



The Benefits of Shared Workspace

It is recognised shared workspace is an important part of making Scotland's public sector estate as efficient and effective as possible. Co-location can directly assist organisations improve service delivery whilst also acting as an enabler for wider positive social impact and outcomes.

This assumes a robust options appraisal has been undertaken to ensure the shared space meets operational, financial, and net zero criteria, *and* uses the right building in the right location; an assessment informed by objectives such as maximising the impact on place and inclusive growth.

This summary focusses on the main benefits of shared workspace and provides examples of what could be achieved. We hope this will help inform and shape project briefs and business cases which can highlight these benefits as strong reasons to co-locate.

11-15 Thistle Street, Edinburgh, EH2 1DF | www.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk

Iain Wardrop | 07711 373 619 | Iain.wardrop@scottishfuturestrust.org.uk

Ruth Macdonald | 07885 461 144 | Ruth.macdonald@scottishfuturestrust.org.uk

Shared Workspace Benefits

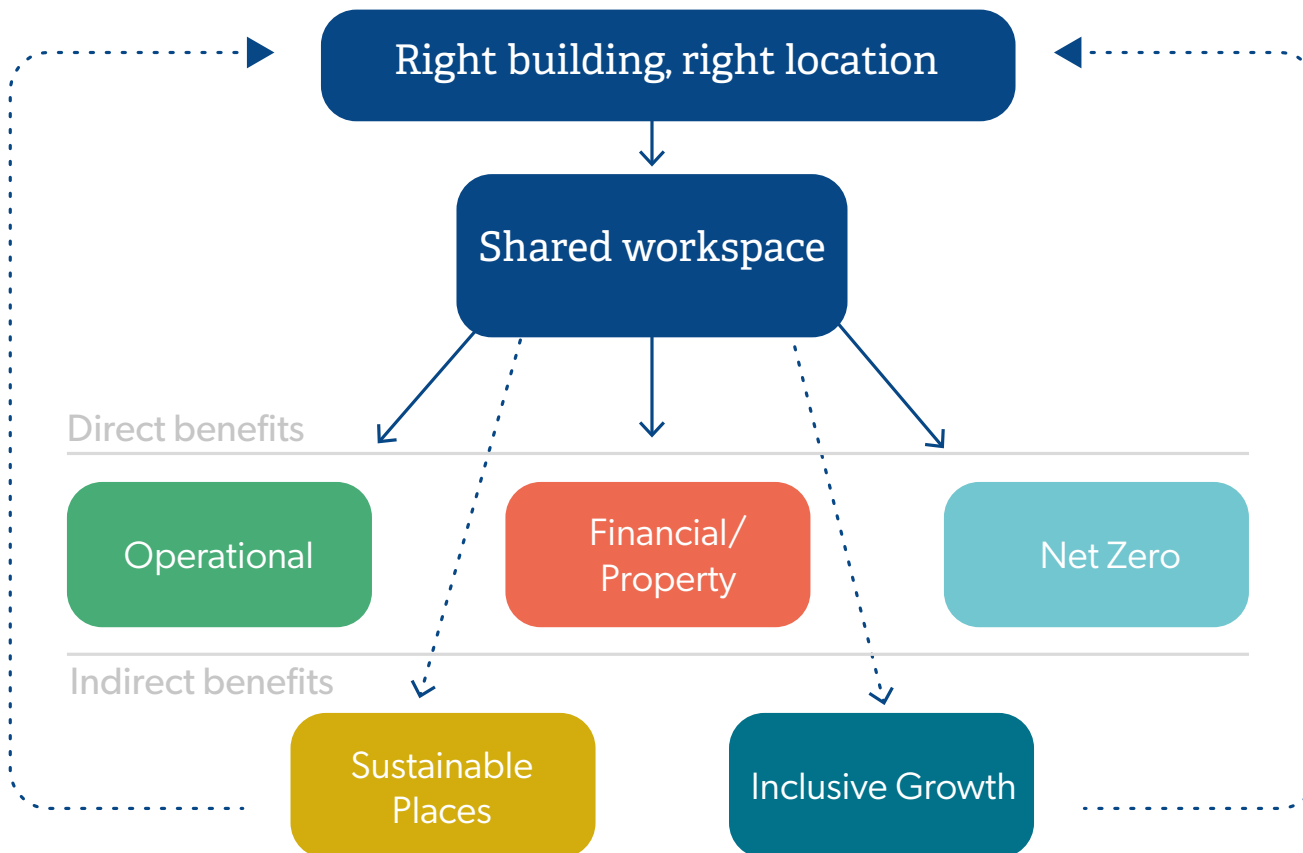
These benefits – which are grouped into *direct* and *indirect* below – are quantifiable so can inform the identification and development of measurable project objectives:

Where these benefits are important to organisations, adopting a shared approach can be particularly useful.

These benefits are integral to Scottish Government policy and guidance concerned with emphasising the crucial links between effective service delivery (**operational benefits**), efficient assets (**financial and property benefits**), and cutting carbon emissions (**net zero benefits**) including:

- **A National Mission with Local Impact: Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-22 to 2025-26**
- **A Guide to Property Asset Strategy in the Scottish Public Sector**
- **Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard**

Some of these benefits are opportunities – potential benefits – so they may not happen by default when sharing occurs. Agreeing common objectives and benefits with partners at the outset of a potential co-location, and then careful planning, monitoring, and resource allocation during project development, is required to realise them.



Operational

Sharing workspace can help occupiers improve service delivery and provide operational benefits including:

Improved Service Delivery



Sharing space can smooth the way for adoption of a collaborative whole system approach to enabling more efficient and effective service delivery.

