

InFocus: News and views from the GPA (June 2022)

WELCOME TO INFOCUS, JUNE 22

Yvette Greener, Client Director

We exist to create great places to work for the UK's civil servants. To achieve this we must have a strong commitment to the solutions we design and the services we provide. This is why we are currently [reviewing our service offer](#) to create a service and pricing catalogue that works for our clients through being clearer, more consistent and transparent.

Our investment in fixing our client billing also continues with [improvements being seen](#) across accuracy, collections and forecasting. But the greatest improvement has been in the timeliness of raising invoices, with a 60 percent improvement in just 12 months. We know there is more to do in this space though and with the award of our [new strategic property partner contract](#) with BNP Paribas Real Estate, with a strong emphasis on client satisfaction, we expect to see a real improvement in this area during 22/23.

I am pleased that during 2021/2022 we saw a marked improvement in our [client satisfaction](#) scores across nearly all of our clients. Incremental improvements have been seen in each quarter from 3.9 in Q1 to 4.7 in Q2, 5.2 in Q3 and finishing the year at 5.4 out of 10. An increase of 40 percent during the year. But there is more to do.

Our growth and improvements is heavily dependent on the strategic partnerships we build. These partnerships empower us to develop new ways of thinking; to challenge the standards; to ensure we're improving; and to identify efficiencies and innovations. We're proud to have recently signed our first Strategic Partner Charter with Atkins Faithful+Gould and AECOM. The Charter includes the ten principles that underpin our commitment to always delivering better for our clients.

As we continue to strive for 'trusted partner' status with our clients, I thank you all for your continued support and transparency. Across Government, we are all working to create a modern Civil Service and I look forward to continuing this journey together.

In this issue:

The Government Workplace Design Guide updated to

reflect new ways of working

We've updated the Government Workplace Design Guide (the Design Guide) – version 3.0 – to reflect new ways of working.

The Design Guide provides guidance, baseline standards and aspirations for delivering the great places to work needed for a modern Civil Service. It covers all buildings within the Government Hubs and Whitehall Campus Programmes, and the central government office estate. The Design Guide helps customers and others who use the Government estate to understand what different working zones are for and how to get the best from using them.

Five key areas or 'zones' are identified within the Design Guide that facilitate flexible and hybrid working practices – otherwise known as 'smarter working'. The Home Zone is where teams will usually work for longer durations on desk-based daily activities in a traditional style but with flexible activity tables and personal storage. The Collaboration Zone provides flexibility and a wide choice in how and where to work with a variety of work settings ideal for group tasks and activities accessible both in person and virtually. Collaboration Zones are accessible to all customers and clients based in the building. The Do Not Disturb Zones provide space for individual focus work, such as work with complex information or conducting confidential activities, without being distracted or disturbed.

The Business Events Centre provides spaces for people to engage with the public and visitors securely and professionally. These are fully flexible, multi-purpose, serviced areas that are used for meetings, training and conferences. Finally, the Amenity Zone comprises a variety of indirect work-related settings for social interaction and wellbeing.

Clive Anderson, our Capital Projects Director, said: "The creation of major multi-departmental government hubs – beacons of workplace excellence – will provide cutting-edge, innovative working environments across all four nations of the UK. This will help improve productivity and deliver a more diverse and inclusive modern Civil Service that can work in a smarter, more flexible way than ever before. The Government Workplace Design Guide is crucial to this and the provision of such guidance is another part of the GPA's increasing mandate that also includes delivering Places for Growth as part of the Levelling Up Agenda, the property aspects of the Net Zero initiative and the management of more than 700,000 square metres of government office property. We hope that our guidance throughout these workstreams can help foster best practice across both the public and private sectors."

Graeme Bell, our Deputy Director of Design and Engineering, added: "The Government Workplace Design Guide is a visual and technical resource which clearly sets out how to design and deliver truly great places to work. Today's workplace is more flexible and the way people interact with the office is changing. The Design Guide has been updated to reflect this, and will continue to be updated as ways of working continue to evolve."

