

Cabinet Office (CO)

Key Statistics

- **total estate running cost** (annual) = £27.7 million
- **floorspace** (office) = 35,100 sq.m
- **staff number** (headcount) = 6000+
- **locations** = London + 13 other locations (UK)

Our Business

The Cabinet Office is a ministerial department supported by two agencies and 18 public bodies. Over this parliamentary period we will manage changes arising from the UK's exit from the EU; manage and respond to security threats, including cyber, and facilitate cross-government efficiencies. Our functional model continues to be a key element of the work, providing a structure for us to work with departments across government on achieving efficiencies and delivering improved public services.

The Cabinet Office is the government's corporate centre, coordinating policy and promoting efficiency and reform. Our purpose is to make government greater than the sum of its parts by providing challenge, support and expertise. We have three strategic objectives, reflecting our continued shift towards the role of a delivery department:

1. to maintain the integrity of the Union, coordinate the security of the realm and sustain a flourishing democracy;
2. to support the design and implementation of HM Government's policies and the Prime Minister's priorities; and
3. to ensure the delivery of the finest public services by attracting and developing the best public servants and improving the efficiency of government

The development of the functional model and the delivery of services at the centre of government represents a new, broader set of responsibilities for the department. To respond, we must fundamentally change our shape and manage the ongoing impact of this on the space we occupy¹.

Our Estate

The Cabinet Office has a relatively small property estate compared to other government departments, occupying approximately 35,100 sq.m of office space, with an associated annual running cost in 2018/19 of £27.7 million (before internal recharges and recovery of income from external bodies of £6.9 million).

Our portfolio of locations is London (Whitehall)-centric but with a small, but growing, proportion of personnel dispersed across the UK, mainly located within other government department's offices.

The headcount of the Cabinet Office has doubled to 6,000 during 2017/18 largely by assimilating other functions such as Civil Service HR and 1500 fast streamers deployed to other government departments. Our headcount is projected to grow further during 2018 to over 7,000, peaking in 2021/22. This will inevitably place further demands on our estate

¹ Further information available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-single-departmental-plan/cabinet-office-single-departmental-plan--2>

requiring careful planning and additional commitments to new office space. Our policy, however, is not to make any additional long-term commitments to accommodation in the Whitehall area and to commit to reduce accommodation in this location.

Our aim is to deliver an office estate that is flexible and able to meet changing demand. As we continue to work smarter and more flexibly with better technology and continual changes to organisational design, the requirement for desks, meeting facilities and working space continues to alter and change.

Over the period to 2023 we will be looking to progressively move some of our London-based administrative operations into Government Hubs, enabling staff to work more collaboratively together across all the departmental locations, in modern working environments, with more efficient use of space and reduced costs. Our smart working policy is committed to improving the wellbeing of our staff, through enhancing the work-life balance, and the improving engagement and productivity of our people - our most valuable assets. As a result, we hope to create an attractive organisation that allows us to access and retain the talent needed to ensure we deliver our strategic objectives for the country.

In the short term, in preparation for leaving the European Union, many jobs are likely to be repatriated from Brussels and new regulatory organisations will be created. The Cabinet Office must respond to these demands, whilst the nature of our other work often requires us to find space quickly for new initiatives, responding to changing political events and priorities, such as the Grenfell Inquiry team, or the Geospatial Commission currently being established.

We will, where we are able, be involved in the transformation of the government property agenda, including the continuing reduction of the Whitehall estate. By 2024 we expect to exit our existing building in Norwich by relocation to a modern 'mini Government Hub'. We shall continue to explore opportunities to rationalise further by moving both London and regionally-based personnel into new Government Hub locations as they become available.

Our Capability

All of our property holdings have been transferred to the Government Property Agency (GPA), established on 1 April 2018, and are now managed directly by the GPA. We now have Terms of Occupation agreements in place for most locations.

With the transfer of our general purpose assets to the GPA we will place particular emphasis on supporting the continued development of our intelligent client function to ensure that our business needs are anticipated, captured and articulated clearly so that they can be managed effectively by the Agency. Over this parliamentary period we aim to continue this development of our capability to provide the department with a strategic, high performing real estate function, aligned to our business, and delivering operational excellence.