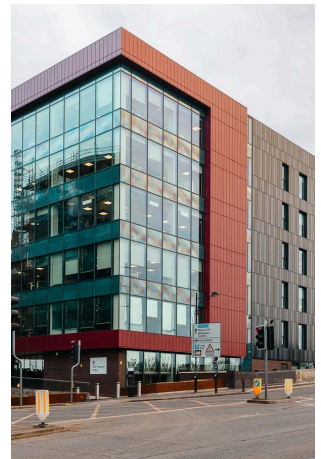




Government  
Property  
Agency

# The Government Property Agency's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report

April 2023





# Introduction



“ This is the GPA’s first ESG report. The report highlights our commitment to ESG and reinforces the importance we place on ESG matters.

In this report we have set out our priority ESG topics, what we are already doing against those topics, and more importantly, our plan going forward. We recognise ESG is a journey and we hope to build on our current activities to become an ESG leader in our sector.

”

The Government Property Agency (GPA) places great emphasis on Environment, Social and Governance (ESG).

We have ESG incorporated into our four strategic objectives and we recognise that, as a client-centric property management company and with our public sector focus, we play a critical role in not only achieving the UK’s carbon reduction targets but also :

Strategic Objective	How it contributes to ESG?
<b>Growth across the United Kingdom</b>	We are contributing to place-making, supporting SMEs, creating new jobs and generating social value.
<b>Transform the Civil Service</b>	We are enhancing the diversity, equality, and inclusion agenda, and supporting our local communities.
<b>Contribute to Net Zero</b>	We are reducing carbon emissions across our own estate as well as that of our clients and helping to focus on nature and biodiversity.
<b>Deliver Better Value</b>	We are enhancing client and customer satisfaction, managing our finances for the long term and working collaboratively with our supply chain.

We have already begun our ESG journey and are undertaking actions that reflect our commitment. We have now consolidated how we are addressing ESG risks, and I am proud to share our first ESG report.

This report sets out what we deem as priority ESG topics and a baseline of what we are doing against those targets. We will also use this report to build upon the gaps in our ESG strategy and have highlighted our priorities over the next 12 months.

## Some of our achievements to-date

- Our current Net Zero programme has already made excellent progress, and forecasts a 50% overall reduction in carbon emissions across our portfolio by 2032, where we anticipate a long term hold.
- We are developing our Environmental Management System which is aligned with ISO 14001 and have agreed an Environmental Policy Statement.
- Our 23 Stephenson Street office in Birmingham has achieved Leesman+ certification, recognising it as providing an outstanding workplace experience and is one of only two public sector buildings in the world to have achieved this.
- In November 2022, we added a Sustainability Committee (SusCo), a sub-committee of our Executive Committee, to provide strategic leadership for sustainability across the GPA.

We recognise this is the start of the journey for us and there is more for us to do to advance our ESG agenda.

## Our focus over the next 12 months

- Measuring the baseline impact across our material topics.
- Finalising, and where relevant setting, KPIs and targets for each of our material topics to enable us to measure our progress against our ESG goals.
- Refining our plans to deliver our ESG strategy in line with our strategic objectives and the targets that we set.
- Building our internal ESG capability to create an environment where all our employees are upskilled on ESG and can contribute to the agenda.

**Steven Boyd**

**Chief Executive Officer**



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## Our vision

To create a transformed, shared, sustainable and value for money government property portfolio supporting civil servants to work productively in every nation and region of the UK.



Transform the Civil Service



Contribute to Net Zero



Growth across the UK



Better value

## Our mission

Create great places to work for civil servants.

We use our scale and commercial expertise to do this effectively, efficiently and sustainably, helping to support growth in all parts of the UK.

How people use workplaces has changed over time and there is a greater expectation on workplaces to drive sustainability. At the GPA, we are basing our transformation on the principles of collaboration, creativity, community and caring, integrating them into everything that we do as an organisation.



## ESG is integral to how we operate at the GPA

The built environment accounts for 25%\* of the UK's total carbon footprint and our sector will be instrumental in achieving the national emission reduction targets. As a client-centric property company, and a government agency, responsible for an extensive portfolio throughout the UK, we recognise the impact we have on the environment and our communities.

Our unique position can effect change and shape society on a scale that would be difficult to match elsewhere. Therefore, we have a holistic approach to ESG, focusing on its promotion within our own operations and amongst our clients, our supply chain and the wider industry. We believe that by prioritising ESG considerations can help create long-term value for our stakeholders and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Our ambition is to become a leader and ESG exemplar in the property sector. We are continuously assessing our performance, innovating our approach, and establishing new ways of working to meet this ambition.

In recognition of our ambition and our impact potential, we have now identified ESG topics that are most relevant to our organisation and created a baseline of our actions and initiatives already underway against those topics. We will continue to set targets and roll-out strategies that help us meet our ESG targets.

Our ESG strategy aligns to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the Government Greening Commitments (GCCs), to ensure our priorities connect with the global agenda and the UK Government's plans to meet its ESG commitments.

Our desire is to develop our property portfolio in a way that continues to minimise the impact we have on the environment, reduce costs and supports social improvements within communities.