The Design Guide is supplemented by a range of Technical Annexes :

- Architectural Annex
- Fire Safety Annex
- HM Government Identity Guidelines
- Government Hubs Healthy Building Guide
- Wayfinding & Signage Annex
- Historic Building Annex
- Inclusive Design Standards
- MEP Technical Annex
- Sustainability & Net Zero & Annex
- Physical Security Standards & Guidance
- Furniture, Fittings and Equipment Specification
- Building Information Modelling (BIM)
- Better Building Information Management (B2IM) Policy Guidance

[Contact our Design and Engineering team \(Gmail users\)](#) today to request your copy of the updated Government Workplace Design Guide or find out more [on gov.uk](#)

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We're pleased to confirm our new strategic partnership with [BNP Paribas Real Estate](#) (BNPPRE) for national property and property-related financial services. This follows a robust and comprehensive procurement process via the Crown Commercial Services Estates Management Services framework (RM 6168).

BNPPRE is a top-tier global real estate adviser providing market-leading services in the UK. With 1,500 employees across 67 offices it delivers consulting, advisory and commercial brokerage across commercial, residential and rural real estate.

We have entered into a new three-year contract, which includes the option to extend for up to an additional four years (two plus two) with BNPPRE to deliver improved tax-payer value, outstanding client satisfaction, high quality data and reporting, and improvements in corporate real estate management.

One of the key elements of our Client Strategy is ensuring client-focused commercial contracts. This exciting new partnership will ensure a marked improvement in service quality including financial information and reporting.

As part of the procurement process, we included improved KPIs and placed a strong focus on service quality to drive client satisfaction as a top priority. The new contract sets out critical success factors to ensure service improvements and innovations are achieved across the contract lifecycle. The success of this strategic appointment allows client requirements to be placed at the heart of our service provision.

This is an exciting opportunity for us to improve service standards through this new strategic partnership, further combining Civil Service know-how with commercial acumen.

[Read the press release](#)

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OneEstate is enabling flexible working across government locations and workspaces

We continue to progress with the development and roll out of the OneEstate interoperability products intended to make it easier for civil servants to work flexibly across different locations.

Shared Network

We are continuing delivery of shared networks in Hubs and onboarding clients to the shared network. We are beginning work on additional regional Hubs, nearing completion of the network at Feethams House in Darlington and preparing to deliver shared networks into three additional buildings within the Whitehall Campus. In addition, we are working with HMRC to deliver shared networks in the 12 regional Hubs delivered by HMRC and we are keen to work with clients moving into these locations.

GovWifi

Since passing its live assessment, we are working on additional measures to further improve the backend GovWifi service to improve ongoing management.

The team is also preparing for the annual Certificate Rotation. This is an important security-related event that has an impact on users. GovWifi administrators should already have received communications. More [information on Certificate rotation is available on gov.uk](#)

GovPrint

We are entering the next phase of development with the successful award of a new contract for the GovPrint2 service. This will move us further into the roadmap for GovPrint development and allow us to extend the GovPrint service to more locations and more clients than the previous contract.

We are also working with HMRC to extend the GovPrint service to its regional Hubs which will benefit clients working in those locations and especially clients who may have a footprint in both GPA and HMRC-managed Hubs.

GovPass

GovPass is on track for delivery at a number of key locations across London, Bristol and Cardiff.

We are nearing completion of work on the first full end-to-end implementation of an occupancy management API (application programming interface) via GovPass. This will be the first time in Government that we have a secure

mechanism for collecting occupancy data derived from access control systems and sets the standard for future deployments. This data allows us to understand how well buildings are being used in terms of the total number of people in the building, as well as identify opportunities for space optimisation.

Occupancy

We are planning to deliver an occupancy monitoring solution to 100 buildings through the course of this Financial Year. This will give the Government the ability to understand the efficient use of the estate. In order to progress this work at the pace required to meet this ambitious milestone, we will collaborate with our clients in all of the identified buildings to deliver this exciting capability.

Audio Visual

Building on our work on standards for Audio Visual (AV) systems, we are entering into a new contract for the delivery of AV into the Government estate. This work builds on the successful approach of BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) based provision of AV systems to support hybrid working using a range of end-user devices and unified communications platforms.

Procurement

We are continuing our programme of strategic procurement and have completed our procurement exercise for Internet Service Providers, Audio Visual Systems and GovPrint2. We expect to announce the winners of the AV and GovPrint contracts imminently and will release a new ITT for shared networks in government buildings this summer. The contract for shared networks is a flagship contract and represents a significant investment in our intention to continue to deliver on the shared networks model.

As well as delivery into GPA-managed Hubs, these contracts are available to support our clients when seeking to deploy interoperable products into their wider estate.

[Contact our Property Technology team \(Gmail users\)](#) today to find out more about enabling your workspaces to become interoperable.

