HM Government

Government Function:
Property

Continuous improvement
assessment framework

This document supports the [Government Functional Standard for Property, GovS 004](#) which sets expectations for the management of all government property assets held by or on behalf of government departments and their arm's length bodies.

This assessment framework should be read in conjunction with all the relevant government functional standards. The full suite of functional standards and associated guidance can be found at [GOV.UK government functional standards](#).

This is a revised version 1.3 of this assessment framework, following a first version (1.0) issued for trial in late 2021 and draft revisions (1.1-2).

A separate **scorecard [add link]** is available to allow an alphanumeric approach to assessing current compliance and performance.

For more information, please contact govs.property@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

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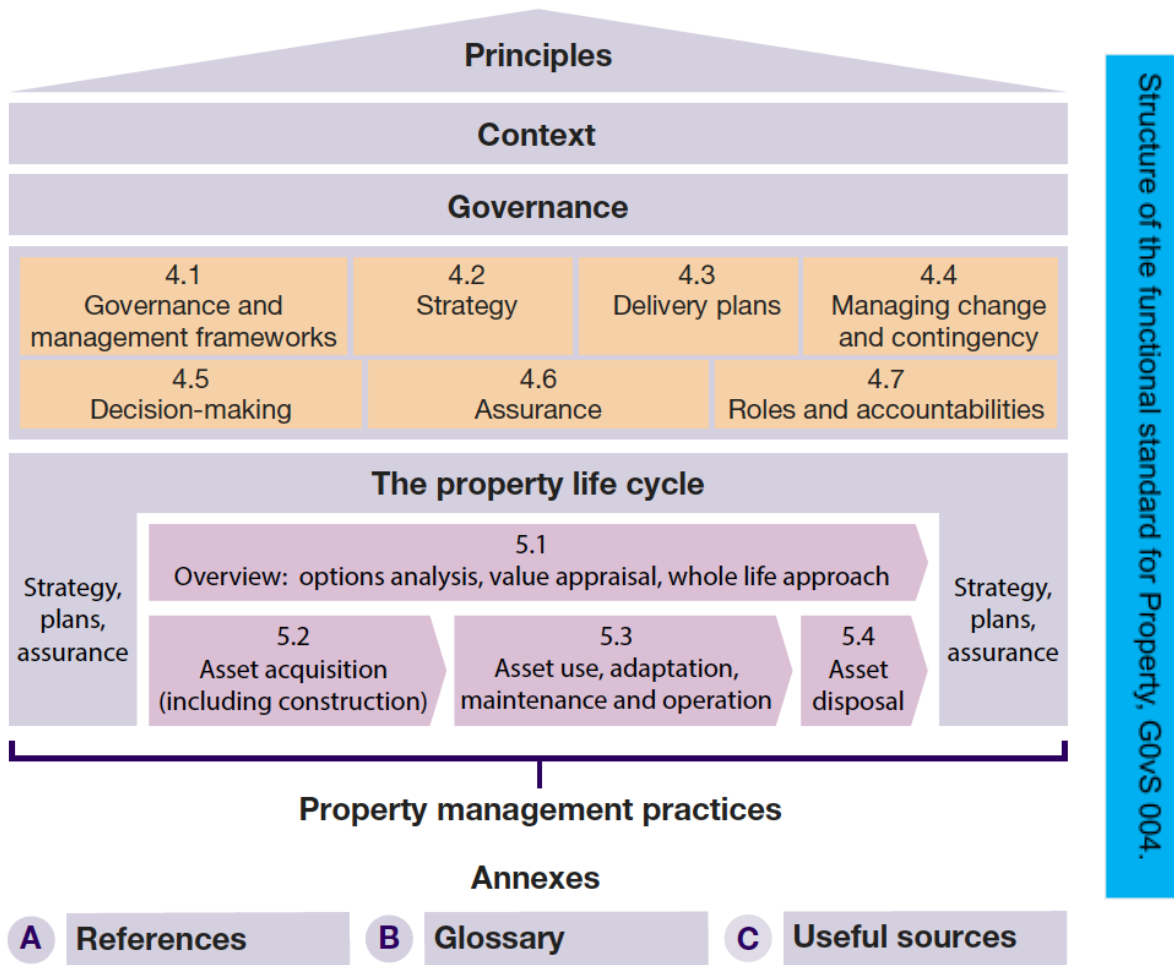Structure of the functional standard for Property, G0vS 004.

Figure 1: structure of the functional standard, GovS 004

1 Purpose and scope

1.1 Purpose of this assessment framework

This assessment framework is designed to support continuous improvement in the property function across the whole of government by helping government organisations assess their practical application of the functional standard GovS 004, Property.

The approach to assessment outlined here is consistent with assessment frameworks for other functions, so that senior leaders can take a coherent view of performance across all functions that are active in their organisation.

This framework complements but does not replace GovS 004, Property, which should continue to be regarded as the primary standard for compliance. The aim of the framework is to encourage self-assessment within organisations, using Themes, Practice Areas and Criteria (see 2.2), so that over time greater capacity and capability is developed and performance moves towards best practice.

As clause 1.1 of GovS 004, Property explains, the functional standard sets expectations for the management of government property to create an enabling environment in which property assets deliver their full benefit; it provides direction and guidance for senior officials and all employed in property management, including commercial suppliers.

1.2 Scope of this assessment framework

This assessment framework can be used as a tool for assessing performance by any organisation that holds or manages government property assets:

● as land, buildings or infrastructure
● for general or specialist use
● for operational or non-operational purposes

This framework is part of the property governance and management framework managed by the property function which is documented as a collection on GOV.UK

Other public sector organisations, devolved or local, might find this assessment framework useful and may use it under the copyright terms indicated on page 2.