\* Source: Environmental Audit Committee



# Our ESG achievements

**2,400 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**

Scope 1 and 2 emissions reduction since April 2021



Established our **Net Zero programme**

Received the **Inclusive Environments Recognition award** by the Construction Industry Council

Launched a **Digital Customer Portal** to enable access to services and local communities



Delivering our **Workplace Services Transformation Programme** to evolve how the Government office estate is managed and operated

**12,000**

civil servant roles supported in the relocation to UK regions as part of the Levelling Up agenda



Committed to establishing an **Environment Management System**

Our 23 Stephenson Street Hub in Birmingham achieved Leesman+ accreditation, meaning it provides an **outstanding workplace experience** for our customers, and is rated the best employee workplace experience in the UK's public sector

**4** Government Hubs and interim spaces delivered to support growth across the UK through providing regional employment and development



**30** departments have achieved 'smarter working mature' status using PAS3000

# Our materiality assessment

Working with an external consultancy, we have identified ESG topics that are most material to us as a business. In identifying material topics, we have given consideration to key stakeholders who influence and impact us as an organisation, and the topics that matter most to those stakeholders.

## How we selected material topics

We identified a long list based on research and insights from within the organisation. This list was shortlisted based on importance and impact of the topic to us both internally and externally. The shortlist was approved by the Sustainability Committee and presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Committee.

## Our key stakeholders:

In line with industry best practice, we considered the importance and impact of each topic on the following stakeholder groups.

### Our sponsoring organisation

#### Who they are

The Cabinet Office

#### Why they are important

The Cabinet Office has identified sustainability as an enabler for the delivery of its priority outcomes

### Customers and clients

#### Who they are

The Government agencies and tenants to which we provide building space, and the people who use our offices, warehouses and land

#### Why they are important

Our customers and clients are at the heart of what we do. It is important that we are aligned and supporting their ambitions

### Strategic partners and suppliers

#### Who they are

The businesses that form part of our supply chain, developers and utility providers

#### Why they are important

Our strategic partners and suppliers are an enabler for achieving our ESG ambitions

### Comparator organisations

#### Who they are

Our peers in the property sector

#### Why they are important

We look to comparator organisations in the property sector to ensure that we are aligned, or ahead of, industry best practice

### Regulators and industry associations

#### Who they are

The National Audit Office and trade associations

#### Why they are important

Our unique position as both a property company and public sector organisation requires us to operate at the most ethical levels

### Local communities

#### Who they are

Local residents, businesses, heritage groups and interest groups

#### Why they are important

The breadth of our work means that we directly and indirectly impact local communities



The ESG topics we consider most material to us and our key stakeholders are:

-  **Climate change mitigation**
-  **Energy management**
-  **Waste reduction and circularity**
-  **Climate change adaptation**
-  **Nature recovery**
-  **Water management**
-  **Social value**
-  **Wellbeing**
-  **Equality, diversity and inclusion**
-  **Human rights**
-  **Workplace health and safety**
-  **Sustainable procurement**
-  **Business ethics and compliance**
-  **Data security**

We will validate our material topics through surveys and interviews with some of our key stakeholders. We are aware of the evolving nature of the ESG landscape, and will regularly review our materiality topics in line with emerging topics and changing stakeholder priorities, to ensure that we continue to prioritise and report on the most material ESG topics.

The following page sets out how our material topics map against the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to reflect how our priorities connect with the global agenda.

The remaining sections of our report will provide you with an overview of the work already underway across each material topic and set out our plan going forward.

# Our contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an international shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

We recognise the impact that our work can have on a global scale and therefore, we are supportive of the SDGs. As such we have mapped our material ESG topics across the SDGs in the table below.

## Sustainable Development Goals addressed:



	Priority topics for the GPA	SDG 3	SDG 5	SDG 8	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 16
Greening Government Commitments	Climate Change Mitigation							●	
	Energy Management							●	
	Waste Reduction & Circularity						●	●	
	Climate Change Adaptation				●	●		●	
	Nature Recovery	●				●		●	
	Water Management					●			
Creating Social Value	Social Value	●		●		●			
	Wellbeing	●		●	●				
	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	●	●		●				
	Human Rights	●			●				
	Workplace Health & Safety	●		●					
Governance	Sustainable Procurement				●		●	●	●
	Business Ethics & Compliance				●				●
	Data Security				●				●

# Standards

## Our environmental work is underpinned by industry standards.

We are members of the UK Green Buildings Council and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and are joining the Better Building Partnership. Our memberships will enable us to support the Greening Government Commitments.

In August 2022, we published the Net Zero Sustainability Annex of the Workplace Design Guide on GOV.UK. The Annex sets out the standards that new build and refurbished buildings must meet to achieve the UK Government's Net Zero commitment.

We also use the Net Zero Playbook, released by the Office of Government Property, as the basis of a maturity assessment of our projects and trajectory towards achieving Net Zero.

Drawing on the above, we have set out high level performance targets for offices.



### Operational Energy Usage (EUI)

The Design Guide ambitions for total energy usage are 70kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr (GIA)



### Space Heating Demand

The Design Guide ambition for Net Zero performance is 15kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr



### Energy Performance Certificates (EPC)

The GPA requirements are a rating of A (new buildings) and B (refurbishments)



### Display Energy Certificate (DEC)

The Design Guide requirement is top quartile performance



### Water usage

The GPA Sustainability Plan recommends CIRIA W11 4m<sup>3</sup>/FTE/yr, 16l/fte/day or 0.55m<sup>3</sup>/m<sup>2</sup> (NIA)



### Waste

Total (tonnes), <5% to landfill, nil single use plastics



### Biodiversity

The Biodiversity Annex recommends 10% net gain, 100% native species, 100% BREEAM credits and >0.3 Urban Greening Factor

Supporting Greening  
Government Commitments



# Supporting Greening Government Commitments

We are committed to supporting the UK Government's Greening Government Commitments (GGCs) and will continue to align with those environmental commitments. The GGCs set out how departments and agencies will take action to reduce their environmental impact.

We will continue to use the work we do to minimise our environmental impact and to support our clients with reporting on how they are meeting these commitments.

