

Office Accommodation Standards

March-October 2017

Central Government



Department of
Finance
www.finance-ni.gov.uk

Contents

Definition of Terminology

Central Government encompasses all those bodies to which this new working environment can benefit including departments, their agencies and arms-length bodies.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is a unit to measure employed persons in a way that makes them comparable although they may work a different number of hours per week.

Each full-time member of staff is one FTE and each part time member of staff is counted as a proportion based on hours worked.

An *Occupant* is a person who is based or works in an office or building.

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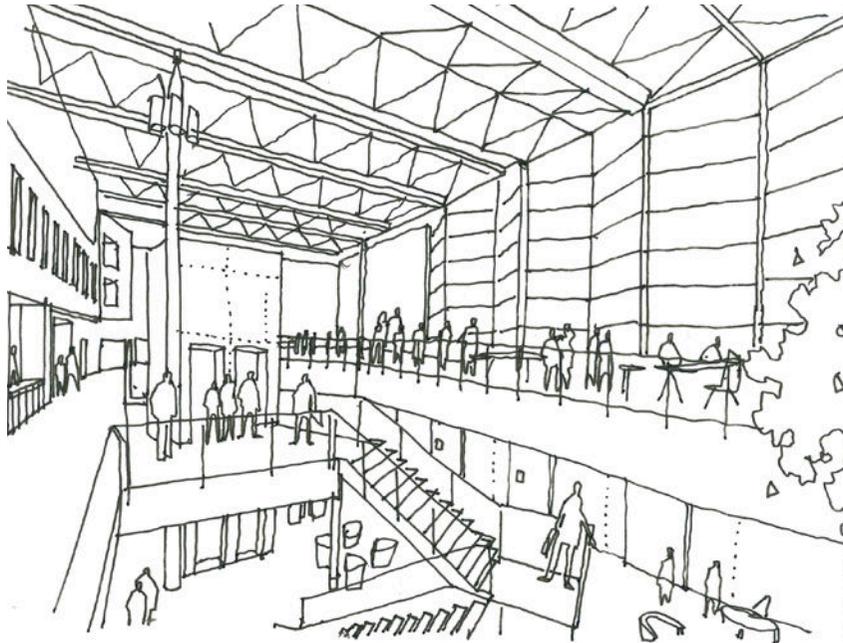


1

Introduction

aiming towards modern and
suitable working environment

“one size” fits all approach is
no longer suitable



In today's office environment, there are a range of different working patterns and styles and a "one size" fits all approach is no longer suitable or viable.

The Northern Ireland Central Government consists of two core assets, the physical assets such as buildings and offices, and the people who occupy them. Whilst the latter continue to provide core services to a high quality and standard, the former have become costly, outdated and unsuitable for modern working.

The new Office accommodation standards of NICS office estate has two key aims; to provide a modern and suitable working environment that is of a standard that reflects its users, and to reduce costs across the NICS office estate by replacing expensive and poorly configured assets, with modern and flexible working environments.

The development of design and technology has surged over the past decade providing the modern worker with a new range of tools to work efficiently and in a manner that suits the person and the task at hand. In today's office environment, there are a range of different working patterns and styles and a "one size" fits all approach is no longer suitable or viable.

Our aim for this brochure is to introduce the new office accommodation standards to those they will affect the most, whilst exploring the benefit of a new way of working for the people and government.



2

How do you work?

how to achieve flexible working environments to support our different requirements

core principles of a modern working environment

Work is an activity, not a place

Not every role is the same, and therefore not everyone works the same way. Modern technology provides untethered flexibility in how and where we work, whilst modern buildings allow for flexible floor plates which can facilitate a range of working spaces and environments. The new standards, in conjunction with the NICS HR People Strategy, will support a modern working style which will focus on *how we work* rather than *where we work*. Within departments there are many different types of jobs and working styles, which require different working environments.

Our working environment should be flexible enough to support all of our different working requirements and styles. This can be achieved by:

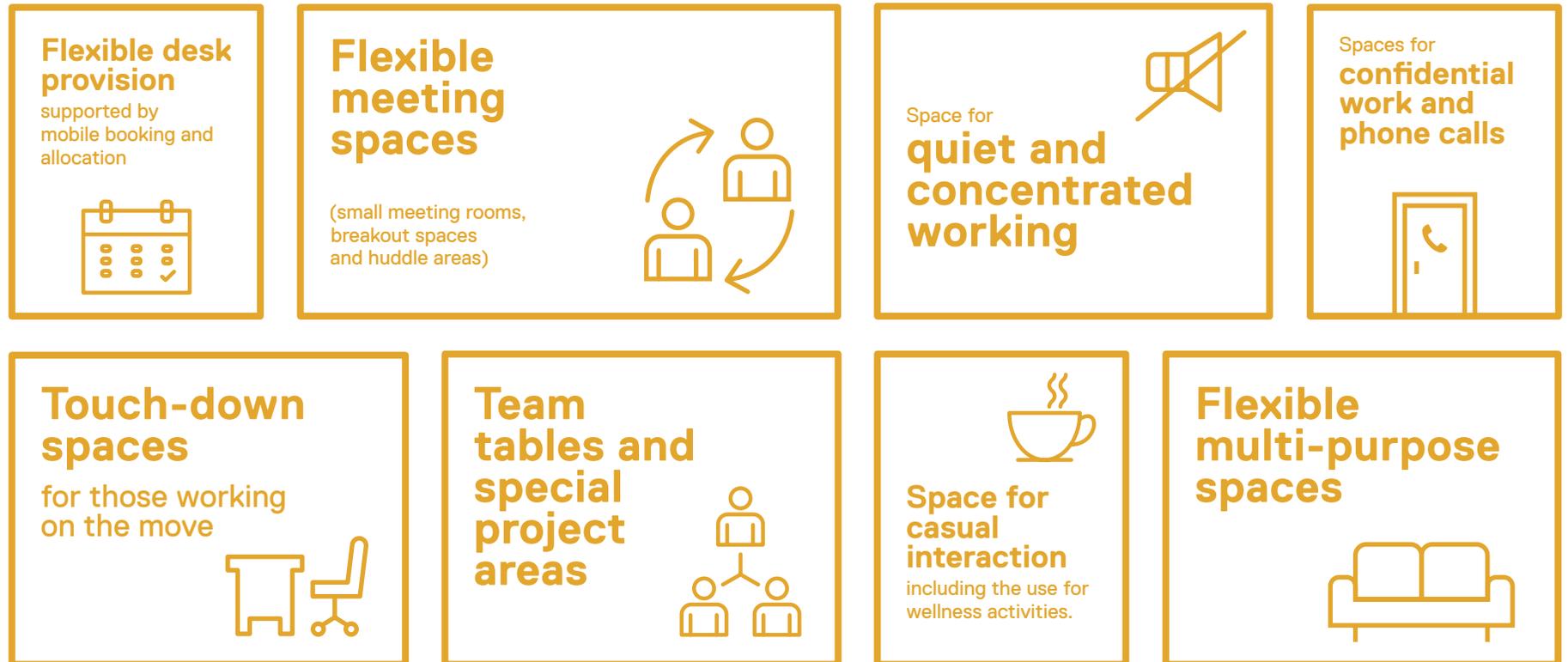


- + Using the most **effective location** at the most effective time
- + **Space being allocated to activities** rather than individuals and not necessarily based on seniority
- + **Modern technology and IT** systems being implemented across all platforms
- + Performance management based on **outcomes and deliverables** rather than physical presence
- + Continuously **challenging what works best** for an organisation
- + **Equality** between users and spaces available to each individual

A flexible working environment will allow employees with different working styles and requirements to use the same space, and will also ensure that our estate is sufficiently flexible to facilitate the future changes within the government.

The modern and flexible working environment will be created using the following core principles:

Work in a space that facilitates the task





3

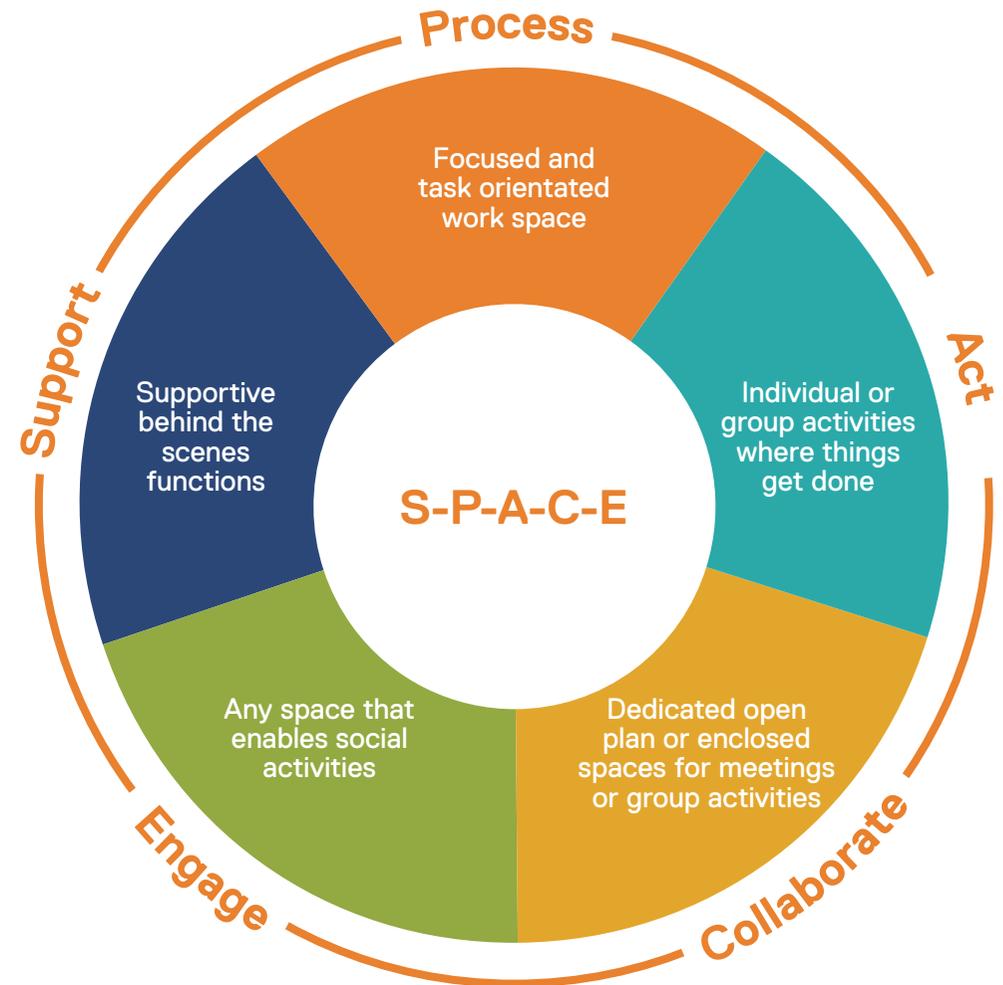
Design Approach

S-P-A-C-E groups
ways of working

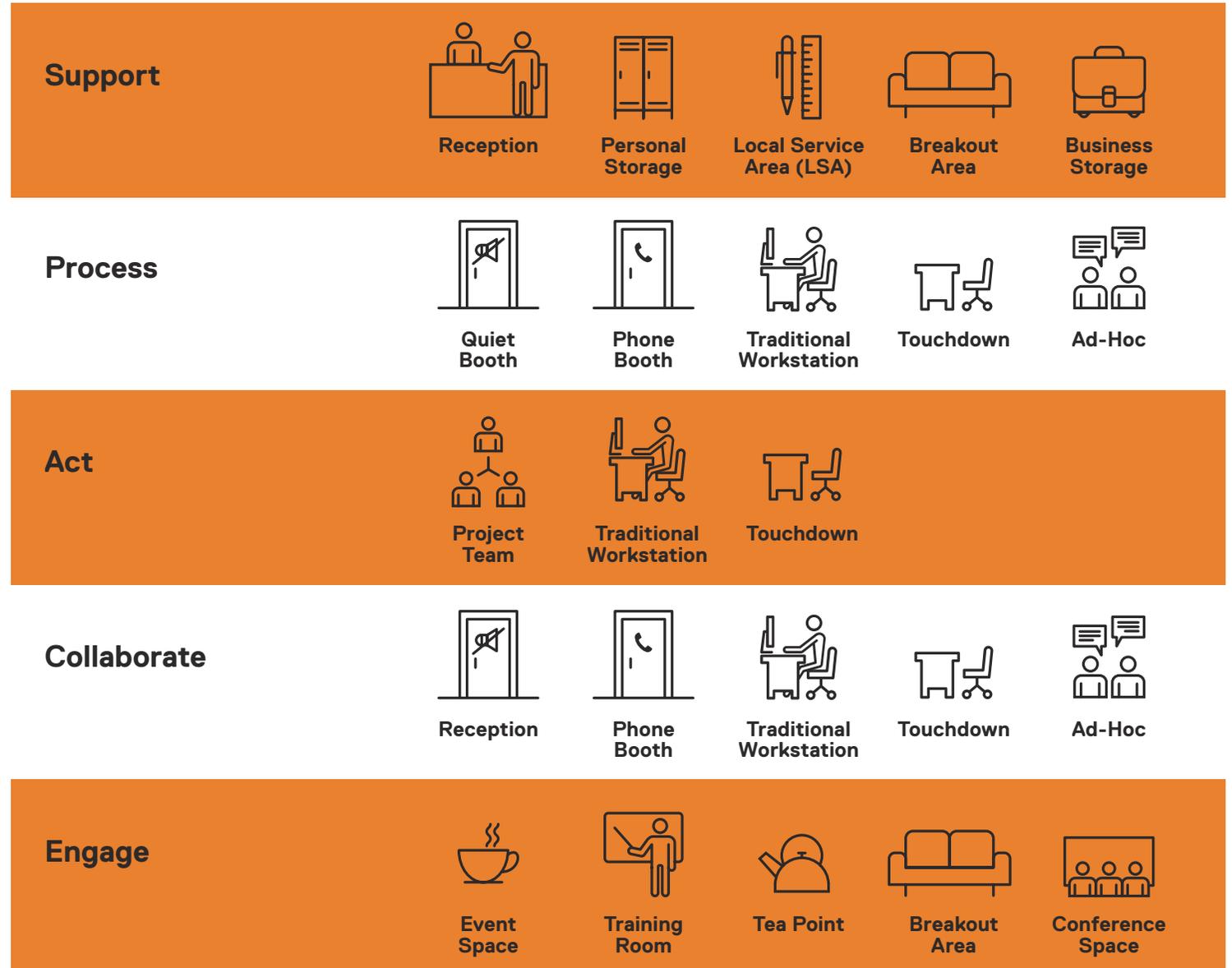
Reflecting uniqueness

Just as not every person works the same way, nor does every organisation. Each organisation will retain specialist roles and will require an individual working environment that reflects their unique working styles. The new standards focuses on a set of modules, each with their own function, which when integrated, provide a flexible and balanced working environment which meets the needs of its user. Each work activity is enabled by a space or module that can share some characteristics with others. These spaces can be grouped by their function or characteristic as set out below.

Each activity space can be coupled with environments that share a similar purpose. The resulting S-P-A-C-E groups, (Support, Process, Act, Collaborate and Engage) form a simple framework for understanding what each space type or module is best used for. The groups have been created by considering the type of activity, the required concentration level, who will use the space and how.



These functions are flexible and can take place within many of the building modules, which allows the spaces to overlap and bleed into each other, whilst still retaining their core activity and purpose.





4

Space Types

demonstration of the
different building modules

what are they,
how can they be used

The S-P-A-C-E designation will be used to demonstrate the different types of spaces and their function. Each individual space is defined by what it is, what it is for and when it can be used. Each space type is designed to incorporate a different way of working and demonstrate a multifunctional approach to how an office environment is designed and used.

- + Support
- + Process
- + Act
- + Collaborate
- + Engage





Personal Storage



WHAT IS IT	Personal lockers will be provided as personal storage in central locations to the working environment.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Storing personal items and laptops in and outside of working hours.
WHEN	Personal storage is available to everyone during office opening hours.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI, device charging