- Strategically it can support public sector wide whole systems change, e.g. joint capital planning, co-produced business cases, and joint procurement.
- At project level it can support more effective and efficient ways of delivering sector specific and/or local services, e.g. 'shortening the customer journey through integrated service hubs'.

Ambitious Outcomes



Co-locating with sector specific or local partners can enable closer working relationships and drive ambitious shared outcomes. This could lead to better collective outcomes than perhaps a single organisation approach could deliver.

- The sum of the co-located sector specific and/or local partners' outcomes are greater than if they were delivered individually and might be realised faster than if not co-located.



Internal Corporate Change



Changing where an organisation operates from, or who it shares space with, can be a catalyst for business system and process

changes that might not have otherwise happened.

- Sharing can be a prompt to review and reassess an organisation's own structures, for example practices and policies around flexible and smarter working.

Innovation



Sharing space can create opportunities for public bodies to learn from each other and undertake joint thinking on future service delivery and corporate functions.

- Learn lessons from others to improve processes, culture, and behaviours.
- Opportunity to undertake joint strategic thinking on corporate functions, e.g. sharing of specialist resources across organisational boundaries like facilities management, procurement, and education and training.

Financial/ Property

Co-location can support occupiers realise financial and property benefits including:

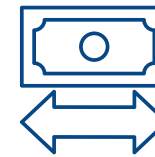
Optimal Size



Sharing can help bodies arrive at a right sized, more fit for purpose estate. It can maximise utilisation, make better use of existing buildings, and release surplus properties to be sold/repurposed.

- A right sized, flexible estate is more adaptable to future change.
- A fit for purpose shared estate avoids/reduces the need for future investment across multiple partner portfolios.
- Disposal of surplus assets may generate capital receipts.

Shared Costs



Co-location enables occupiers to share the costs of operating and maintaining buildings, helping to offset ownership costs.

- Shared annual running costs, e.g. business rates, utilities, and facilities management.
- Opportunity to share longer-term capital costs/investment, e.g. expenditure on transition to net zero construction work.

Efficient Expenditure



Occupying a shared modern estate can help each organisation operate as efficiently as possible.

- Frees up scarce financial resources for use elsewhere, for example to improve front line service delivery.
- Opportunity to promote innovative and equitable charging models.
- Focus spend to retained, better assets.
- Reduced annual property running costs associated with a smaller estate with better quality buildings.
- Reduced estate management resource needed to run a smaller, shared portfolio.
- A more streamlined advisory supply chain, e.g. fewer contractors and technical advisors required.



Net Zero

Sharing can allow occupiers to take a joint approach to transitioning their estates to net zero emissions and wider environmental sustainability including:

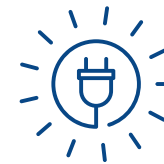
Net Zero Economy Outcomes



Sharing can allow organisations to adopt a collaborative, evidence-based approach with partners to identify projects which will lead to a smaller, leaner, greener public estate.

- Agreeing where to co-locate can impact on people's need to travel and the suitability of its facilities to support active travel and wellbeing.
- A reduced number of more carbon efficient buildings helps decrease public sector estate carbon emissions.

Operational Energy



Sharing workspace can reduce overall energy use and support best practice to minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

- Reduced demand overall and opportunity to meet needs more efficiently.
- Co-location projects could be the catalyst for excluding energy sources that cause direct greenhouse gas emissions from heating and hot water provision, or optimising onsite renewable sources.

Construction Embodied Carbon



Co-locating, especially when in existing buildings, can avoid the need for new build thus minimising the creation of new construction embodied carbon. However where new buildings or major refurbishments are required, a multi-partner approach to funding, developing, and occupation can lead to:

- Opportunities to apply waste minimisation best practice and circular economy principles at the co-location project's design and delivery stages.
- Scope to quantify the project's 'Cradle-to-Construction' embodied carbon and demonstrate it is less than if a separate buildings approach continued.
- Scope to specify additional materials of low embodied carbon, e.g. thermal insulation, which will benefit in-use operational performance.

Wider Environmental



Sharing can help organisations work towards other net zero objectives including joint EV infrastructure, whole life cost assessments, indoor environmental quality, and other wider environmental aspects.

- Opportunities to share the cost of installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- As costs are shared, co-location may encourage more awareness of whole life assessment and measuring and data gathering.
- Improve the experience for building users through a focus on improving comfort conditions, e.g. air quality and availability of natural lighting.
- Consider green infrastructure, biodiversity, landscaping, climate change adaption and resilience, health and wellbeing and active travel.

Indirect Benefits

Shared workspace can also indirectly support placemaking and help inclusive growth:

Sustainable Places

Supporting more sustainable places through promotion of the principles and recommendations enshrined in the **Christie Commission**, the **Place Standard tool**, and the **Place Guide**.



Improved Collaboration



Sharing can support a more joined-up, collaborative, and participative approach to services, land and buildings, across all sectors within a place, enabling better outcomes for everyone and increased opportunities for people and communities.

Place-based Outcomes



A well located, shared building can improve an area's physical, economic, and social elements leading to better place outcomes. Sharing can also help organisations maximise the impact of investment across the public sector, and find alternative uses for surplus assets.

Inclusive Growth

Sharing can help contribute to inclusive growth objectives like the increased wellbeing of citizens as set out in **Measuring and Valuing Inclusive Growth**.

Economic Opportunities



Sharing buildings can promote prosperity and a fairer distribution of wealth through helping people have equal access to jobs and workplaces in as many areas of Scotland as possible.

Wellbeing and Welfare



Sharing can enhance staff wellbeing and welfare through public bodies being more able to offer good quality, fit for purpose workplaces across Scotland. This can contribute to improving productivity.