To enable us to do this credibly, we are developing an Environmental Management System (EMS) that is aligned with the internationally agreed standard, ISO14001. Our EMS will enable us to fulfil our compliance obligations, enhance our environmental performance and achieve our environmental objectives.

As our people have been, and will continue to be, a crucial part of achieving our goals, providing training is a priority for us. We have, therefore, become corporate members of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and an IEMA-registered Training Centre offering courses to ensure that our people can acquire sustainability expertise.

We currently have certified trainers and offer three courses aimed at embedding sustainability expertise at all levels and in all areas of the business. We have introduced continuous professional development for those working in sustainability, which can lead to the gold standard of Chartered Environmentalist.

These activities have come together to give us a strong foundation on which we can develop our environmental programmes to ensure that we are making an impact.

## In supporting the GGCs, our material environmental topics will be:



**Climate change mitigation**  
*Reducing our impact on the climate*



**Climate change adaptation**  
*Adjusting to a changing climate*



**Energy management**  
*Using energy wisely*



**Nature recovery**  
*Enhancing biodiversity*



**Waste reduction and circularity**  
*Maximising resource efficiency*



**Water management**  
*Only using what we need*

The built environment accounts for about 25% of the UK's total carbon footprint\*, and, as one of the largest landlords in the UK, we are committed to playing our part and reducing our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

We have committed to achieving a Net Zero carbon portfolio by 2050 and are already undertaking programmes that will help us reduce carbon across our portfolio.

### Our road to Net Zero

We launched our Net Zero programme last year. The programme focuses on delivering initiatives such as LED lighting upgrades, solar panel installations, decarbonisation of heat and HVAC upgrades in our portfolio.

We are already seeing benefits, with the programme having delivered over 2,400 tCO<sub>2</sub>e savings across Scope 1 (175 tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and 2 emissions (2,225 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). Our 90+ carbon saving schemes have resulted in £1.16m in cost savings.

### Setting 2030 standard for our buildings today

We have set standards for our new buildings in line with Government Buying Standards (GBS). GBS requires that all new buildings are gas fuel-free and achieve BREEAM Excellent, while refurbished buildings are required to achieve BREEAM Very Good.

We are placing our offices near public transport hubs and cycle stores, to help reduce carbon emissions, air pollution and support green travel.

We are also reviewing our property portfolio and strategically exiting from inefficient buildings.

We believe these initiatives will help us get to 50% of our Net Zero target by 2032.



### Our plans for the future

In the next 12 months, we will develop a more detailed roadmap of our journey to Net Zero by 2050.

Going forward, our work will involve:

- Reducing emissions in our property portfolio by requiring all our new build and major refurbishments to be Net Zero ready, strategically exiting from inefficient buildings, improving utilities efficiency and transitioning to green energy.
- Supporting our supply chain to minimise emissions. We undertake robust supply chain audits, require our suppliers to adhere to strict environmental standards, and are helping to educate them where necessary to support their Net Zero transitions. In addition, we are installing EV charging points for our client fleets, enabling their decarbonisation processes.
- Working with partners to ensure that we meet our new building and refurbishment commitment by communicating our NABERS or Government Buying Standards requirements, and embodied carbon and recycled materials targets.

We will continue to invest in interventions that enable us to support delivery of the UK Government's national target of Net Zero by 2050.

Source: Environmental Audit Committee

# Case study: Our Net Zero Programme

## The site

Titchfield House on the south coast of England is one of the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) primary sites, covering an internal area of 18,733m<sup>2</sup> and is due to be transferred into our portfolio.

## Our Approach

Working with the ONS's Facilities Management (FM) team and their FM provider Vinci, provided funding as part of the (formerly known as) BEIS Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for an 'early works' drive to kickstart the Net Zero initiative.

We provided the lighting specification and included guidance on lighting levels, colour rendition, power usage and controls. The project was supervised by ONS and the lighting was supplied by local manufacturer Wirefield Lighting.

The lighting is controlled via individual passive infrared and daylight sensors and is configured via Wirefield's Eye-Wi control system via an iPad, which allows lighting levels and light clusters to be established.

The project was completed within a two-month period with all works undertaken during normal working hours, taking advantage of the reduced occupancy levels caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Benefits

Net Zero benefits:

- 75% forecast reduction in energy consumption via installation of LED sensor lighting, with the longer life span of LEDs significantly reducing ongoing maintenance costs.
- Reduced carbon footprint and waste by choosing a supplier with a predominantly UK-based supply chain and delivering direct from factory to site.
- Supported the circular economy by returning 100% of packaging to Wirefield to recycle for future deliveries.

Other benefits:

- Supported Wirefield, a local employer.





As we are primarily a service provider to our clients, we mostly produce operational emissions. As part of our carbon reduction programme, we are committed to increasing the energy efficiency of our portfolio, as well as sourcing renewable energy for buildings where we are responsible for arranging electricity supply.

### Our current energy management approach

We re-lagged the pipework on the existing Whitehall District Heat Network to improve energy efficiency.

We require new buildings to be rated EPC A and refurbishments to be EPC B, and are currently in the process of certification of all existing properties to understand how we can best develop our portfolio.

### Creating an energy efficient portfolio for the future

Going forward, we are progressing District Heating in our Bristol site.

We are working to get portfolio assets to a minimum of EPC B by 2030.

### Our plans for 2023/24

We are currently installing energy meters across our portfolio, and we plan to create a 'utility bureau' to embed data-driven efficiencies in energy, gas and water usage.

We will baseline operational energy intensity across our portfolio, and use that baseline to set a target and roadmap for enhancing the energy efficiency of our buildings.

