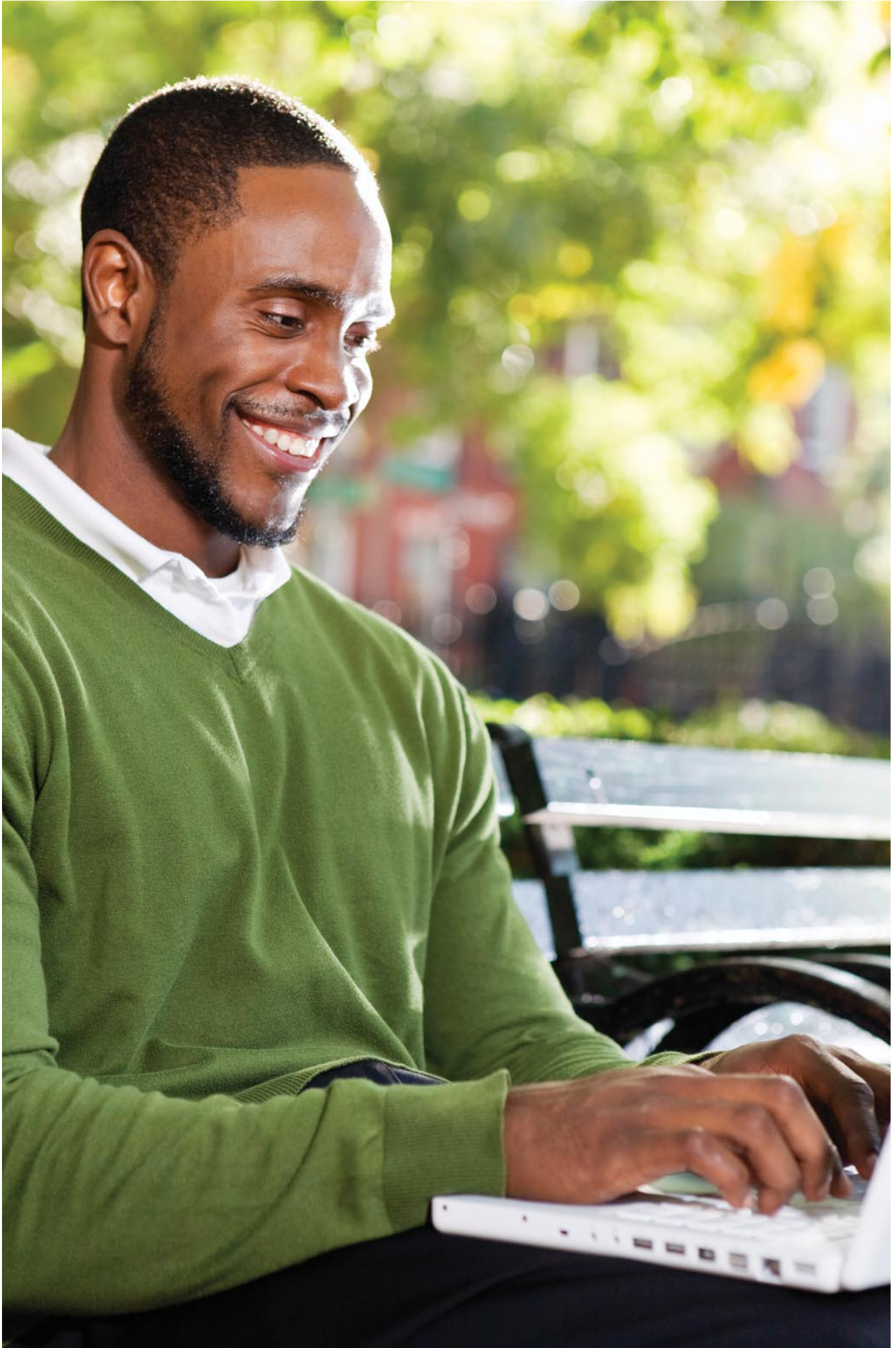


There are no personal desks (except for reasonable adjustment). There are a mixture of desks, including some height adjustable ones, and square project tables. The desks are set up for thin client working. The office is zoned with team bases, so people can sit close to colleagues when they want to.

There are a range of new informal meeting spaces, encouraging more collaborative working and taking the pressure off meeting rooms. Already there is much more cross-team interaction, which was one of the key aims. There are also quiet spaces where people can get away from phones to do concentrated work.