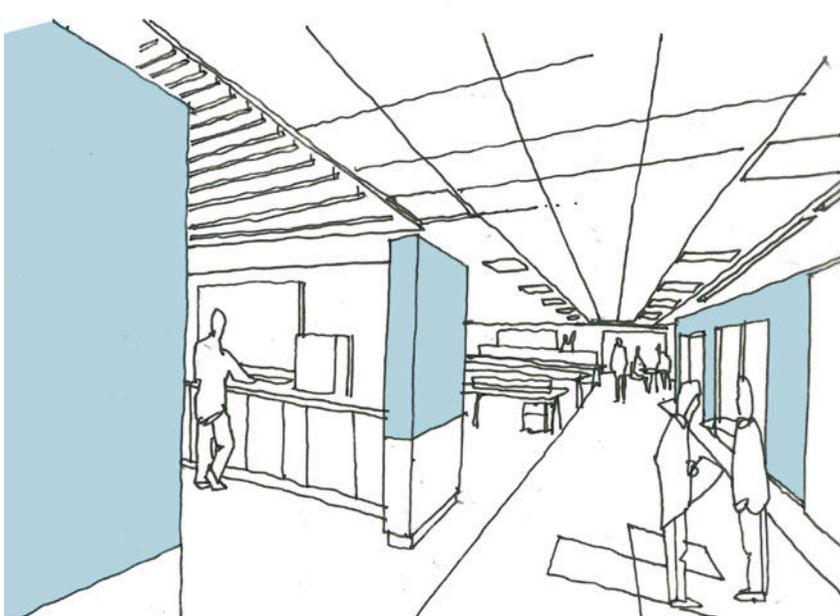
Business Storage



WHAT IS IT	Low level or wall height storage units incorporated into the open plan work space.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Storing business related documents and items.
WHEN	Available during office opening hours.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI



Local Service Area

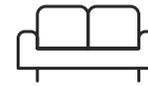


WHAT IS IT An enclosed or semi enclosed space located in close proximity to work areas.

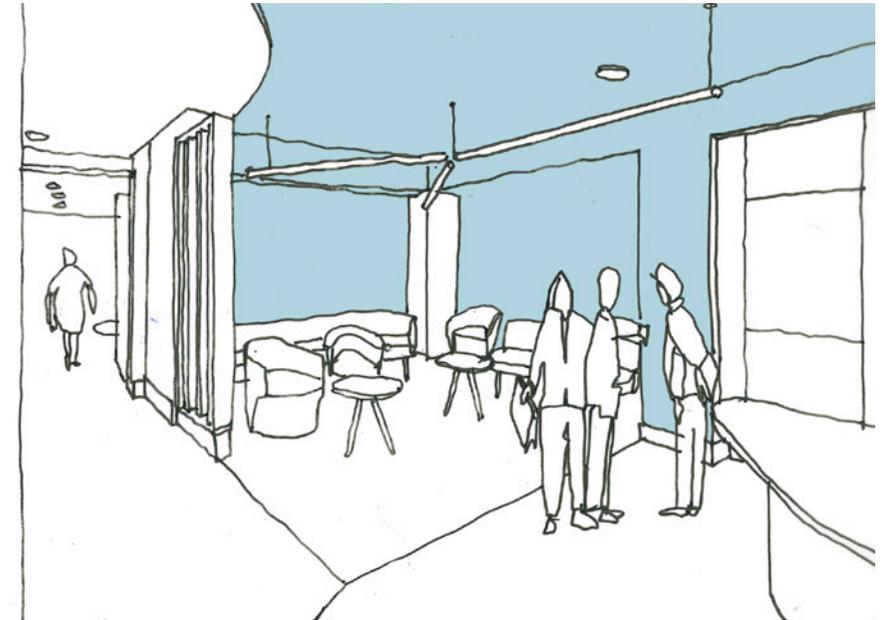
WHAT IS IT FOR Printing, copying and stationary storage.

WHEN Available to everyone during office opening hours.

TECHNOLOGY Follow you printing, WIFI



Breakout Areas



WHAT IS IT An acoustically screened space made up of a range of soft furnishing and modular spaces.

WHAT IS IT FOR Relaxing, ad-hoc meetings, group activities and social interaction.

WHEN Available to everyone during office opening hours.

TECHNOLOGY WIFI, Connected Screens, Jabber, Webex



Quiet Rooms & Telephone Booths



WHAT IS IT	An enclosed or semi enclosed space located in close proximity to work areas.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Focus work, telephone calls and one to one meetings.
WHEN	Available to everyone during office opening hours.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI, network point, Jabber, Web-Ex, Active Screen



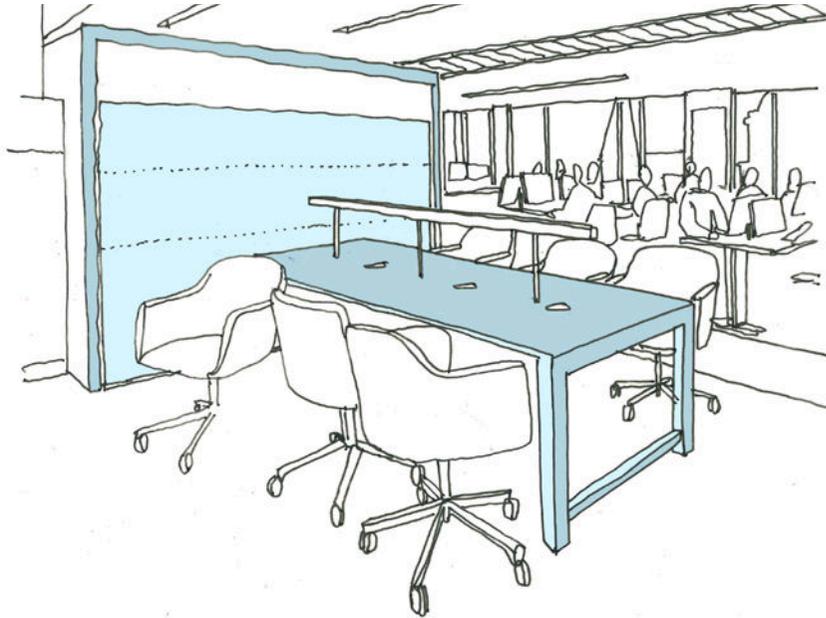
Work Space



WHAT IS IT	A workstation and task chair located within a cluster of workstations in an open plan environment.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Individual, project or team work.
WHEN	Available to everyone during office opening hours.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI, network point, Jabber, Web-Ex. Options for screens / PC / Laptop



