

NET
ZEROSUSTAINABLE
PLACESINCLUSIVE
GROWTH

SFT Outcomes 2021/22

Demonstrating progress with impact

PRIMARY OUTCOME

07

**PUBLIC ASSET CONDITION
AND PERFORMANCE IS
IMPROVED**

SECONDARY OUTCOMES

08

10



New Frontiers for Smarter Working is working

In March 2021, our Asset Strategy Team published its *New Frontiers for Smarter Working, Work and Workplace Report*; the report was a culmination of work by the Team to gain a deeper insight into how working patterns had changed across the public sector since the pandemic.

At the time of the launch of the report, Shona Adam, a member of the Asset Strategy Team and who co-authored the report, said: "Collectively, across both public and private sectors, we need to use the experience we've had during the pandemic in a positive way, to dispel presenteeism and consign it to the past. Workers can be located anywhere provided they undertake the activities they are paid to do. This is a tremendous opportunity to explore a more dispersed network for delivering both work activities and improving outcomes."

And across the public sector, many organisations have taken on the report's recommendations with the Asset Strategy Team providing specialist advice around the best approach to smarter working.

Here are three examples of that work in action.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

The SDS design process kicked off in March 2020 just as the pandemic hit and it became evident very quickly that the project would need to recognise the impact this would have on their way of working going forward.

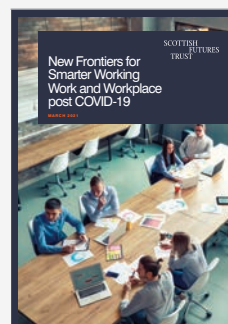
When the project started, they had 470 staff but the headcount by 2021 had reached 600. That, combined with the changes to how workspace would support people, meant SDS would have to do something radical - both to accommodate their new headcount and the changes to

working that the pandemic would have on both work and workspace.

SDS looked to design their workspace to support connection and to support team working with the creation of 'Team Zones' which are booked by teams to match their activities and purpose.

The organisation is split across eight floors of office space within two buildings and the workspace is focussed around activity based working – some floors are retained for teams, the remaining support collaborative and individual working. Collaboration means different things to different people so a wide variety of spaces were included to support team working, brainstorming and other collaborative activities.

When staff want to access workspace, they book as a team or as an individual depending on the activity. They book the space they need for the time they need it for which creates a very focussed set of behaviours around work activities. The social space on the ground floor can be reconfigured to support different functions and the customer centre has been reconfigured to better support their needs.



New Frontiers for
Smarter Working
Work and Workplace
post COVID-10



07

PUBLIC ASSET CONDITION AND PERFORMANCE IS IMPROVED

NET ZERO



SUSTAINABLE PLACES



INCLUSIVE GROWTH

**Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)**

The SQA has two offices – one in Glasgow that accommodates around 700 staff and the other in Dalkeith that supports about 300 people. The two buildings are organised around a one desk to one person arrangement.

When COVID-19 hit, SQA staff were mobilised to work from home very quickly and they immediately adapted and settled into their new normal. This opened the way to explore activity-based workspace and smarter working to ensure people were provided with flexibility and choice, where their job allowed, when the offices reopened.

Jacqui Faulds, SQA Head of Facilities Management, said: “We focussed our programme around three strands – people, workspace and technology – with engagement being a key priority at all stages of delivery. We agreed a set of guiding principles for the project along with an engagement plan and set of work styles that really encouraged colleagues to think about how they could work in the future. Our message was simple: redesign the office space to enhance outputs, meet business needs and remove any barriers to collaboration. We are very proud of the things we have achieved together, supporting each other, while significantly progressing new ways of working and building stronger connections.”

The workspace was designed around the provision of zones for breakout, touchdown, open plan workspace, quiet zones and resource areas. The roll-out started towards the end of Summer 2021 but SQA understand it is an ongoing process to embed it.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)

Prior to the pandemic, HIE had 160 desks to support 180 staff in its headquarters in Inverness, which it shares with several partner organisations.

Although smarter working had been in place for some time, work from home wasn't commonplace but the pandemic gave HIE management the opportunity to understand how it could better support the organisation.

Leesman, industry specialists in measuring employee experience, was commissioned to undertake a survey to understand how remote working was enabling colleague productivity and 'workplace' satisfaction and to clarify how people wanted to work post pandemic.

By December 2021, two thirds of employees indicated they wished to work from home for a significant part of the week but also needed access to workspace for part of their week. It was clear a different type of workspace was needed to support the organisation.

HIE's Facilities Management Team worked closely with its HR team to deliver clinics to understand how its staff wanted to work. This led to the creation of a pilot workspace within its headquarters.

The social spaces have been situated to benefit from the best views and greenery and natural elements introduced to make the space feel comfortable and alive and to assist with colleague wellbeing. A wide range of work settings were introduced including a flexible large open space which can be reconfigured to suit people's needs. Technology was a key part of the design with sensors ensuring that user experience and efficiency are maximised.

The delivery of this initiative has resulted in a better-quality work environment with the realised opportunity to bring additional partners into its shared building.