Project summary

Results/outcomes



#### Whitehall

Replaced lagging on 2km of pipework of the Whitehall boiler system in time for their switching on for use during winter

- 17.1% Scope 1 emissions reduction vs 2014 from phase 1
- Completion of pipework lagging and plate heat exchangers enable lowering of the system temperature



#### Croydon Hub

Replaced over 7,000 fluorescent lights with energy saving LED bulbs throughout the building

- 256 tCo2e of Scope 2 emissions savings expected annually
- £255,000 of utility savings expected each year



#### Cheylesmore House, Coventry

Replaced the lighting in the external car park and access ways, which was manually controlled and had poor lighting layouts

- 60% energy and carbon savings due to higher efficiency and automation
- Site occupants expressed approval of the safer system





## Waste reduction and circularity



The built environment sector in the UK consumes over 400 million tonnes of resources annually<sup>[2]</sup>.

### Our current approach

#### Reducing waste within our own buildings and operations

In our own office buildings, we are working to reduce unnecessary use of single use plastics by offering segregated recycling.

We have established pathways for the reuse and recycling of furniture and computer systems at the end of their use in our buildings. We continue to look for ways to ensure our people, clients and customers can make the right choices in waste management within our buildings.

Beyond our own operations, we already work with our partners and suppliers to embed circular economy practice into our operations and adopt a lifecycle management approach for our buildings.

#### Reducing waste generated in construction

We are proud to be supporting organisations in the built environment to minimise waste during construction, and plan to continue to engage suppliers on ways to reduce use of avoidable consumer single use plastics, consider alternative options available, and explore reuse of items within projects.

This will help us to further reduce the amount of waste that we produce both in construction and operation of our properties and limit the amount of waste that we send to landfill.

**50%**  
of construction material to be reused

**80%**  
of construction material to be designed to enable reuse

A significant part of our waste reduction and circularity approach involves retrofitting and refurbishing our buildings, to ensure that they do not dilapidate and become waste. This work also supports us to achieve our carbon reduction goals. So far, we have completed 90 retrofit projects.

Refurbishing an existing building is a different proposition to developing a new build. Working on older buildings means there is less control and investment to gain the same result as there isn't always clarity on how the building was constructed.

We have issued policies and guidance for Condition Survey and Lifecycle Asset Replacement Planning, to ensure we have a common approach for assessing the core conditions of our assets. This will enable us to develop retrofit programmes and avoid waste.

### Our plans for the future

In the future, we plan to use the data obtained from our Condition Surveys to inform our strategic investment decisions, including divestment. This will be in addition to aiding our current reporting and in-time maintenance approach.

## Case study:

- We developed the Government Workplace Design Guide to help the industry embed sustainability into the design, construction, retrofit and operation of buildings.
- It will be applied to all projects before they reach RIBA stage 3.
- The guide considers a number of established frameworks, such as BREEAM 2018, RICS and UKGBC.
- It outlines how environmental sustainability standards will be applied across our property portfolio.
- It is comprehensive in its scope, covering end-to-end governance processes, energy and water usage, waste, sourcing and biodiversity.



## Climate change adaptation

As the impacts of climate change are being realised, every organisation must actively adapt its operations to become resilient to those impacts. We are no different.

### Our current approach

We have started a preliminary Climate Change Adaptation Risk Assessment, which uses the Office for Government Property Framework. Development of the preliminary risk assessment will be continued during 2023/24, and will consider what action plans may be needed as part of a wider Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.



We work with developers to design new buildings to be climate resilient, where possible.

We have created flood damage remediation plans; requiring, for example that new builds have their main IT system on the first floor to reduce likelihood of damage during floods. We ensure that sustainable urban drainage is considered for all construction projects.

### Our plans for the future

In the next year, we will produce our Action Plan for implementing Climate Change Adaptations.



## Nature recovery

We have set a target to achieve a Urban Greening Factor target of 0.3 and 10% biodiversity net gain.

### Our current approach

To ensure that we minimise our negative impact on nature and support biodiversity recovery, we are adding a Biodiversity Annex to the Government Workplace Design Guide, in collaboration with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. This will be released in October 2023 and includes a review of best practice.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



13 CLIMATE ACTION



The Annex will set out how building will take urban greening into consideration, and help us to achieve our targets.

### Our plans for nature recovery

In 2023/24, we are committing to invest approximately £250,000 into Nature and Biodiversity pilot projects.

Our projects will include creating two new habitats for UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species based on recommendations from ecologists.



## Water management

We are committed to improving our water management capabilities, even though we are a primarily office-based organisation. Water management for us involves ensuring that water use in the building and operation of our offices is minimised.

### Managing water effectively

We are doing this by improving water efficiency, decreasing water intensity, and promoting water recycling during the operational use of our buildings.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



To implement this, we have rolled out various initiatives to increase water efficiency such as including flush control in all new buildings.

Water fittings including showers, taps, toilets and urinals in our buildings comply with the flow rates set by the Best Practice Government Buying Standards, Association for Environment Conscious Building (AECB) standards and DEFRA guidelines.

We will also ensure that rainwater collection is included in building design where it is operationally viable to do so.

Creating social value



# Creating social value

As a public sector organisation, we are aligned with the UK Government's Social Value approach, and as a result we consider the cost and benefits of our services beyond their financial impact to also look at social, economic, and wellbeing consequences of our decisions.

We play a key role in the Levelling Up agenda through the Government Hubs Programme with Local Authorities to support communities in regions across the UK.

We use the National themes, outcomes, and measures (TOMs) Framework, which is a measurement standard that has evolved to enable the Social Value Act. It is centred on the TOMs and we are taking steps as an organisation to integrate them into our own ways of working.