The structure and scope of the functional standard is shown in Figure 1 to allow comparison with the Themes, Practice Areas and Criteria adopted for this assessment framework.

2 Using this assessment framework

2.1 How the framework relates to the functional standard

This framework draws on [GovS 004](#) and presents a set of statements indicating different levels of performance against aspects of the standard, ranging from 'good' to 'better' and 'best', as shown in Figure 2. 'Good' means that all mandatory elements in the standard and the most important advisory elements are met. An organisation is 'developing' if the criteria for 'good' are not met.

The framework allows for the functional standard to be implemented appropriately in organisations of different maturities and with different business needs. It provides a basis for systematic, proportionate, appropriate and consistent review of how well the relevant standard is being met. It supports organisations to plan, undertake and demonstrate the actions needed to improve their property management.
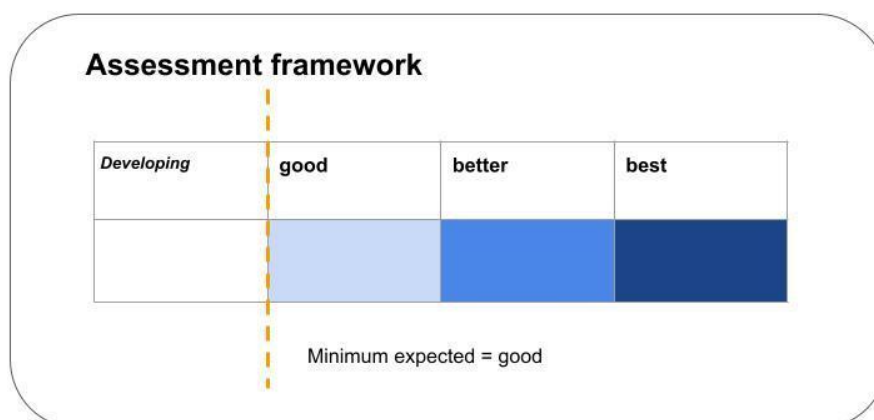

Figure 2: Good, better and best

2.2 Structure of the assessment framework

The structure of the continuous improvement assessment framework is designed to give an overview of performance and highlight areas for improvement. It identifies:

Themes: the overall topic being addressed

> **Practice areas**: what is being assessed against one or more clauses in the standard

>> **Assessment criteria:** descriptions of the target performance level, defining what you would expect to observe

2.3 Assessing how well property is being managed

Use of this framework can be flexible, depending on the scope of the assessment. Attitude is vital to effectiveness: this framework is a tool to support continuous improvement and it will add no value unless there is honesty in responses to the criteria. The assessment should be mainly concerned with identifying opportunities to improve the way the organisation operates.

This assessment framework should normally be applied within a single, coherent organisation unless in some circumstances it is appropriate to separate different work strands, or bring them together. A government department may choose to include one or more of its Arm's Length Bodies within an assessment, although normally a large ALB would be expected to produce an assessment for its own property portfolio. Assessment for only one part of a large organisation might be useful (whether core department or ALB) as long as the management boundaries are clear, in order to help pin-point areas needing improvement. The assessment should be appropriate to the responsibilities of the organisation, for example if an organisation has only Intelligent Client responsibilities the assessment might examine how well it relates to its delivery body.

Business leaders should set ambitions for their organisation based on their business needs, as set out in their strategies and/or plans (including the property strategy - see 2.5). For some, 'good' might be sufficient. For others, the business might dictate that 'best' is necessary.

Most functional standards rely to some degree on other functions and their standards (as listed in clause 1.3 of every functional standard). This interdependency means that for an organisation to operate effectively it needs to consider the impact of all functions on the organisation's operations. For example, property management has strong links to commercial, digital and security functions.

The methodology for making an assessment can include both 'scorecard' and 'narrative' approaches to using the framework, and the two approaches can be complementary. Textual description or commentary, summarising the current situation, will add useful information to a scorecard if it explains briefly and simply how well an organisation is operating and what issues it is currently facing. Equally, a scorecard can give a clearer, quantified sense of proportion and the relative importance of the assessments it describes.

- The simplest approach is to reproduce the table at section 3.2 (Assessment criteria) and use it as a basis for annotating descriptive responses to each criterion. If the present set of criteria does not adequately express an important aspect of property management, feedback should be shared with the designers via govs.property@cabinetyoffice.gov.uk

- The **scorecard** methodology can be used to help achieve more consistent responses, adjusting the results with the benefit of experience in use. ('Good' requires confirmation of the minimum, mandatory level of performance. 'Better' and 'best' - Columns 2 and 3 - are more likely to need qualitative descriptions, examples, case studies, etc. as evidence.)

General guidance on assessment frameworks can be found in the **Guide to continuous improvement against functional standards**.

Notes on scoring:

- *in order to be 'good', 'better' or 'best' overall, all the criteria for that level across all the Themes neet to be met*
- *by default, failure to meet 'good' in one or more Practice Areas means the organisation is still 'developing'*
- *an assessment needs to meet all the criteria of a lower level in order to reach the higher level - respondents cannot be 'better' if they don't meet all the criteria for 'good'.*

2.4 Characteristics of good, better and best

Broad characteristics of 'good', 'better' and 'best' practice have been used to construct the assessment criteria in section 3 of this framework, building on the Government Functional Standard for property, GovS 004, as follows:

- **Good:** The organisation uses the functional standard to inform its strategy, business plans and ways of working. Roles and accountabilities are assigned to people with appropriate seniority and skills, within an appropriately defined governance and management framework. Mandatory requirements are being met.