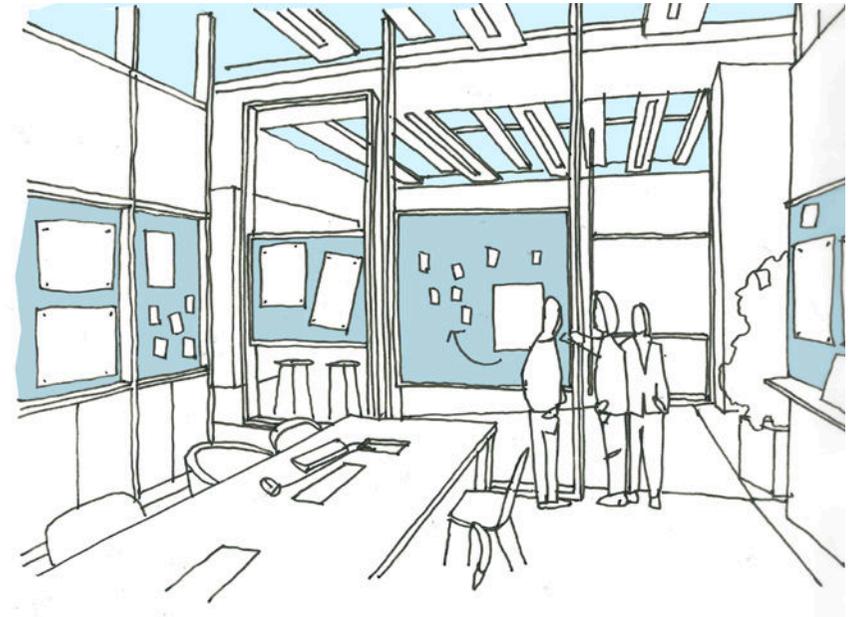
Open Plan Meeting



WHAT IS IT	Semi enclosed meeting spaces with a high acoustic performance.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Meetings, group work and individual focus work.
WHEN	Available to everyone during office opening hours.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI, network point, Jabber, Web-Ex, Active screens



Project Space



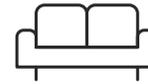
WHAT IS IT	A cluster of workstations located adjacent to open plan meeting and breakout spaces.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Team or group work which will continue over a long period of time.
WHEN	Available to be booked for long stay periods.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI, network point, Jabber, Web-Ex, Active screens



Meeting Rooms



- WHAT IS IT** Enclosed rooms with a high acoustic performance located central to the work space.
- WHAT IS IT FOR** Meeting, virtual meetings and conference calls.
- WHEN** Available to be booked for short stay periods.
- TECHNOLOGY** WIFI, network point, Jabber, Web-Ex, Active screens



Kitchen Space



- WHAT IS IT** Enclosed spaces providing hot and cold water as well as suitable appliances.
- WHAT IS IT FOR** Eating and drinking, relaxing, and small group meetings.
- WHEN** Available to everyone during office opening hours.
- TECHNOLOGY** WIFI, Active Screens



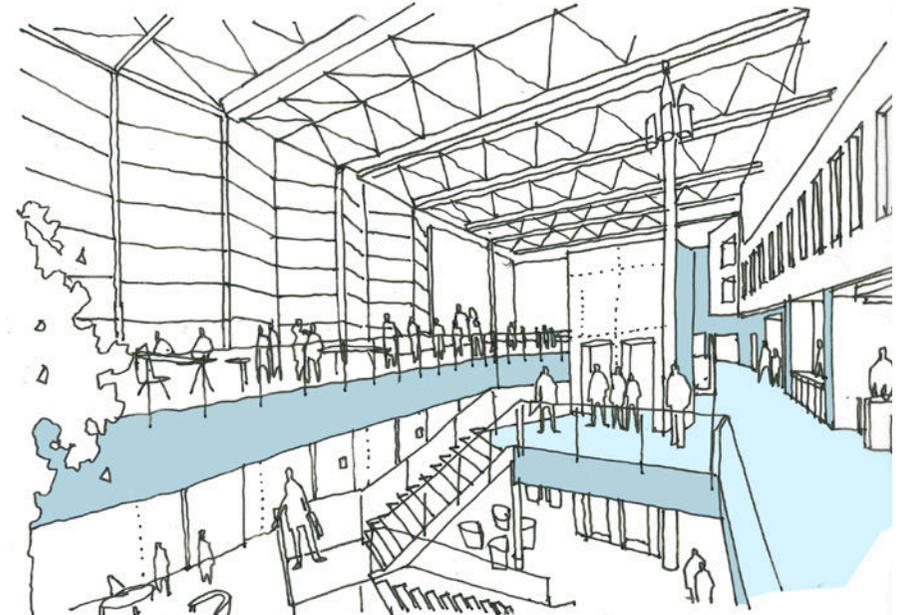
Tea Point & Kitchen Areas



WHAT IS IT	A semi-enclosed space providing hot and cold water as well as suitable appliances.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Coffee and tea, and social interaction.
WHEN	Available to everyone during office opening hours.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI



Atrium Space



WHAT IS IT	A large, multifunctional engagement space located on the ground floor.
WHAT IS IT FOR	Presentations, large gatherings, and events.
WHEN	Available to everyone or to be booked for events.
TECHNOLOGY	WIFI, Video Display



5

Design Planning Principles

module percentages

plans and images of
the reference design

“Space should be allocated based on function rather than hierarchy”



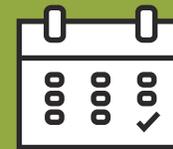
With the introduction of these new working spaces and a new working culture, the need for traditional rigid workstations will become reduced and the need for the new working spaces will increase. Supported by flexible technology and encouraged by the NICS HR People Strategy, building users will be able to choose how and where to work depending on the task and the requirements of the business.