Our OneEstate initiative is a series of interoperable digital products that is allowing civil servants from our client departments to work flexibly, from any location and on the go. It is also improving the data we capture to make better informed decisions and provide more transparent reporting.

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GPA'S Capital Programme progress continues

London

The Whitehall Campus Programme continues to support the Government's Levelling Up agenda by leading work to consolidate the Central London office estate as roles relocate out of London. To support those that remain in Central London, the programme will establish a Whitehall Campus of interoperable buildings to support modern hybrid ways of working.

The latest development on this is the announcement made on 11 May, that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will relocate its headquarters from 1 Victoria Street to Government-owned buildings in the north end of Whitehall. The new location buildings will be refurbished to the latest [Workplace Design Guide](#) prior to BEIS taking occupation in Autumn 2023.

1 Victoria Street, London

The move will increase efficiency and reduce the overall cost of the Government's Whitehall estate. The new buildings will be linked to the Whitehall Heat Network with cooling provided by efficient heat pumps and will have the latest energy efficient LED lighting installed.

The change of location follows the BEIS plans to move 865 roles to six locations across the UK – Salford, Birmingham, Cardiff and Darlington, and two new locations: Belfast and Edinburgh.

The Government aims for a quarter of all civil service jobs to be based outside of London in the next four years as part of its Levelling Up agenda. BEIS is expecting to go beyond this, with 30% of its workforce to be based in regional offices by 2030.

Darlington

A further example of how the [Government Hubs Programme](#) is supporting the Levelling Up agenda and the Places for Growth (PFG) programme, can be seen in Darlington where the [Darlington Economic Campus](#) is being created by relocating roles out of London.

This new Hub is an important part of the Cabinet Office's PFG programme. It will eventually support up to 1,565 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff plus visitors across the Campus.

As part of the first phased move to Darlington, Feethams House will temporarily support up to 600 civil servants, in line with the [Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement in March 2021](#). This will allow the economically-facing departments to begin to recruit into posts from the local area as part of the transformation of the Civil Service.

From early June 2022, the Feethams House project will achieve a key milestone when the first sectional completion of the Ground and First Floors will be handed over to HM Treasury for occupation. Work will continue through the spring and the building will be completed and handed over by the end of the

summer.

Left: Feethams House, front elevation

Top right: New workstations installed ahead of occupation

Bottom right: Ground floor collaboration space

Croydon

Our Government Hub at Croydon reached a key milestone in May as we celebrated its 'topping out'. This represents the stage when the highest beam of the build is secured into place. Our partners and stakeholders were on site with us to sign the beam and celebrate the milestone.

Rated BREEAM Outstanding, this Hub is highly sustainable with fully decarbonised power and all electricity procured from renewable sources. Once complete, it will offer an effective mix of flexible and hybrid work spaces to support neuro-diversity, collaboration and wellbeing, along with fully inclusive refreshment hubs, home zones and meeting rooms to support more than 5,000 civil servants. And it will allow the [UK Home Office](#) to come together in one building.

We thank our partners for the continued success of the project: Atkins, Faithful+Gould, AECOM, Stanhope, Schrodgers, Lendlease, Arup and AHMM.

Left: The beam was signed before being placed into position

Top middle: Progress of the facade being installed

Top right: The North West corner of the building, with the tower crane and lifting platform

Bottom right: The construction partners were on site to celebrate the project's milestone

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CASE STUDY: Feethams House IT solution fully operational in just seven months

Feethams House in Darlington is currently being fitted out to become the temporary accommodation for the [Darlington Economic Campus](#).

Five economic facing departments, with up to 600 FTE's, will work across more than 3,000 square metres of hybrid space at Feethams House. Due to the sensitive nature of the work these departments perform, it's critical that we provide a secure environment across all digital platforms and physical spaces.

In rapid response to the need for a fully operational IT solution by mid-2022

we mobilised a DDaT (Digital, Data and Technology) team who, in just two weeks, facilitated a supplier engagement session and completed a network survey. The team identified and procured all long lead items, which involved managing excessive supply delays of up to 28 weeks due to global computer chip shortages.

The team quickly progressed to the discovery and design phases in collaboration with the building contractors, building on lessons learned from previous Hub deliveries to improve delivery efficiencies.

This rapid response from our DDaT team designed and delivered the full network with all equipment in place ready to deploy in just seven months to be operationally ready for the first clients in early June 2022.