There is a fair amount of homeworking already, and staff are supported to work wherever is most effective to get the work done. Looking to the future, the aim is to enable people to go into any DfT building and work, anywhere in the country.





8 Moving forward

Many of the people we spoke to in the course of preparing this Guide spoke of the move to Smart Working as a journey. And it is one that continues.

As with all large organisations, not all departments move at the same speed. Within departments and agencies there may also be variations in progress.

The 'Smart Working Maturity Model' below outlines the main phases of change that organisations go through on their journey to embracing smart and flexible working in a strategic and integrated way.

The model also summarises the typical stages that bridge the gap from one phase to another.

Departments and agencies can use this Maturity Model to assess where they are positioned on the road to better ways of working, and to scope what their priorities should be in moving forward.

Larger organisations may find that different areas of the business are moving forward at different speeds. The Maturity Model can help in measuring progress across an organisation in such cases.

Changing places

Future changes to working environments are likely to include a greater emphasis on sharing – sharing between office bases between departments, being able to work in other public sector offices, and working from local centres. These latter may be provided by various bodies in the public sector, or by the private sector.

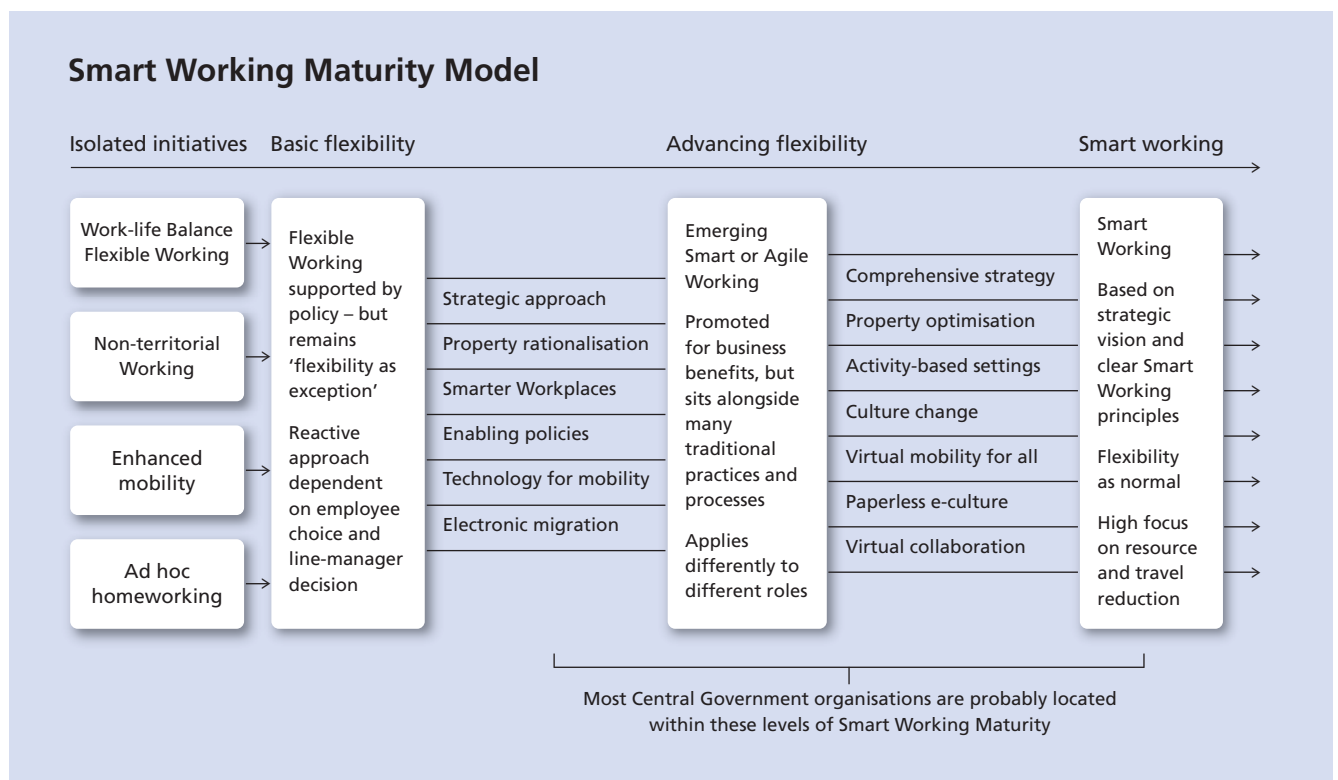
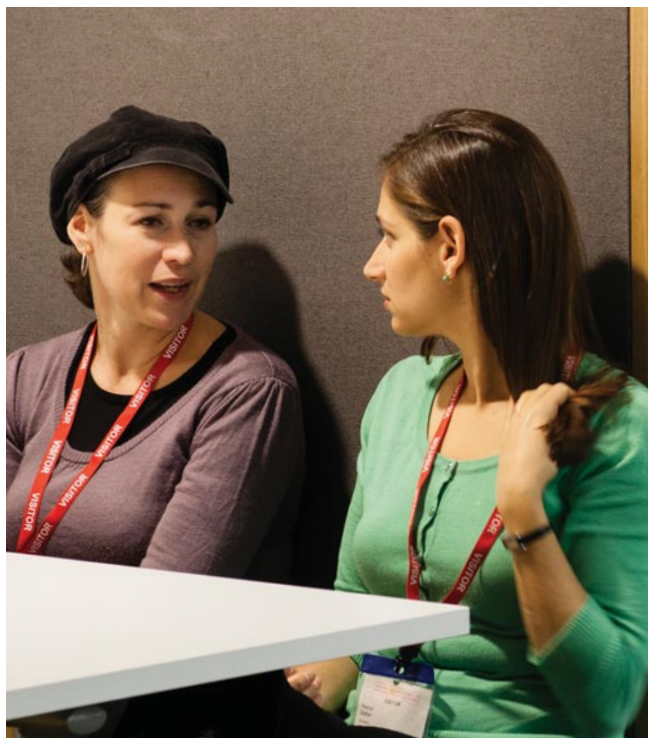