Traditional workstations will still be provided at a ratio of 8 workstations for every 10 FTEs as well as the new working spaces and environments. The flexible use of workstations and space will be supported by mobile booking software and space allocation.

Software: Desk booking and check-in

Booking software will facilitate the booking of different spaces throughout the office environment, from workstations to meeting rooms. The booking system will be supported using flexible technology and will help any user navigate and plan their day to day working life.

MANAGE YOUR SCHEDULE



ACCESS FROM MULTIPLE PLATFORMS



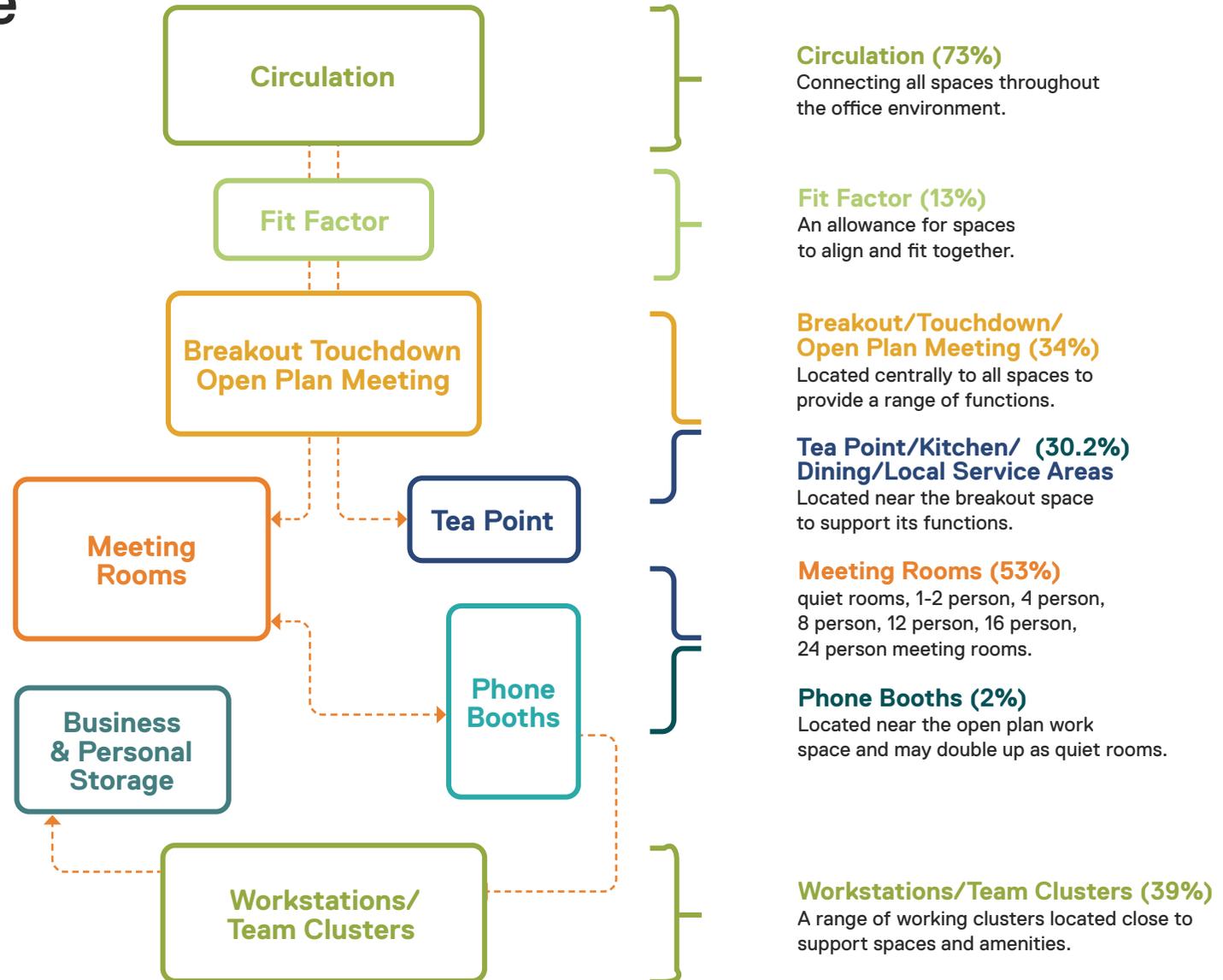
FINDING COLLEAGUES



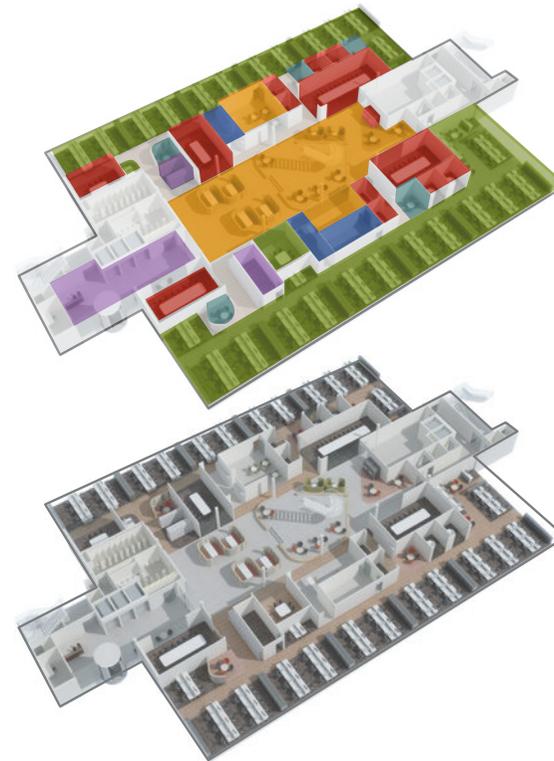
BOOKING SPACES



Principle Spaces



Ground Floor



■ Kitchen, tea point, LSA, reception

■ Meeting rooms

■ Open Plan Meeting Rooms

■ Workstations

■ Breakout

■ Support

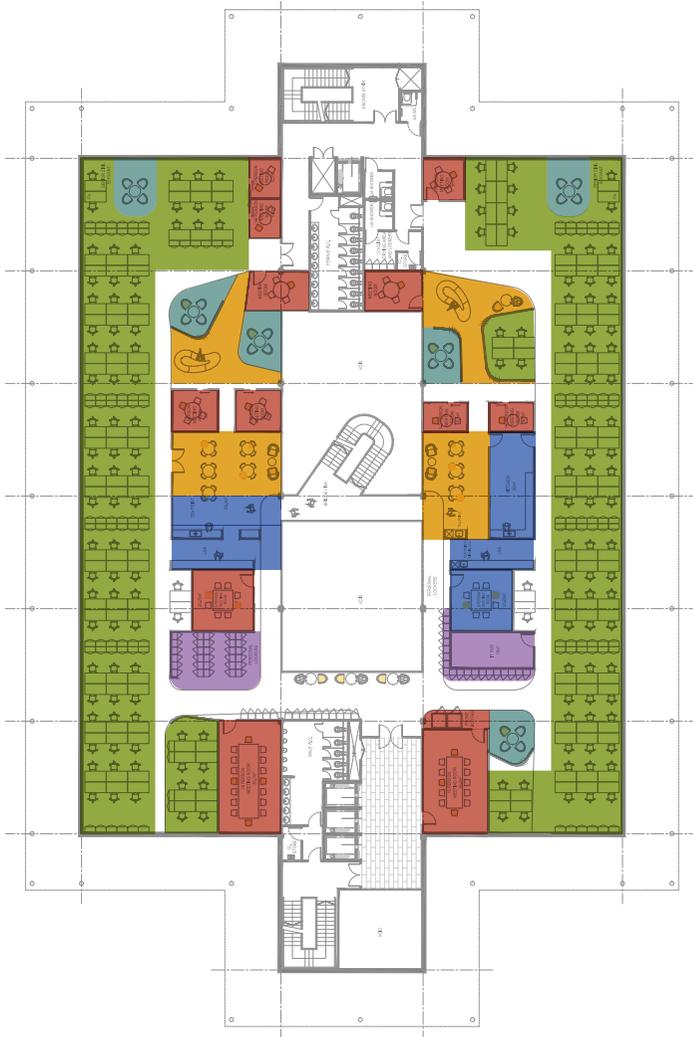
Natural daylight and views out, prioritised for workstation zones

Open-plan floorplate to encourage mobility and movement through the building

Social Space are central, visible and inviting, located separately from working space.

Multifunctional use of space to support “wellbeing” activities

Upper Floor



Kitchen, tea point, LSA, reception

Meeting rooms

Open Plan Meeting Rooms

Workstations

Breakout

Support

Collaboration encouraged through spatial adjacencies and layout

Support spaces provided in different forms throughout the floorplate

Connectivity provided through a central atrium, providing an open and natural environment

Flexible zones providing different ways of working based on the task at hand



6

Maintaining a smart Environment

office etiquette in open plan spaces
guidance on some aspects

In the interests of a harmonious and effective workplace the sharing of new open-plan, modern work spaces requires an understanding and acceptance of new working practices and office etiquette. By taking a common sense approach as well as drawing on the experiences of those already operating in the new working environment, we have developed the following guidance that is supported by the NICS HR People Strategy.



It is intended as a guide and organisations should develop and adapt the protocols in consultation with their staff to recognise and respect different work styles and practices.

