

# Audit Scotland

Leases expiring in late 2015 for both buildings presented Audit Scotland with the opportunity to re-assess its office requirement to align with future business requirements and support its overall vision in becoming a 'world class organisation'.

Audit Scotland's relocation to a new Edinburgh address in late 2015 reflects a major organisational change supporting the ambition to become an exemplar auditing authority. Audit Scotland previously operated from two separate offices on George Street, Edinburgh. The nature of these more traditional style buildings meant that the work environment was less than ideal for collaboration and 'one team' working.

The move would also deliver a 25% reduction in floor space and revenue savings of around £300,000 per annum.



Following an engagement exercise across the business led by HAA Design, staff workstyles were identified which in turn informed the development of a space budget for the future office requirement. With no suitable office space available across the public sector estate in Edinburgh at that time, a search was undertaken of the commercial office market. Following a short listing and negotiation process, the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of 102 West Port was selected as the preferred option for the new office. Audit Scotland relocated in late 2015.

*'SFT helped us to explore the link between office space and using it to support cultural and organisational shift. This in turn allowed us to design an office based on agile principles and in the process reducing our space requirement and costs.'*  
– Diane McGiffen, Chief Operating Officer, Audit Scotland

The design and layout of the new office provides all staff with an open plan environment with desks being shared between staff. The office has a wide variety of different work settings, ranging from touch down spaces, study booths, huddle spots, a conference suite and a 'business lounge' – an informal work area for both visitors and staff designed in a modern informal style.

The move to a new office was not merely a process of space rationalisation. The adoption of more 'agile working' principles was seen as an active part of supporting cultural and organisational change. This shift supports the organisation's intention to promote transparency and quality in public sector audit to support best value in public bodies.



Central to the success of the project was fully understanding the structure of the organisation in order to fully appreciate how teams work and interconnect. Giving individuals an input to the design of their workplace to imagine different ways of working was an essential part of the project from the outset.

In addition to the headline savings, the new office delivers improved facilities management, a 33% reduction in desking with a reduction in space allocation to 7.5 square metres per person and addresses issues from working across two sites. Other benefits include increased visibility of leadership and increased collaboration, communication and interaction between staff.

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