- **Better:** The organisation evaluates how well it meets the requirements of the functional standard and defines its ambitions for being 'good, better or best' against it. Requirements and guidance set by the centre of the property function are followed and those working in the organisation contribute to the formation of the requirements and guidance. Self-assessment against a continuous improvement framework informs progress.

- **Best:** The functional governance and management framework for property in the organisation is fully integrated with the cross-government property function. Planning is shared constructively. Improvements are measurable against suitable metrics, and verified through direct observation and evidence as well as through remote assurance mechanisms. Innovation is observable in solutions delivered to meet needs.

2.5 Use to support Strategic Asset Management

This framework can be used to support organisations undertaking assurance reviews and compiling blueprints for their capacity and capability, assessing whether they have sufficient resources to deliver their property strategy and delivery plans - identifying risks, gaps or shortfalls. Such reviews are a requirement of the functional standard. The outcomes should be summarised in the Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) which is shared with the Office of Government Property, informing its contents. The timing of a review might be chosen to support the preparation or revision of a SAMP or delivery plan.

Assurance reviews should be proportionate in scale and coverage to the scope, complexity and requirements of the property portfolio occupied or managed by the organisation.

3 Assessment framework

3.1 Themes and Practice Areas

Note: The following themes and practice areas have replaced the structure of the framework circulated in the first Trial version 1.0 (Nov 2021) and draw together related topics. This version (1.3) is for use during the financial year 2022-23. Suggestions for improvement are welcome and can be incorporated into a future revision.

Themes

1. **Capability and Capacity**
2. **Data and Management Information**
3. **Planning and Decision Making**
4. **Operational Performance**
5. **Sustainability and Stewardship**
6. **Engagement, Transactions and Contract**
7. **Governance and Strategy**

Themes and practice areas

1. **Capability and Capacity**
   - **1.1.** Learning
   - **1.2.** Assurance and Continuous Improvement:
     (a) Self-assessment (b) Peer support (c) Three Lines / audit
   - **1.3.** Strategic Workforce Planning
   - **1.4.** Recruitment, Induction and Training -Career Framework
   - **1.5.** Workload and change management - agility, continuity, resilience

2. **Data and management information**
   - **2.1.** Asset inventory data - quality, data standard
   - **2.2.** Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Information Management
   - **2.3.** Condition survey data
   - **2.4.** Risk
   - **2.5.** Performance reporting
   - **2.6.** Whole Life Calculations
   - **2.7.** Financial management - investment decisions

3.2 Assessment criteria

Theme 1: Capability and capacity		
The property function has the capability and capacity required to succeed in delivering strategy and plans, meeting business needs.		
Practice area 1.1: Learning		
Benefit is gained from past experience		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Systems are in place to capture valuable experience and convey it to others.	c) A storage facility is available to store and access learning from property projects.	f) Routines include post-occupancy evaluation, and monitoring of usage and user satisfaction.
b) Teams share learning as part of project closure.	d) Lessons from previous experience are recoverable and re-examined when planning new work.	g) Occupancy data is used to adjust current building operations and / or to design new property solutions.
	e) Project initiation guidance or templates includes assessment of relevant past experience.	h) Organisation leaders update management framework(s) in the light of experience, and communicate learning across government
Practice area 1.2: Assurance and continuous improvement		
Assurance is part of a learning and continuous improvement culture, so that senior leaders are confident about property management, its effectiveness and consistency, coherence of strategy, delivery plans and implementation projects, and the function's ability to improve.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) A framework and process for continuous improvement is in place, including assurance reviews based on self-assessment by	b) Self-assessment is strengthened by peer review or similar forms of benchmarking, resulting in examples of improvement, with reporting of progress	c) Self-assessment and peer review processes feed into external assurance by independent bodies, including the adequacy and effectiveness of

operational management.	to senior management.	governance, risk management and spend controls.

Practice area 1.3: Strategic workforce planning		
Timely reviews, risk and gap analysis ensure that the capacity and capability is available to deliver the organisation's property strategy and delivery plans.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) A capability and capacity review is undertaken regularly or at appropriate times to ensure that the needs of the property function can be met by the available human resources.	f) Roles and responsibilities are adjusted to suit the scale and needs of the estate using the Government Property Career Framework.	k) Intelligent Client roles and relationships between client and delivery bodies (if any) are regularly reviewed in depth, taking account of functional guidance and best practice professional methodology, to achieve coherent operational outcomes.
b) Mapping roles to the Government Property Profession Career Framework has been undertaken to support the progression and development of the property function within the organisation.	g) A capability and capacity review preceded the latest property transformation programme or project.	l) The resourcing strategy and target operating model set out in the approved blueprint or equivalent is fully achieved[1]
c) A resourcing strategy and target operating model[2] is approved in a blueprint or equivalent and defines appropriate specialist and general capacity	h) A plan is in place to deliver the approved target operating model and resourcing strategy and is on track to be delivered.	m) Technical and specialist roles are assigned or commissioned in relation to specified needs and to other established roles and

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[1] 'fully achieved' allows for a 5% tolerance against the planned permanent FTE posts in the resourcing strategy

[2] The target operating model should consider the appropriate mix of skills, enabling transactional and strategic delivery of the property strategy and delivery plans, and this should inform the learning and development plan

across the organisation.		are provided with all necessary training.
d) The property function has a role in strategic workforce planning for the whole organisation (following Government Functional Standard GovS 003, Human Resources)	i) Capacity and capability assessments include the management of property projects (in accordance with GovS 002, Project delivery).	n) Diversity and Inclusion is considered through all resourcing, development and performance management practices, with active interventions in place to increase the diversity of the team, particularly at senior levels.
e) The resourcing strategy promotes a diverse and inclusive workforce in line with human resourcing policies.	j) Examples can be evidenced of diversity and inclusion being increased in the workforce through recent recruitment	