The guidance in this section is not intended to cover all aspects of working within a new office environment. As we adapt to the new working environment it will be important that we regularly review the arrangements to help all staff get the best out of the new facilities and workspaces.

NOISE MANAGEMENT



It is also important to manage noise levels and respect the business/privacy needs of colleagues in an open-plan working environment.

Radios

The use of radios during working hours in an open-plan environment is not considered acceptable.

Conversations

at desks should be kept to an appropriate noise level or for longer conversations the appropriate support spaces should be used.

Mobile Phones

People should be mindful of the personal disruption an unattended phone can cause. For calls the supporting spaces such as telephone rooms should be utilised.



PRIVACY

Just because people are at their desks does not mean they are available to talk.

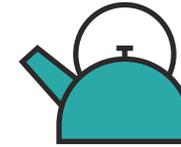
If staff require absolute privacy, the supporting spaces, such as quiet booths should be utilised.

STATIONERY

More than one business area may have a stationery store. Each floor/area should consider how much stationery is required and how will this be stored.



TEA POINTS



Tea-points provide boiling water for tea/coffee making and a fridge, while the galley areas also have dishwasher facilities. Staff should be careful when moving away from the tea-point or galley area carrying a cup of tea/coffee in order to avoid accidents and spillages.

HOUSE KEEPING

Common courtesy and general hygiene standards of the galley areas, including food items in fridges should be applied.

Staff are encouraged to take their food at the designated eating areas (a) so that they can get a break away from their desk; and (b) so that food smells do not pollute working areas.



STORAGE



Each staff member has 1.5 linear metres of storage space. An electronic storage facility is provided through the HPRM database.

Confidentiality

All information on paper or on computer/laptop/tablet screens is confidential.



OPEN PLAN

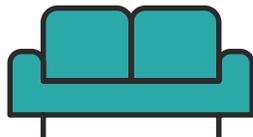
mutual respect and common courtesy should be applied by everyone to everyone concerned.

WORKSTATIONS



choose the most appropriate workspace (workstation, touch down, break out, quiet booth) for the task and utilise your surroundings.