To ensure that we continue to create social value, our material topics will be:



## Social value

*Benefiting our people and communities*



## Wellbeing

*Enhancing the welfare of community*



## Equality, diversity and inclusion

*Making sure all are welcome*



## Human rights

*Ensuring justice in our operations*



## Workplace health and safety

*Ensuring the safety of our workforce*





## Social value



We define social value as the benefits that are realised for our employees, the local communities we operate in and the workforce of our clients as a result of our operations.

### Our approach to placemaking

With our national footprint, we are in a unique position to act as placemakers and positively impact our communities.

Our hubs have the potential to support direct and indirect job creation in construction and support services. We also encourage our partners to develop apprenticeships for community support.

### Our placemaking impact

We play a key role in the Government's Levelling Up agenda and Places for Growth initiative by sourcing space to support the relocation of Civil Service roles to the nations and regions of the UK. New hubs such as our Darlington Economic Campus are supporting regional economic development. In total we have supported the movement of 12,000 roles since 2018, and are on target to achieve 30,000 by 2030.

We collaborate with Local Authorities on placemaking, for example, our Peterborough hub within the Fletton Quays development, and we are currently working with over a dozen Local Authorities, as well as Network Rail and Homes England in other regions across the UK.

Our placemaking impact does not stop when construction ends. Our Government Hubs and building condition improvement works create ongoing construction and service jobs, helping economic recovery post the Covid-19 pandemic.

We manage historic buildings, including some of the most iconic heritage buildings in the UK, such as Whitehall, preserving the nation's heritage. As such we maintain a close relationship with Historic England.

We also recognise the importance of leveraging the social value that can be delivered through our supply chain, working closely with small and medium sized enterprises and encouraging our supply chain to invest in training and apprenticeships to support the next generation of talent.

### Our plans for the future

Our immediate next steps will include developing a comprehensive GPA Social Value Strategy and Vision, and establishing a Social Value Measurement Framework, with consistent and appropriate measures and targets set to evidence the contribution of each project, giving the ability to aggregate up to a portfolio and GPA-wide view of achievements.

In 2023, we will develop an internal tool aimed at quantifying the social value we create.

# Case study: Furniture donation scheme

## The Scheme

We have set up a partnership with charitable organisation Business 2 Schools (B2S) to trial a new initiative to support our Temple Quay House (TQH) site to remove surplus and redundant furniture.

B2S is a registered charity that supports schools throughout the UK by distributing office furniture and IT equipment donated by businesses and other organisations that no longer require them.

## Our approach

We cleared unwanted furniture from Bristol, TQH prior to refurbishment.

With the majority of the furniture in very good condition, the team created the pilot scheme to support B2S' initiative, while ensuring all items met with an environmentally friendly and sustainable solution.

So far, the excess furniture has been donated to 13 Schools with the remaining furniture being stored in B2S's Chichester warehouse for other schools to access free of charge.

In addition to this, B2S were able to support a Ukrainian Refugee family who have recently secured their own home after initially being placed with a 'host' family. The family, who have a daughter with significant learning needs have received a number of items including a table, chairs, two desks and some pedestals.

## Benefits

By working with B2S we;

Repurposed 100% of the surplus furniture, saved c. 30 tonnes of waste going to landfill and more than 45+ tonnes of Carbon emissions from the recycling process.

Alongside the environmental and social value benefits, we have also saved significant costs – collaborating with B2S has saved circa £25,000 in recycling costs, keeping money in the public purse.





The wellbeing of our colleagues is a key element of our social strategy.

**Our approach to supporting our people's wellbeing**

In order to help staff to maintain their work/life balance, we are implementing a flexible working policy which enables people to work from wherever they are most productive. We are also supporting our clients to do this through our smarter working programme.

Alongside this, we have developed a stringent anti-bullying and harassment policy, which has been rolled out to ensure that all of our people feel safe at work.

**Wellbeing in our buildings**

We consider wellbeing to also include the impact that we have on communities through development of new workplaces and contracts awarded to suppliers.

We currently provide wellbeing rooms and other amenities that ensure that our people have space in our offices to cater to their wellbeing.

**Our plans for the future**

In 2023, we will carry out an in depth review of the data from our surveys to identify all the things that are working well so that we can learn from and replicate them elsewhere. We will also find out where we can make improvements to further enhance the workplace experience for our colleagues and customers.



**Leesman+ Certified**

Our 23 Stephenson Street office in Birmingham has achieved Leesman+ certification with a score that rates it as the best employee workplace experience in the UK's public sector.

Leesman+ certified buildings create an elevated benchmark, and provide valuable insights into the quality of features, services and infrastructure that matter the most to the people who use the building.





We want to foster an environment that enables diverse talents to thrive.

We want to be a workplace where everyone, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, health, socio-economic background or who they are or what they do for the organisation, can succeed and feel empowered.

Our recruitment and management of staff has always sought to create an inclusive culture in which diversity is fully valued and social mobility is enabled.

### Our current approach

Every year, we promote a ‘Speak Up’ campaign to signal to our people that we are here to listen and take action.

In 2021, we published our first gender pay gap report and re-enforced our commitment to achieving gender parity by designing our Gender Pay Gap Action Plan to address pay issues identified. Despite our reporting showing that we are in a stronger position than the wider property sector average, we are committed to continuous improvement.

We launched our Women’s Network in March 2022, aimed at supporting women to develop the skills, confidence and sponsorship needed to advance their careers.