Practice area 1.4: Recruitment, induction and training

Capability and capacity are maintained by appropriate recruitment, induction and training in line with the strategic workforce plan for the organisation and accreditation standard, which gives the baseline and identifies skills gaps to be filled by developing existing staff or recruiting new talent.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Job specifications, with the appropriate level of accreditation set, are used to define any role needing to be recruited, and show how it will augment the capability and capacity of the property function	e) Management of training includes an analysis of needs, strategy, availability of briefings and courses, and monitors effectiveness.	h) Talent and staff development fill gaps promptly and provide leadership for property management.
b) Induction and training are provided so that	f) Resources are provided by the	i) Apprentices are employed in building

staff engaged in management of property assets can work in them safely as soon as is practical.	organisation to benchmark and drive recruitment, induction, training and development in the property function.	capacity for the property function.
c) All mandatory training (e.g. for asbestos, legionella, or other health and safety issues) is obtained and kept up to date by relevant people in the workforce.	g) Roles at Senior Practitioner and Senior Leader will be held by appropriately accredited individuals, or those working towards and appropriate accreditation, as set out in the Career Framework.	j) Routes to accreditation are actively supported for Senior Practitioner and above, and Practitioners who wish to train.
d) The organisation supports its workforce to access appropriate Continuing Professional Development, including opportunities for staff to act on learning where it is beneficial for improving organisational performance.		

Practice area 1.5: Workload and change management		
Workloads are managed to maintain optimum results and working conditions, including through change programmes		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Individuals in essential property management roles are resourced and supported by others to reflect	d) Resourcing is adjusted to match the prevailing workload, using people working full-time or part-time,	g) Senior leaders maintain an overview that considers the balance of work by in-house employees,

changing workload and specialist skills required.	in generalist or specialist roles.	mutual support across government of the property function, and contracting out.
b) Structural change requirements in the property function are anticipated and planned.	e) Structural change is managed as a project with initiation, stage management and closure delivering agreed outcomes.	h) Opportunity is taken during structural change to achieve ancillary improvements.
c) Resilience is maintained by contingency planning.	f) Continuity arrangements allow service delivery to be largely unaffected during a change programme.	i) Agile working prevails at a level that can accommodate minor changes easily, without significant impact on continuity of service.

Theme 2: Data and management information (including financial)

A supportive environment of good quality data and management information enables leaders to make well-grounded decisions.

Practice area 2.1: Asset inventory data

Knowledge of the estate is comprehensive, enabling all assets to be readily identified.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Records of property assets are accurate and up to date in both departmental and central government databases.	d) Property management information is produced directly from operational data base(s) and metrics include indicators as recommended in GovS 004.	f) Informative notes are added to asset records if there is potential for alternative use that would benefit government objectives or revenues.
b) Property records use the current Government Property Data Standard published by OGP and mandated for the cross-government	e) Property records include qualitative data to show whether assets are regarded as fit for purpose, in good condition, and performing satisfactorily.	

asset data register (InSite).		
c) Information on non-strategic assets (such as individual components of a building) is recorded in the organisation's property management data systems in ways consistent with the [FM Asset Data standard](#).		

Practice area 2.2: Building Information Modelling (BIM) and information Management

BIM is used to add value in the design and construction phases of property and support building information management during operation.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Building Information Modelling is used for all new projects, undertaken in accordance with prevailing modelling standards (sources [here](#) and [here](#) - Annex B)	b) Management of building information including 'digital twins' provide a shared knowledge resource that is used as the basis for operational decisions.	c) Procurement takes advantage of opportunities to demonstrate leadership in the advancement of digital information management and BIM for the UK construction sector.

Practice area 2.3: Condition survey data

The condition of buildings and open land is known through routine survey and provides a basis for asset management planning and budgeting for maintenance.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Condition surveys are undertaken by practitioners with the necessary competence and results recorded to convey essential	d) Condition surveys correlate maintenance requirements (backlog, priority repairs, routine replacement) with foreseeable future needs	f) Assessments are made of the likely impact of under-investment in property maintenance on service delivery.

information to decision makers		
b) Condition surveys include building materials, structure and structural components, and alert managers to immediate risks.	e) Analysis identifies historic, current and future maintenance costs and service charge liabilities, following [FM Services and Asset Data standards]().	g) Asset condition records include date of last survey, operational status of the property, and life expectancy.
c) Condition and energy surveys are conducted regularly and at least every five years to ensure that management information is available for quarterly reporting and can be used as a basis for budgeting expenditure on repair, replacement and refurbishment.		

Practice area 2.4: Risk

Risks are identified, managed and mitigated, and fed into governance and management decision-making systems to ensure they are dealt with appropriately

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Building, land and infrastructure assets are assessed regularly for risks (including safety, climate adaptation, operational failure, financial, or other) and risks identified are recorded, notified to management, and minimised.	d) A defined framework for risk management covers initial assessment, mitigation and control, addressing priorities.	g) Levels of risk are assessed in relation to matters that are important to the organisation. Strategic or major risks are defined and referenced in the strategic asset management plan.

b) Plans for business continuity and resilience are in place that minimise disruption to premises and accommodation.	e) Risk is managed throughout the property life cycle to minimise physical, financial and other liabilities.	h) Robust processes are in place to manage risk against all the principles of the functional standard.
c) Guidance in the HMT Orange Book is used and implemented for property.	f) Risk assessment includes the need for adaptation to deal with climate change	

Practice area 2.5: Performance reporting

The performance of property assets in operation is monitored and evaluated, allowing improved services to be considered

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Parliament receives good quality information via the State of the Estate report (SOFTE) on the performance of the organisation's property portfolio.	c) Data series include accurate and comprehensive coverage of running costs, energy and water consumption, waste, security, incident management, and user satisfaction.	d) Exemplary case studies can be contributed to organisational or professional reports and the SOFTE report, including data on Modern Methods of Construction.
b) Data is gathered and organised for regular inputs to management information and to SOFTE without customised processing.		