BREAKOUT & TOUCHDOWN AREAS



WELFARE, HEALTH & SAFETY

A new working environment has been developed alongside appropriate and effective procedures that support the commitment to welfare, health and safety.



Security

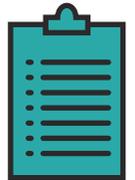
“clear desk policy” at the end of each working day, all papers should be cleared, including the bins. Be responsible for the security of your personal belongings.

Both areas are for staff that need thinking time away from their desk and the distraction of the phone and/or email.

Touchdown Areas can also be used by colleagues from other departments/organisations or consultants who may be undertaking work on behalf of the organisation.

NEW WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

- + Team zones are non-exclusive
- + Occupants will be provided training on how to best utilise space
- + Spaces should be used appropriately, and for their intended purpose.
- + Clear desk policy should be managed alongside a storage policy
- + Temporarily unoccupied space should have a time-cap with a duration to determined locally after which the space is available for general use.
- + Protocols should be clearly identified
- + Promoting the use of shared calendars and schedules
- + Being flexible about flexible working
- + Stressing the importance of the guidance



VISITORS

In line with current practice if a member of staff is expecting visitors it is the responsibility of the member of staff to make the appropriate arrangements and inform the visitor of the correct protocol on arrival depending on the organisation's or building's security.

CONFERENCE / MEETING ROOMS / STAFF AREAS

consider what sort of space they will require and for what length of time before booking a space. avoid block booking 'just in case'

Booking System

meeting rooms, and touch down points to be booked in advance, within a predetermined time to be agreed upon per organisation.

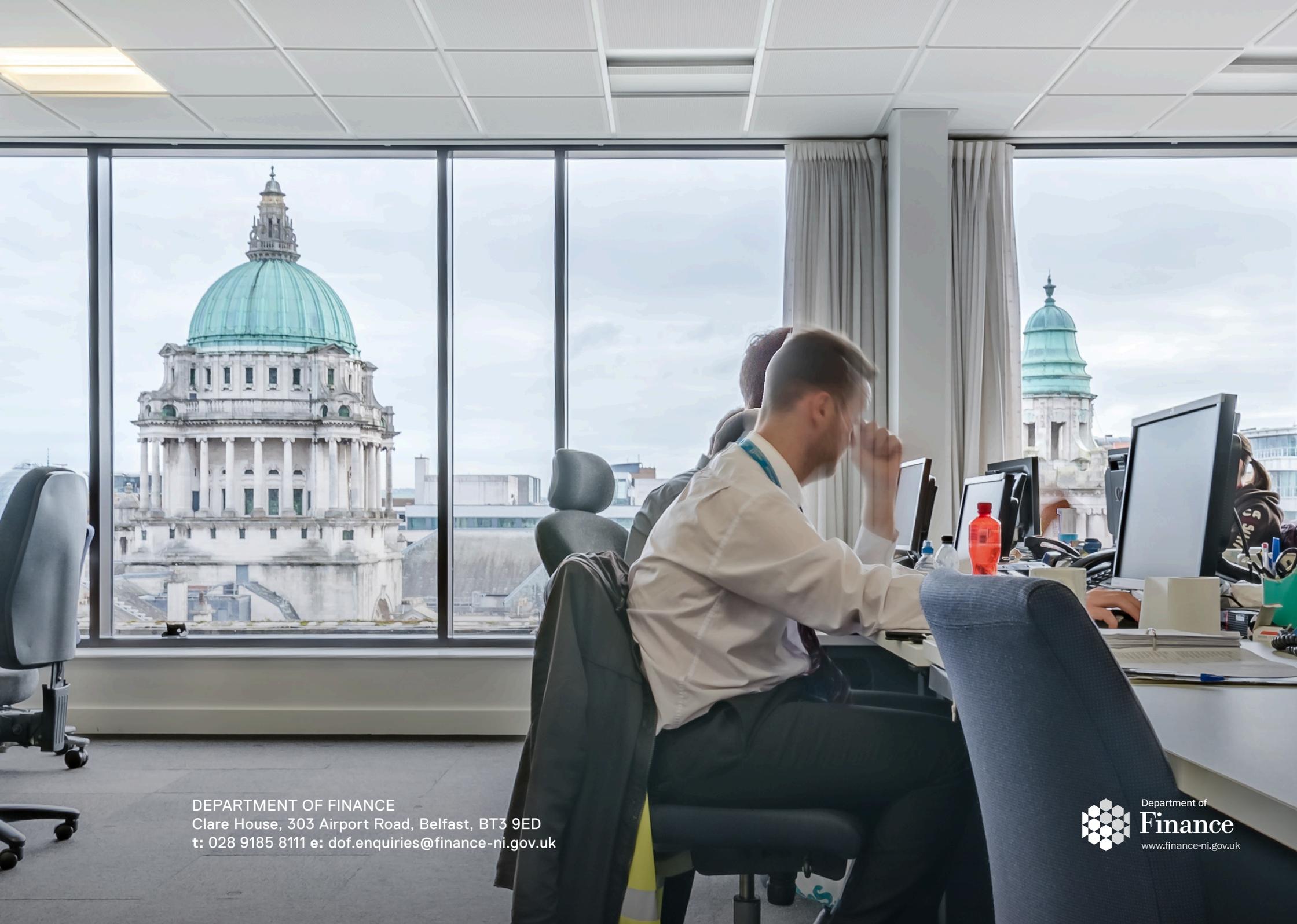


The following organisations and individuals have been helpful in the compilation of this brochure:

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In addition the following documents have with permission been drawn from in the production of this brochure:

Ministry of Justice; Government Hubs Guide
PAS 3000 Smart Working
The Cabinet Office; TW3 – The Way We Work



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