Figure 3: The Smart Working Maturity Model based on Smart Flexibility



The design of these offices and hubs is likely to move further away from the central importance of the desk and towards an increased range of shared flexible work and collaborative work settings.

Continuing technology changes

However, the story does not stop here. Further innovations in the world of work are bound to impact on the potential for greater effectiveness and efficiency.

While many organisations are wrestling with making best use of current technologies, new technologies are

coming on stream all the time. New generations of portable devices, new screen and surface technologies, social media applications, communications technologies, voice recognition technologies and ambient computing will over the next decade further transform the nature of work, and the spaces in which we work.

To reap the benefits, The Way We Work programmes must remain open to the future possibilities for supporting greater mobility and flexibility.

9 Further resources and information

TW3 resources

Contact us

For more information about The Way We Work programme please contact the TW3 team on:
TW3information@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

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Flexibility.co.uk

Flexibility is a free resource providing guidance, case studies and features on new ways of working. Beneath the home page there is a wealth of resources, articles, reports and guides.

You can sign up for a regular newsletter and also receive early notification of forthcoming events. Further details at www.flexibility.co.uk

Smart Work Network

The Smart Work Network was launched in Autumn 2007 to bring together practitioners of flexible working from large organisations across the UK. Members are people working in private, public and voluntary sector organisations to roll out substantial programmes of flexible work.

Currently there are over 200 members, from 160 subscribing organisations. Further details at www.smart-work.net

Acknowledgements

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The guide has been produced by the TW3 team led from Cabinet Office to help UK central government departments implement Smart Working. The team includes policy advisers and experts on workplace, IT, employee policy and security

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The Author

Andy Lake was commissioned to work with the TW3 team in the Cabinet Office and UK Government departments to create this Guide to capture the vision, principles and practices recommended and required by The Way We Work programme as part of Civil Service Reform. He is Editor of Flexibility.co.uk, the online journal of flexible work which he has edited since 1994. Andy has been involved in many implementations of flexible work, specialising in building the evidence base for change and developing organisational policies for smarter working. He has also participated in numerous research projects funded by the UK government and the European Commission, looking at the impacts of new ways of working on business, society and the environment.