Practice area 2.6: Whole life costs

Decision making is supported by realistic estimates of the whole life costs of holding and operating property

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) The property function provides finance team members with whole	c) Decisions to invest in refurbishment, adaptation or	e) The relevance and importance of Social

		Value (community, place, heritage, environmental quality and accessibility) are considered in options analyses or costings.
b) Allowance is made in maintenance budgets for historic, current and future liabilities, including service charge liabilities and final dilapidations settlements.	d) Toolkit(s) provided centrally for the property function are used for calculating whole life costs.	

Practice area 2.7: financial management for property

Property management practices comply with guidance issued for government financial management

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Financial planning, control and reporting of property projects is undertaken in accordance with GovS 006, Finance.	b) Options analysis for property projects includes financial estimates in advance of commitment to project initiation.	c) Budgetary planning and control for property projects incorporates approvals gateways and timescales that apply internally and externally.

Theme 3: Planning and decision making

A holistic approach to decision making is used, taking account of the public policy context and best practice.

Practice area 3.1: Context

The distinctive characteristics of the public sector are recognised and incorporated into decision making to deliver the best outcomes

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Decision-making within the organisation is structured to take account of the wider, cross-government and public sector context,	c) Examples can be given of effective working relationships between sponsor departments and ALB or other delivery	e) Alignments between departmental and government-wide objectives are maintained systematically, such

including the Government Property Strategy, as well as the organisation's business strategy and plans.	organisations, as well as the centre of government (CO/HMT).	as by participation in a cross-government property forum.
b) Business cases reflect interaction with relevant parts of cross-government machinery, taking account of Treasury guidance (for example, the [Green Book](#)) and Cabinet Office spend controls.	d) Assets of Arm's Length Bodies are managed appropriately for the status of the ALB.	f) Strategy and delivery plans support both national and organisational objectives.

Practice area 3.2: Strategic Asset Management Plans (SAMPs)

Strategic asset management planning gives constant impetus towards adjusting the estate to a better fit with business needs

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) A current SAMP outlines how your organisation's property strategy will be translated into delivery plans and projects for implementation.	d) Your SAMP summarises the organisation's property strategy and delivery plans in a way that enables easy integration with the cross-government delivery coordination plan (Function Plan).	g) The SAMP is complemented by an assessment of capability and capacity for implementing the organisation's property strategy and delivery plans, undertaken through an assurance review.
b) Suitable versions of the SAMP can be (i) shared with OGP to satisfy the latest commission from Head of Function; (ii) published on GOV.UK, after approval by the Accounting Officer.	e) Supplementary information is added whenever necessary to maintain the SAMP as a 'live' document.	h) Your SAMP considers any potential for mutual support via the cross- government property function.

c) The SAMP presents a clear overview of the organisation's property strategy, delivery plans and pipeline of forthcoming projects, with summaries on assurance for continuous improvement, capability and capacity, financial status, and alignment to standards. It takes account of the Government Property Strategy as well as the organisation's business strategy.	f) Information supplied to cross-government programme data collection is consistent with the SAMP.	i) Opportunities for generation of clean energy on land and within buildings are appraised and included within the SAMP or cross-referenced in sustainability strategies

Practice area 3.3: Delivery Plans

Property strategy is followed through by delivery planning that achieves the desired outcomes within optimum timescales

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Delivery plans (including event pipelines) are in place to deliver the property strategy.	d) Property projects outlined at strategic level are defined in plans specifying acquisitions, disposals, retentions (when disposal would be possible, such as passing a lease break) or investments (such as refurbishment or extension).	g) Alignment of business plans and cross-government strategies is demonstrated, including workforce and resourcing plans.
b) Delivery plans are proportionate to your organisation's	e) Plans cover all anticipated changes	h) Current property strategy and delivery plans have continuous

property portfolio, outlining the means for expected changes, including the pipeline for business case approvals under spend controls.	during the Spending Review period	data and information updates in property databases to show outcomes to date.
c) The quality of a business case that meets the criteria for a Government Major Project is examined and validated by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, and if in scope for the National Property Control is examined and validated by the Office of Government Property.	f) Decisions are holistic, taking account of social, economic and environmental considerations.	

Practice area 3.4: Life cycle options		
Decisions take into account an analysis of all the practical options available for property solutions, including adaptation, extension, refurbishment and new building.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*

a) Decisions about property solutions are made with due regard to:
  a. the requirements of property strategies and related plans
  b. management information, including costs and condition data
  c. scope for disposing of
	c) Decisions about property solutions are made with due regard to:
	
	● potential for improving sustainability or efficient utilisation
	
	● optimising contracts relating to facilities management and any other property services
		d) Decisions about property solutions are made with due regard to:
		● optimising the tenure of property assets, whether leased or freehold (including any Crown Estate Lease provisions)
		
		● specialist advice on adaptation to deal with climate change

surplus accommodation.		
b) The senior officer accountable for property strategy across government is consulted in accordance with property spend control and pipeline requirements.		