### Assessing diversity, equality and inclusion in our organisation

As part of our ongoing commitments to ED&I, we commissioned talent advisory firm Green Park Ltd to carry out an independent Culture & Inclusion review (CARE Audit) across the organisation.

Green Park engaged with staff across all business areas and seniority levels via one-to-one interviews, focus groups and a bespoke all-staff survey, using a framework of twenty cultural indicators. Green Park’s report, which includes recommendations and key actions to drive impact, forms a key element of our upcoming ED&I strategy and action plan.

We have also engaged with Real Estate Balance, a membership organisation that supports ED&I in the property industry.

### Our work on ED&I extends beyond our people

We embed inclusive and accessible standards into our workplace design to ensure that the buildings and spaces that we are developing can be used by a diverse group of people.

We have created reflection rooms in our buildings and rooms dedicated to performing ablution. This has been recognised in our receiving the Inclusive Environments Recognition at organisational level by the Construction Industry Council (CIC).

### Our targets and goals

We plan to continue building on this work, with the launch of our ED&I strategy and action plan later in 2023.

We also strive for better representation at senior levels of our organisation. Our ambition is to be industry leaders with an integrated approach to ED&I, leading on best practice and taking significant steps to increase under represented groups.



## Human rights

Upholding the human rights of people involved in our own operations and throughout our supply chain is at the heart of our organisational values.

As such, we seek to have the highest standard of ethics and ensure that no human rights violations (such as modern slavery, forced labour or child labour) occur within our organisation or supply chain.



### Our approach to maintaining human rights

We take a risk-based approach to managing human rights within our business and supply chain.

We require all of our suppliers to carry out right to work checks on their employees to reduce modern slavery risks.

Going forward, we will continue to ensure that our processes and governance are effective, relevant, and robust.



### Case study: Supply chain checks

We work with multiple suppliers and our stringent processes have been successful in flagging potential human rights issues in the supply chain.

We quickly took action and as a result, we have paused working with a solar panel provider while investigations are completed.



## Workplace health and safety

We take the health, safety and wellbeing of our people seriously. 41% of government offices are in our portfolio; this represents about 800,000m2 that caters to over 100,000 civil servants. The GPA Health and Safety Committee is responsible for monitoring safety of our buildings for our people and clients.

### How we manage workplace health and safety today

We have established a Health and Safety Management System to identify and manage health and safety issues.

We have a team of mental health first aiders, with an additional 16 being trained, and a mental health working group has



been established to help direct how we handle our ongoing management of mental health issues.

We monitor safety against the RIDDOR framework and report outcomes on a monthly basis to the Executive Committee. In the last two years, there have been no incidents to report to the committee.

### Our plans for the future

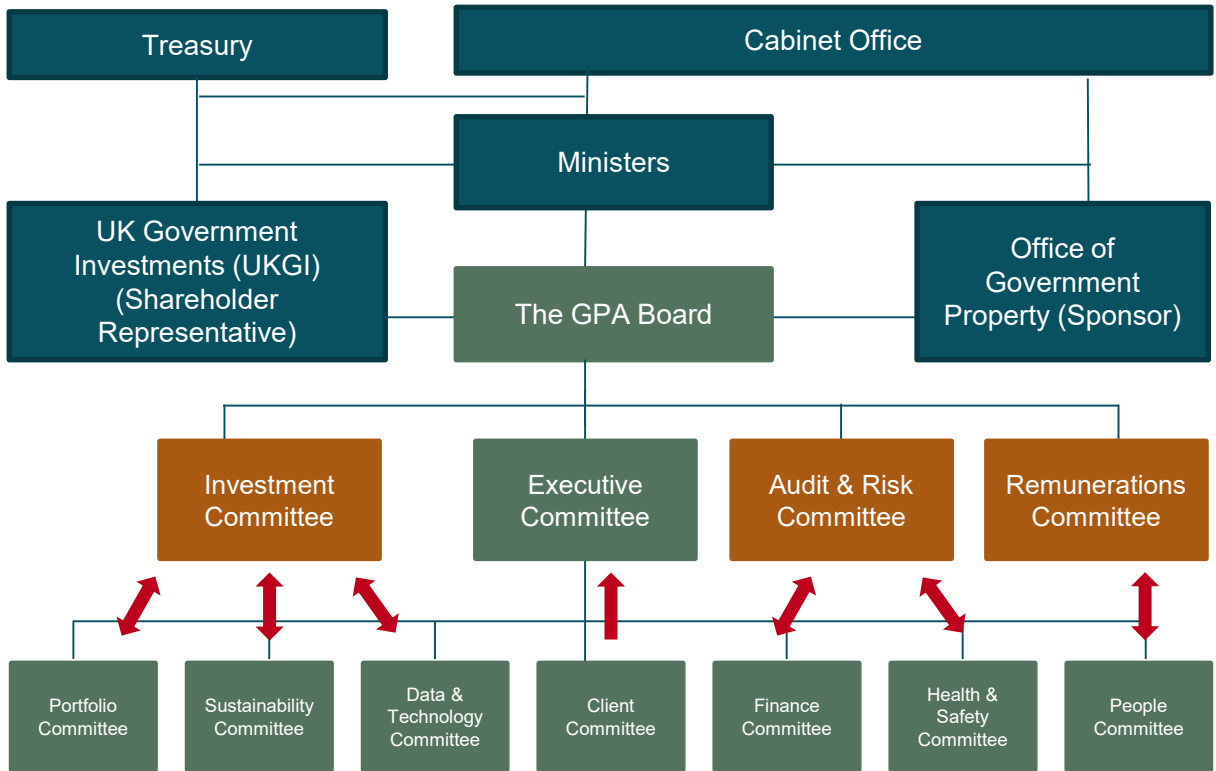
In the coming years we will continue to invest in improving the safety and comfort of the buildings in our portfolio, including investigating how we can create healthier office environments such as better indoor air quality.