Mark Duddy, Deputy Director for Capital Projects at the GPA, said: “Our DDaT team has achieved outstanding results in a challenging and complex environment. It’s a brilliant example of how the GPA responds positively to our client needs and overcome challenges to provide safe and secure environments.”

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Enhanced responsiveness and collaboration shows 40% improvement in client satisfaction

Our mission is to provide great places to work for civil servants. We aim to achieve this through continuous innovation, which involves excelling in both operations execution and strategic management, importantly working to ensure our clients and customers are at the heart of everything we do.

We are pleased that during 2021/2022 we saw a marked improvement in our client satisfaction scores across nearly all of our clients. We saw incremental improvements in each quarter from 3.9 in Q1 up to 5.4 by Q4 – an increase of 40 percent.

Our clients’ feedback told us that we’ve made the most progress in responsiveness and collaboration. We have also made improvements in our financial services, however we know we have much more to do. We are continuing to work hard in areas where our clients have told us more focus is needed, such as delivering client-focused services to ensure end-to-end solutions; further improving responsiveness and delivering more consistently.

Moving into the new financial year, we have launched a new GPA Client Strategy with an underpinning delivery plan to support better client service. We are keen to work in partnership with clients to deliver a client-centric approach that is embedded into all of our activities including staff recruitment, inductions and communications. This also includes team meetings, projects and delivery programmes including procurement.

As part of implementing this new approach we want to work with clients to achieve “trusted partner” status, gaining a better understanding of key business drivers. Across Government, we are all working to create a modern Civil Service and we hope to continue this journey together with our Civil Service colleagues.

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Client invoicing improves by more than 60%

Our Client Finance team continues to focus on improving our client invoicing. We have been monitoring the Q4 invoicing (produced at the end of December) and the timeliness of invoicing has improved by more than 60% in less than 12 months, with 97% of invoices being raised by the quarter due date.

We have also seen vastly improved collections of the Q4 invoicing in comparison to Q3, despite the inevitable delays across the Christmas and New Year period. We collected the same value of cash within 14 days at Q4 as we did within 60 days at Q3. Furthermore, of the 80 invoices that were queried, only one resulted in an amended charge.

We also continue to focus on reducing the number of invoices raised as we look to consolidate charges. These improvements will continue as we improve accuracy and increase the efficiency of your quarterly invoicing.

FORECASTS

We acknowledge that we didn't hit our deadline for issuing forecasts for the 22/23 financial year. Despite some glitches, overall this has still been an improvement on the 21/22 forecast process. The information was with you earlier and the collaborative approach taken between our respective teams has produced benefits to both sides. We are happy to take on board any further feedback you might have on how this could be improved further.

RECRUITMENT

We are pleased to confirm Simon Baldry has joined us as Deputy Director of Client Finance. Simon brings a wealth of experience from industry to further strengthen our client support team. Our interim, John Hatter, is continuing to support us on further improving our systems and processes.

Reporting into Simon will be our newly appointed Interim Head of Client Finance, Shane Dowd, who was previously one of our Client Finance Managers. We have also recruited four new Client Finance team members.

Nigel Beckett
Finance Director, GPA
Talk with Nigel on [email \(Gmail users\)](#)
Connect with Nigel on [LinkedIn](#)

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Defining our service commitments to clients

We exist to create great places to work for the UK's civil servants. To achieve this we must have a strong commitment to the solutions we design and the services we provide. Therefore, we are increasing our focus on the quality of our service provision and the benefits that we bring to our clients.

We are currently defining the services we provide for our diverse clients. This will create a single, straightforward service catalogue explaining our services and prices. We will set out the service levels and the role that our departmental and ALB clients play in order to deliver those services to meet individual business needs. It is also important that our clients understand the benefits to them as an organisation but also to the Government as a whole.

This work will be ongoing over the early summer period and we will provide a further update in the next newsletter.

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New TFM contract awarded for two of our Government Hubs

In December 2021, the Government Property Agency (GPA) commenced a competitive procurement process using the CCS RM3830 framework Lot 1B for to deliver a Total Facilities Management (TFM) service at two of our upcoming [Government Hubs](#) – Peterborough and Darlington – as well as a recently transferred site in Manchester.

The Contract was successfully awarded to ISS Mediclean in April 2022 and we have since commenced mobilisation of the first site in Darlington.

This contract will provide an interim TFM solution to these buildings whilst we continue planning our long-term Strategic Workplace Services Supply Chain Contract.

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Find out more about the [Government Property Agency here](#)