Practice area 3.5: New building projects and acquisitions		
New buildings are designed and constructed or acquired to meet the relevant standards.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) New-build property solutions comply with organisational requirements and cross-government standards, including the Common Minimum Standards for Construction.	d) The senior officer accountable for property strategy across government is consulted before any interest in a new acquisition or construction project is communicated to the market.	g) Government guidance on project initiation is employed, including Transforming Infrastructure Performance
b) Design of new buildings follows design guides adopted under organisational and cross-government management frameworks, such as guidance for the design of schools, hospitals, or prisons; office projects making use of Government Hubs policy and its	e) Managers of construction projects make arrangements from the outset for efficient transition into operational phases as an integral part of the project.	h) If there is a need for commercial activity to acquire new property, the market is engaged early and requirements are set to be accessible to as many suppliers as possible

associated design guidance.		
c) In procurement using government buying standards, when options are being assessed, a costed option to achieve quality ratings higher than the minimum is evaluated.	f) Projects for constructing new or adapting existing government buildings take account of: - current options for modern methods of construction (MMC) - government policy for climate change and guidance provided in the Net Zero Estate Playbook	

Practice area 3.6: Operation

Property is managed to achieve value for money throughout its operational life by applying a sustainable standard of maintenance.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Annual budgets and business plans include sufficient resources for sustaining adequate maintenance with decarbonisation.	c) A maintenance strategy is regularly updated and aligned to the strategic asset management plan (SAMP).	e) If premises are failing to meet contractual obligations or agreed standards for safety or sustainability, the alternative property solutions are evaluated.
b) Maintenance includes routine replacement, remedial action and statutory certification.	d) Plans for extensions or major refurbishments include capital investment for maintenance, better sustainability or care of heritage assets.	f) Business cases for maintenance programmes include options analysis showing the relative merits of retro-fitting improvements compared with a new acquisition.

Practice area 3.7: Disposals

Disposals follow guidance and optimum asset value is realised for the public interest

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Sales of freehold are preceded by consultation with other public sector bodies through the Register of Surplus Public Sector Land, which is held by the Office of Government Property.	b) A strategy for disposals is kept up-to-date, including a holistic assessment of potential for beneficial alternative uses, including financial, social, economic and environmental benefits	c) Disposals of surplus assets are being implemented and beneficial alternative uses delivered.

Theme 4: Operational performance

Land, buildings and infrastructure are operated successfully to achieve their agreed purpose and the wellbeing of users

Practice area 4.1: Safety

The safety of all premises is ensured by regular monitoring, precautionary action and assurance

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Users of government property are protected from avoidable harm by precautionary action, including: fire risk assessments carried out by the responsible person; routines for the safe evacuation of buildings being practiced regularly; testing of electrical and other equipment being carried out to the required legal standard or FM contract obligations.	c) Building accessibility complies with statutory requirements and exceeds them to ensure the safety of people on an inclusive basis (all ability groups) on all government premises.	d) Safety precautions are incorporated into arrangements for the reorganisation or alteration of premises, achieving agreed low levels of risk.

b) Workplace management meets prevailing industry and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) standards and those specified in facilities management or other contracts.		

Practice area 4.2: Security

Physical security of government property is achieved through appropriate anticipation, prevention, detection and responses.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Design and management of buildings and infrastructure takes security standards into account, enabling reporting against them in accordance with government security policy.	d) Work spaces are designed to comply with agreed security levels in a way that maximises productivity.	f) Interactions between security, safety, environmental and other property-related services are facilitated and optimised.
b) Security incident management planning follows GovS 007, Security.*	e) Security passes implement the selected security regime(s) efficiently.	
c) Internal and external security controls operate in a coherent manner to deter or prevent unauthorised access, protect assets and maintain safety.		

* Note: see especially GovS 007, 6.1 Physical security and Annex C

Practice area 4.3: Health and wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of people on government premises is protected and nurtured

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) A health and wellbeing at work plan promotes a good quality working environment, protecting the wellbeing of employees in addition to satisfying the mandatory standards set by the Health and Safety Executive.	c) Wellbeing of users is maintained when undertaking planned and preventative maintenance of buildings.	d) Heating, cooling, lighting, noise and air quality are monitored and adjusted for the health and wellbeing of occupants.
b) Building accessibility complies with statutory requirements.		

Practice area 4.4: Workplace and facilities management		
Buildings are operated sustainably and efficiently to satisfy user requirements whilst achieving good value for money		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Recognised standards for workplace and facilities management are used as the basis for defining the services needed, regardless of whether the services are provided through in-house operations or outsourced to a delivery organisation.	g) Utilisation of meeting rooms and other workspaces is optimised by offering flexible use of facilities, for different purposes, by different users.	k) Integrated workplace management systems are in use to enhance agile working, space utilisation and building performance.
b) A sourcing strategy defines the elements to be delivered within the organisation and by external suppliers respectively.	h) Smarter Working has reached a growing level of maturity that includes significant elements of self-service.	l) Smart and hybrid working are optimised through a balance of facilities that raises efficiency and productivity.

c) Environmental characteristics of meeting rooms, office space and other work areas are made suitable for their intended use.	i) The organisation has a maintenance strategy which is regularly updated and aligned to the SAMP (including resourcing).	m) Management practices include comprehensive and consistent condition surveys and a means of measuring building performance in operation.
d) Management practice aligns with the FM Standards for Asset Data and Services	j) A plan exists for sustainability, including a pathway to Net Zero for each building or portfolio.	
e) Commercial arrangements and maintenance contracts comply with GovS 008, Commercial		
f) Condition and energy efficiency surveys are conducted regularly and at least every five years.		

