

News story: Government property reductions deliver billions to public purse

The government reduced its estate by over 300,000 square metres – the equivalent of seven Wembley stadiums – and delivered running cost savings of £176 million in the last financial year, according to the latest [State of the Estate report](#) from the Cabinet Office.

Speaking today at the 2017 Government Property Conference, Minister for the Constitution Chris Skidmore announced that since 2010, rationalisation of the estate has reduced its size by a quarter, delivering over £1 billion in running costs.

The sale of surplus properties, including Admiralty Arch and the Old War Office, resulted in a further £1 billion in capital receipts in 2015-16 – a notable step towards the pledge to deliver £5 billion in receipts by 2020.

The report shows that vacant space within the central government estate now only represents 1.4% – well below the average in the private sector of 8.9%.

The Minister outlined how the Government Property Unit's pioneering Government Hubs and One Public Estate programmes are revolutionising the way government uses its property to deliver savings to the taxpayer, homes and jobs, whilst revolutionising the way the Civil Service works.

He highlighted the progress made in setting up a new central body that will take ownership of all relevant government land and property. The body, which will be called the Government Property Agency, has an executive team in place and is expected to go live by the end of 2017.

Chris Skidmore, Minister for the Constitution, said:

The progress that we have made over the past year in rationalising the government estate is something that I am very proud of. Not only are the sales and savings that we have made substantial, but the way in which we are managing our buildings will bring about positive, and lasting change.

Whether releasing land for housing, or revolutionising the way in which civil servants work, we can be confident that we are using the government estate in the most productive way possible.