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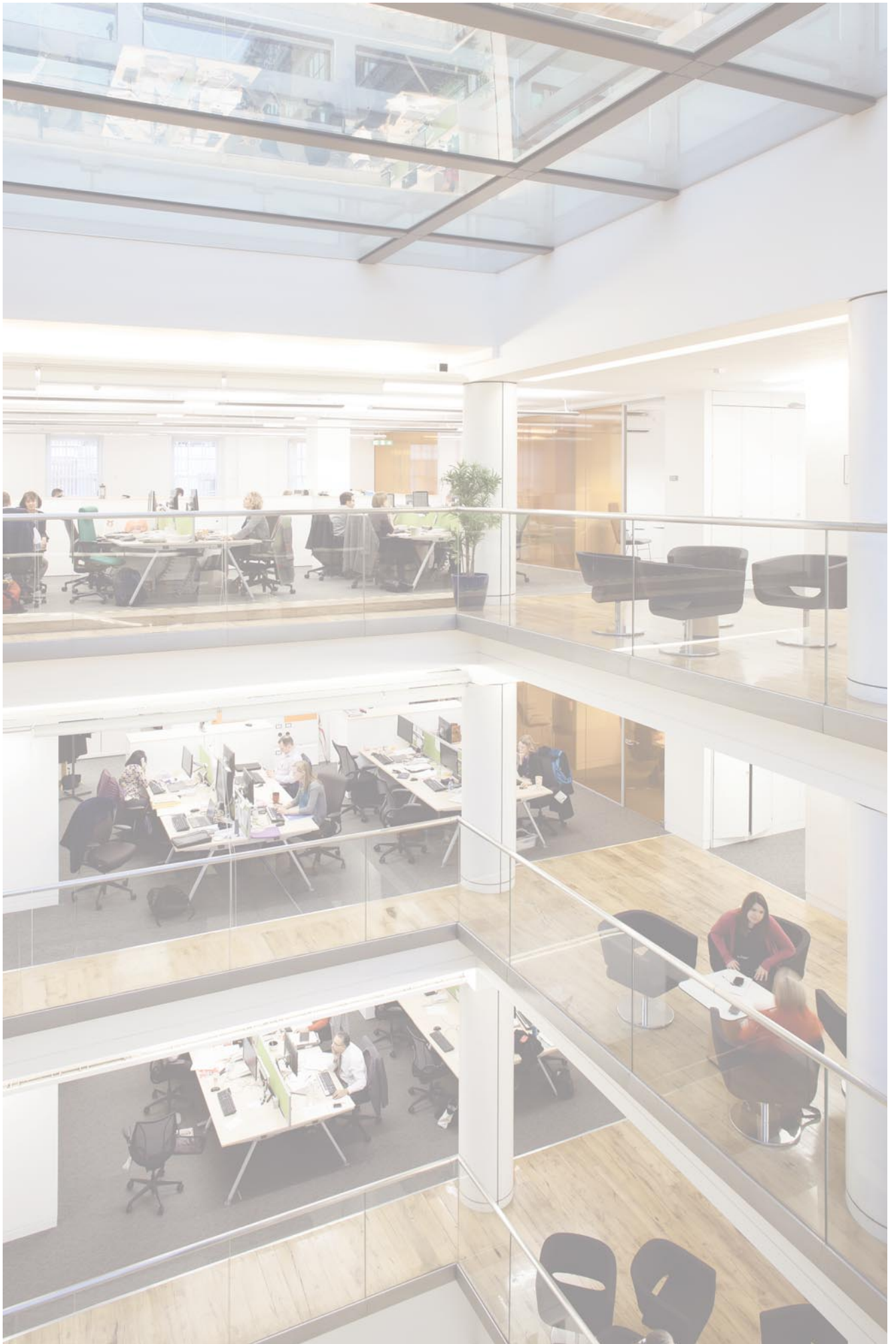
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The Way We Work (TW3) is the Cabinet Office led cross-departmental programme designed to help realise the Civil Service Reform Plan's aim of 'Creating a decent working environment for all staff, with modern workplaces enabling flexible working, substantially improving IT tools and streamlining security requirements to be less burdensome for staff'.



Our aim for this book is to provide a guide to the new ways of working brought in through the Civil Service Reform programme which will enable all parts of the Civil Service to work seamlessly across locations, and at times that are more advantageous to citizens, employees and taxpayers.

"Transforming the way we work is not a 'nice-to-have'. It is the only way to make sure we provide the services our customers expect and demand – now and in the future."

Martin Donnelly

Permanent Secretary, Business Innovation and Skills, and
Chair of the TW3 Delivery Board



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