

New guide to cut emissions of Britain's biggest property estate

- Guidance will reduce the environmental impact of the country's largest property portfolio, the public estate
- Net Zero Estate Playbook will guide public sector organisations on how to reduce carbon emissions
- The public sector estate – including offices, hospitals, prisons and job centres – is working to a target of delivering a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035

A new guide to decarbonising public sector buildings and creating a net zero public estate has been launched by the Cabinet Office.

The Net Zero Estate Playbook will ensure consistent approaches, such as using solar panels, LED lighting and greener building materials, are applied across public buildings as they help decarbonise Britain's largest property portfolio.

The UK was the first major country to legislate for net zero, and as the host of COP26 which concluded earlier this month has been leading the way in securing global action to tackle climate change. The guidance will make national infrastructure greener by giving departments, the public sector, and government property professionals clear guidance on the design, implementation, and monitoring of Net Zero strategies and delivery programmes.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Steve Barclay said:

The public estate generates 2% of the UK's total emissions. So decarbonising public buildings is absolutely crucial if we're going to meet our environmental targets.

Property Professionals should use the Playbook to turn best-practice into standard-practice. It will put the public estate in a stronger position to deliver a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035, and fully net zero by 2050.

One example of a current site which follows the principles of the Playbook is the recently opened DWP hub in Tŷ Taf, Wales. The new site is leading the way in sustainability with energy efficient solar-powered technology. The site also has electric vehicle charging points for staff, putting it at the

forefront of the UK Government's commitment to using Ultra Low Emission transport.

The guidance, which will be applied to both existing and new properties, will also help the Department of Health and associated public bodies improve sustainability of their hospitals through the use of low carbon materials and improved understanding of a building's environmental impact over its entire lifespan.

The Playbook can be used as a guide by anyone responsible for managing government property across the public sector.

The Net Zero Estate Playbook supports existing policies designed to drive the UK towards achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050, including the 25-Year Environmental Plan, the Greening Government Commitments, and the Net Zero Strategy, which was published in October 2021.

This announcement comes after COP26 concluded with 197 Parties agreeing the Glasgow Climate Pact to urgently keep 1.5°C alive and finalise the outstanding elements of the Paris Agreement.

The pact will speed up the pace of climate action this decade, with all countries agreeing to return improved emissions targets in 2022, as well as doubling climate finance for action on adapting to climate change by 2025.