Practice area 4.5: Information technology

Information and communications technology is suited to the buildings and locations it serves.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Information and communication technology systems enable flexibility to cope with varying workforce numbers and staff deployments.	c) Design of ICT demonstrably improves productivity, including efficient access for people working remotely.	d) ICT has been installed on sites held by the organisation to benefit citizens by improving the reach and efficiency of transmissions infrastructure.
b) ICT is matched to the security requirements of building occupants		

Theme 5: Sustainability and stewardship

Management of property is directed towards fulfilling government environmental and sustainability policies.		
Practice area 5.1: sustainability targets		
Targets are used to encourage progress in achieving sustainability		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	***Better*** *Criteria denoting better performance*	***Best*** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Targets have been set to improve the handling of waste and the use of water and energy.	b) Plans are in place to achieve government-wide sustainability targets within defined timescales before 2030.	c) Comprehensive reporting is in place for achieving Net Zero, Biodiversity Net Gain, water quality and consumption, waste reduction and recycling.
Practice area 5.2: energy efficiency		
Energy use is managed towards sustainable levels and sources.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	***Better*** *Criteria denoting better performance*	***Best*** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Buildings meet the minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES), certification is available / on display (DEC and EPC) and recommendations of DEC advisory reports are being addressed.	b) Monitoring is in place to report the actual (operational) energy performance of buildings.	c) Renewable sources of energy are in use and meeting an increasing proportion of the total requirement.
Practice area 5.3: Conservation, remediation and adaptation		
Land in government ownership is brought into acceptable physical, chemical and biological condition, heritage assets are conserved, and adaptation to environmental change is implemented.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	***Better*** *Criteria denoting better performance*	***Best*** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Contamination of land in government ownership is identified	d) Land that is contaminated is assessed for remediation to	g) Disposal strategies provide for remediation prior to disposal, including

and evaluated as a possible risk.	determine the action required to bring it to an acceptable standard of environmental quality.	facilitation of necessary action by a new owner.
b) The heritage value of government property is recognized and recorded.	e) Specialist advice is taken to optimise the value of heritage assets.	h) Access to heritage assets is maximised for the benefit of the public.
c) Adaptation to climate change or other aspects of change in the environment are incorporated into new property plans.	f) Adaptation measures are being implemented retrospectively.	i) Adaptation includes positive environment benefits as well as protection for property assets.

Theme 6: Engagement and Transactions

Property management engages with the relevant stakeholders and conducts transactions appropriately.

Practice area 6.1: Procurement

Procurement within the property function achieves good value, including value for money and social value, by appropriate means including astute market behaviour

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Projects involving procurement follow national procurement policy, the Commercial functional standard, GovS 008, and relevant frameworks managed by Crown Commercial Service	b) The responsible person obtains commercial information to make themselves aware of current market conditions and how to obtain best value, including evaluating different options for tenure.	c) Procurement achieves its immediate goal (satisfying a requirement) and also adds value to the property portfolio.

Practice area 6.2: Due diligence

Property transactions are preceded by adequate checks on the status and propriety of the parties and the asset(s) changing hands

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Contracts for the construction,	b) Due diligence includes counter-fraud	c) Senior officials receive updates to keep them

purchase or leasing of new buildings or acquiring other property services or assets are entered into or renewed only after completing due diligence, taking account of the financial status and stability of the supplier and commercial and legal advice.	measures, taking account of GovS 013, Counter Fraud.	aware of current commercial trends, financial regulations and good practice, giving them the ability to scrutinise property holding arrangements and landlords (such as offshore ownership) to ensure financial probity and avoid money-laundering.

Practice area 6.3: Communications

Communications are recognised as a vital part of property management, achieved through appropriate stakeholder engagement

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Communication with stakeholders is an integral part of delivery planning and engagement follows GovS 011, Communication	c) Decisions are the subject of consultation with stakeholders by appropriate means, supported by accurate information and analysis, enabling effective appraisal of the available options.	e) Communicators dealing with property decisions use stakeholder insight, drawing on a range of resources to identify the most appropriate method to reach them.
b) Communications with delivery organisations includes working in accordance with the functional standard for property, GovS 004.	d) Checks are made to ensure that good communication exists between the Intelligent Client role and delivery organisation.	f) Within a delivery organisation, responsibilities are assigned to reflect specific requirements of the client and maintain an ongoing dialogue on delivery.

Theme 7: Governance and strategy

The property function's governance and strategy promote appropriate, proportionate, and consistent ways of managing government real estate.

Practice area 7.1: Governance and management frameworks

Governance and management frameworks for the function as a whole and for each organisation or portfolio, programme and project are proportionate and appropriate to the work and the assessed levels of prevailing risk.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) A governance and management framework for property management has been documented, showing system overview, structures, decision making processes, terms of reference and job roles, and defines remits and authority limits for decision-making.	c) The governance and management framework for property is embedded by key documents being referenced in commissions, project initiation documents and job descriptions.	e) A comprehensive governance and management framework includes systems for agile responses or adjustments to change, incorporating improvement opportunities.
b) The governance and management framework describes the property function in government departments and their Arm's Length Bodies.	d) Arm's Length Bodies (ALB) have well defined requirements for their property function from their sponsor department.	f) Systems are in place to inform those performing sponsor department roles of progress with delivery plans in ALB.

Practice area 7.2: Roles and accountabilities

Accountabilities and responsibilities are defined, mutually consistent, and traceable across all levels of management.

Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	*Better* *Criteria denoting better performance*	*Best* *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Roles and accountabilities are defined and assigned to people with appropriate seniority, skills and experience.	e) The Accounting Officer and Property Leader ensure that their organisation periodically reviews roles and accountabilities to suit the scale and needs of the estate.	i) Specialist and technical roles are defined and assigned to suitably qualified people.

b) The senior officer accountable for property assets is clearly identifiable and ensures that governance of property is integral to the organisation's overall management.	f) Property roles are seen to be effective enablers of business processes or objectives, by examples, and reflect the Government Property Career Framework.	j) Property roles are shown to be a systemic enabler of business objectives through transformational programmes.
c) Intelligent Client roles are appointed so that strategic commissioning takes account of organisational strategy, property strategy, business objectives and workforce strategy. .	g) GovS 004 Property and its supporting governance and management framework is referenced from the Accounting Officer System Statement (or the equivalent in an Arm's Length Body)	k) Intelligent Client roles are performed so that contracted or commissioned service providers are clear about the expectations placed on them and agreements are in place to specify how expectations will be met, with feedback and metrics measuring performance.
d) Delivery managers prepare plans in conjunction with the Intelligent Client role, so that they are consistent with organisational strategy, business objectives and workforce strategy.	h) Property Manager roles are delivered effectively so that building users are well informed and confident about who to contact in the event of incidents, emergencies, failure of equipment or facilities, deliveries, requests for adjustment, furnishing, health and safety conditions, security, queries about space allocation, and offering feedback.	

Practice area 7.3: Property Strategy

Intentions for significant changes in asset portfolio or property management are set out in a property strategy		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Your organisation has a property strategy which is consistent with your organisation's business plan and supports the delivery of its objectives.	d) A property strategy reaches 3-5 years into the future, or at least to the end of the current Spending Round, showing aspirations for delivery of the function's work	g) Organisational property strategy and the cross-government property strategy are being supported through a transformational change programme.
b) The organisational property strategy uses the functional standard GovS 004 as a basis for the work of its property function.	e) Examples can be evidenced of property function activity and projects implementing principles of the functional standard, GovS 004.	h) All principles of the functional standard GovS 004 can be shown to be applied through its strategy and delivered in its outcomes.
c) The property strategy for your organisation is consistent with the cross-government property strategy (Government Property Strategy).	f) The property strategy for your organisation implements a significant aspect of the Government Property Strategy (for example, relocation plans to support the Levelling Up policy).	
Practice area 7.4: Governance in separate jurisdictions, within UK and Overseas		
Property is managed to UK standards unless the local jurisdiction requires a different standard.		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	**Better** *Criteria denoting better performance*	**Best** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Property is managed to standards set by U.K. Government unless the local jurisdiction requires a different standard, including higher, better or different	b) Action is taken on notified changes to the requirements of local jurisdiction.	c) Liaison is maintained with representatives of local jurisdictions to gain prompt updates of information having implications for property management.

technical specifications.		

Practice area 7.5: Use of guidance		
Advisory content of GovS 004 ("should" statements) is used as guidance		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	***Better*** *Criteria denoting better performance*	***Best*** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Outcomes show evidence of following the advisory content of functional standard, <u>GovS 004</u>	b) Outcomes show evidence of following the advisory content of functional standard <u>GovS 004</u> and its supporting governance and management framework	c) Outcomes show evidence of routinely taking account of the advisory content of functional standard <u>GovS 004</u> and its supporting governance and management framework

Practice area 7.6: Management of the property function across government		
The property function is managed in accordance with <u>GovS 001</u>		
Good *Criteria denoting good performance*	***Better*** *Criteria denoting better performance*	***Best*** *Criteria denoting best performance*
a) Senior roles for managing the function are assigned, namely the Government Chief Property Officer (as Head of Function), Government Head of Property Profession, and Head of Function in each organisation (Estates Director etc.)	f) Senior stakeholders contribute to the function's governance, strategies, plans and standards.	k) Governance and management frameworks are integrated across functional boundaries.
b) A cross-government governance and management framework is defined and actively used* in ways that are overseen and encouraged by the Property Leaders	g) Implementation of vision, strategy and delivery plans is built into governance and management frameworks by means of a Function Plan that coordinates delivery of the Government	l) A mechanism is in place to consistently integrate improved practice into relevant governance and management frameworks

Board and its Policy & Standards Committee	Property Strategy across government.	
c) An up-to-date Government Property Strategy contains a vision statement and reaches 3-5 years into the future, enabling stakeholders to know what are the intended aspirations for delivery of the function's work.	h) Vision and strategy are promoted to all those involved in the function's work.	
d) Heads of Profession contribute to governance and management frameworks and are accountable for implementing their organisation's strategic workforce plan.	i) Subject specific standards, systems and processes are managed to enable cross-government collaboration and interoperability.	
e) A continuous improvement assessment framework has been published.	j) Property function governance is integrated with organisational governance.	
Note: *Governance and management frameworks include authority limits, decision making roles and rules, degrees of autonomy, assurance needs, reporting structures, accountabilities, roles and escalation routes; and the appropriate management practices and associated documents needed to meet relevant standards.		

4 Future development of this assessment framework

At present, detailed prescriptions are not being offered for applying this assessment framework or reporting findings. Approaches to its use are expected to evolve over time. The effort required to produce a self-assessment should reduce after initial baselining. Reporting is expected to be stabilised so that year-on-year comparisons can be done relatively easily.

SAMPs should summarise the outcome of continuous improvement assessments, especially if they imply investment or change. The Office of Government Property (OGP) aims to support government organisations in their improvement journeys. Sharing a summary of assessments via the SAMP enables an overview of functional activity, and dialogue - often through the regular 'bilateral conversations' or Property Leaders forum - can be maintained about what needs to be resourced within departments and across government, to maintain an effective property function.

For assessing 'better' or 'best' levels of performance, peer review is recommended, giving the benefit of different perspectives and other people's experience. Conferring over methodology may also lead to further development of this assessment framework.