# Governance





As a Government organisation, we are required to have robust and transparent governance structures in place, which are illustrated below:



Our work on ESG is underpinned by the highest ethical standards and a strong governance structure that ensures that ESG issues are appropriately managed across our business.

Ultimate responsibility for ESG is with our Chief Executive Officer, Steven Boyd, and the Executive Committee.

Our Sustainability Committee, which reports directly into our Executive Committee, is responsible for setting our ESG ambition and the monitoring and execution of ESG related projects. The committee comprises representatives from our clients, strategic delivery partners, independent experts and functional leads from within the GPA.

**The committee is chaired by Clive Anderson, Director of Capital Projects. The committee does the following:**

- Informs the Executive Committee and senior management on environmental and sustainability policy, structure and communications matters,
- Recommends necessary actions to minimise the environmental and social impact of acquiring and operating the buildings in our portfolio, and
- Leads decisions on implementation of initiatives, resources, budgets and escalations relating to our Sustainability Plan.

To ensure that ESG is embedded across our business operations, our material governance topics will be:



**Sustainable procurement**  
*Becoming resilient*



**Business ethics and compliance**  
*Being transparent and accountable*



**Data security**  
*Keeping our data safe*



## Sustainable procurement

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Our supply chain is the lifeline of our business. We currently spend approximately £560 million with third-party suppliers in support of managing our organisation.

We are committed to minimising risks within our supply chain and maximising opportunities with our suppliers and partners.

### Suppliers used for our business

As such, we require that social value accounts for at least 15% of the scoring of all commercial procurement tenders. This ensures that social value is embedded into every competitively awarded contract.

We currently pay at least minimum wage to our suppliers and are working towards a Living Wage standard across our supply chain. We are also committed to the Government's Prompt Payment Code.

### Supply chain management for our property portfolio

We have produced a comprehensive, detailed guide on procurement, which includes processes and conditions for the sourcing of the materials used in construction as well as information on our commitment to prompt supplier payment.

Our sustainable procurement approach extends to the landlords that we work with. We consider and integrate ESG topics into the leases that we sign.

In addition to this, we have a Strategic Supplier Relationship Management system, which allows us to regularly monitor ESG KPIs of our top-tier strategic suppliers. This enables us to identify where ESG interventions might be required with our key suppliers, as well as enable us to respond to their needs effectively and ensure that we develop and maintain strong relationships.

### Our targets and goals

Going forward, our work will involve:

Providing training on ESG to our commercial teams; to enable them to identify and minimise risks to our business

Assessing the ESG risks with our supply chain; so a programme of support for our suppliers can be designed, where feasible

Paying suppliers more fairly; to better support their employees throughout our supply chain, we are paying a Living Wage beyond minimum wage requirements



Our definition of business ethics and compliance covers the management of professional ethics, such as taxation, bribery and corruption, anti-competitive practices and process we use to ensure that we as an organisation comply with regulations.

### **Our approach to ensuring business ethics and compliance**

In alignment with the Managing Public Money guidance, issued by the Government and guidance issued by the Counter Fraud Function, we have a suite of processes and policies in place to ensure effective and transparent use of resources.

Our whistle-blower policy empowers our people who might feel that they have witnessed inappropriate activity to come forward.

We regularly issue standard quarterly reports to our clients, which include sustainability updates, illustrating our commitment to maintaining open and

honest communication channels with our stakeholders.

In addition, we publish our Annual Reports and Accounts, in line with the Government Financial Reporting Manual, to continue to foster transparency.

Our approach to managing ESG risk aligns with the risk appetite set out by our Board on an annual basis.

### **Continuous improvement**

We are committed to maintaining a culture of continuous improvement. As such, we will be assessing the options available to us to improve access to data within our organisation and outside of it. This report, which will be updated annually, is a step in that direction.

We will also work to ensure that data is utilised strategically in our investment decision-making process.





# Data security



Data security is a critical aspect in an increasingly digital world.

We have implemented a data security strategy and introduced policies to manage risks related to collection, use and storage of sensitive, confidential, and proprietary customer or user data. Our system is aligned with UK GDPR.

Our Chief Security Officer leads our security strategies and ensures the safety and security of our digital environment, and, as a result, the safety of our people, clients, assets and the civil servants who use our workplaces.

This work is supported by an in-house team that manages data and maintains its integrity.

We have publicly issued an external privacy notice to increase transparency with our stakeholders with respect to handling of their data, their rights regarding the same and a grievance redressal mechanism in case of any breach.

**Our plans for the future**

To ensure ongoing data security, we will conduct a data risk assessment and make contingency plans to minimise those risks.



## Training our people



Training our people to perform their roles successfully is key to everything that we do. Our ability to deliver products and services for our clients, as well as deliver on our commitments, are predicated on the development of our people.

We recognise that our people are a key enabler to deliver our ESG projects, as such we are building our internal sustainability capability and creating an environment where we can have joined-up working that results in our desired outcomes.

We became corporate members of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and were accredited to provide IEMA-certified training to our people.

Since October 2022, we have run monthly training in 'Environmental Sustainability Skills for the Workforce'. From April 2023, we will offer 'Environmental Sustainability Skills for Managers' to our senior leaders, 'Certificate in Environmental Management' and 'Leading with Environmental Sustainability' courses to specialist role-holders and senior leaders.

We believe our commitment to providing our people with the right skills to succeed at work will allow us to continue to be an attractive employer.



## Financial Stewardship

Financial stewardship underpins our activities. Effective management of our resources is fundamental to our ability to deliver for our clients and deliver our ESG commitments.

We are committed to ensuring that we have a robust audit trail for our activities and purchases, and clear guidance as to what our processes should be when handling public funds.

This is why we have developed our governance structures which adhere strictly to the Managing Public Money guidance and the Counter Fraud Function guidance, and are going above and beyond to assure our stakeholders that their resources are in safe hands.

We are also committed to adopting Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) requirements in line with the timescales set out for the Civil Service.

### Going beyond financial impact

As part of ensuring we deliver solutions which represent value for money, we are increasingly looking beyond the purely financial benefits of our projects, and aiming to maximise opportunities for delivering ESG benefits in parallel.

We are doing this through the use of our 'Social Value Model', which is already mandated by our Commercial team.

Supplier proposals and responses are assessed against suitable Model Award Criteria (MAC) for their ability to deliver a set of strategic themes and policy outcomes to award 10-15% weighting on the social value delivery.

The Social Value Model provides a consistent approach for government departments and suppliers.

It helps streamline and standardise the procurement process.

With these cornerstones in place, we are confident that we will be able to strengthen the value of buildings in our portfolio, exceed the expectations of our current and future stakeholders and achieve our ambition to be ESG leaders.



## Our performance

Achieving our ESG ambition will require us to leverage the large amounts of data at our disposal, and we acknowledge there is even more scope for development in this area in the future.

Increased data availability will enable us, and our clients, to better understand our ESG impact and ensure that our systems are optimised at all times. The ultimate aim is to provide performance data of all assets in order to understand the intricate evidence gained, and demonstrate the benefits and any shortcomings on which to base future forecasting. This will in turn help planning and gain all-round buy-in. In addition, it will mean a high level of self-service so that clients can be in control of their own data needs.

Table 1 below shows the greenhouse gas emissions for our own operations, it does not include the portfolio we manage. The data only includes those in scope for reporting and has been extrapolated from full building data based on estimates of space occupied. Estimates of data have been applied where not available.

**Table 1**

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions		2021-22	2022-23	Estimated Spend £
Non-financial indicators (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Total Gross Scope 1 (Direct) GHG emissions	22.20	19.69	
	Total Gross Scope 2 (Energy indirect) emissions	36.38	37.39	
	Total Gross Scope 3 (excluding Official business travel for 22/23*) emissions	25.27	3.42	
	<b>Total emissions – Scope 1, 2 &amp; 3</b>	<b>83.85</b>	<b>53.67</b>	
Non-financial indicators (MWh)	Electricity: non-renewable	171.34	193.66	25,026
	Electricity: renewable	-	-	-
	Gas	121.20	70.05	3,533
	Gas oil	-	-	-

# Our performance

**Table 1**

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions		2021-22	2022-23	Estimated Spend £	
Non-financial indicators (MWh)	Steam	-	-	-	
	Diesel	-	-	-	
	Total energy	<b>292.54</b>	<b>263.71</b>	-	
ULEVs		2021-22	2022-23	Estimated Spend £	
Non-financial indicators – Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs)	Total fleet (and non-fleet within scope of ULEV reporting)	1			
	Percentage of fleet and qualifying non-fleet that are ULEV)	Vehicle details not known			
Waste		2021-22	2022-23	Estimated Spend £	
Non-financial indicators (tonnes)	Non-hazardous waste	Landfill	0.29	0.02	
		Reused/ recycled	3.02	7.46	
		Composted (food)	0.15	0.14	
	ICT waste	Reused	-	-	
		Recycled	-	-	
	Incinerated with energy from waste	1.01	0.82		
Waste		2021-22	2022-23	Estimated Spend £	
Non-financial indicators (MWh)	Total waste (tonnes)	<b>4.48</b>	<b>8.44</b>		
Water		2021-22	2022-23	Estimated Spend £	
Non-financial indicators (m3)	Total water consumption (m3)	330.12	397.00	677.00	

# Our performance

## Table 1 – Assumptions/Notes

### \*Assumptions/ Notes

- Data based on the GPA's main office locations and only including those in scope for reporting. Data has been extrapolated from full building data and is based on estimates of space occupied.
- Estimates of data have been applied where not available.
- Official business travel and paper use has not been included as this forms part of the Cabinet Office data return.
- 2021/22 data included business travel and also an additional building which has now been excluded as it is reported by another Government department. This means 2021/22 and 2022/23 data cannot be fully compared to each other.
- Scope 3 includes emissions from distribution losses from electricity.
- Full figures for utility costs are not available. Figures shown for entries on ledger. Figures for waste are not available.





## Our next steps

In the next year, we will continue to build on our ESG work. Our efforts will be focused on progressing the following areas:

### **Update our ESG KPIs**

We will update the KPIs and targets which we measure under each material topic. These KPIs will enable us to measure our progress against our goals and help to identify performance gaps that could slow or prevent us achieving our ambition.

### **Measure our baseline impact across material topics**

We will collect quantitative and qualitative data to determine the baseline/current state impact of our operations against each of the material topics identified. This baseline will be critical for updating our ESG targets and key performance indicators (KPIs), and we will develop these in alignment with industry benchmarking standards such as those from the Better Buildings Partnership.

### **Deliver our ESG strategy and develop a clear roadmap for improvement**

We will continue refining our ESG strategy in line with our strategic objectives, relevant ESG regulations and reporting standards. We will develop clear roadmaps for how we will achieve our ESG goals.

### **Build our internal ESG capability**

We will continue to create an environment where all our people are upskilled on ESG through our training programme, which is certified by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.



Government  
Property  
Agency



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