

SCOTTISH
FUTURES
TRUST

New Frontiers for Smarter Working Work and Workplace post COVID-19

MARCH 2021



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Introduction

01

The impact of the COVID-19 work from home situation has created the biggest change opportunity for office based work that we have experienced in recent times. Many organisations had already delivered some form of smarter working, enabling their people to work remotely, but very few had crossed the line to deliver a full distributed model. As of 23 March 2020 many organisations moved from single office solutions to many thousands of ‘workplaces’ distributed across the country virtually overnight.

This period of ‘enforced’ home working has shown us that it is possible for the majority of office-based roles to be delivered from home and this has encouraged the thinking to change around how and where work is delivered.

For some people, the experience has been very positive, allowing them to regain valuable time taken up by a long commute. They have been able to spend more time with their family and friends and in their local communities. For others it has been a challenging experience as they grapple with adapting to this ‘temporary normal’, finding suitable space to work, managing family commitments, dealing with mental health issues, etc. - all this while trying to gain new skills and adapt to new virtual technology.

Opportunities for the future;

- Employees are looking to capitalise on this opportunity to help manage their own work life balance and the complex mix of family and work pressures that make up their lives
- Employers are seeing opportunities arising from using ‘the workplace’ as a tool for supporting organisational culture via a potentially smaller, or at least different, office footprint that capitalises on using a more distributed model to support delivery of their organisation’s outcomes

As we look towards a future beyond COVID-19, there is an opportunity to redefine the way we work and to re-imagine the purpose of the office. The aim would be to make it less about presence and more about a place, to deliver real connection within and across an organisation and to create places that people ‘want’ to come to.

Even if only a proportion of the 88% of people wishing to change the time they spend in the office actually do so, we have a real opportunity to reshape the size, function and type of workspace we need for the future. If we consider the experiences that people have had around working locally, both positive and negative, we can start to explore how we expand on this unique opportunity.

Exploring a people focussed cross sector network of choice delivered in rural, sub-urban and urban locations could be the answer to creating places that support work and wellbeing in its widest sense.

Practical issues such as cost and operational models would need to be explored to ensure viability and it will be easier for some organisations than others to deliver their individual solutions. In addition, public sector organisations will require to undertake social, economic and environmental analysis to understand the impacts at a ‘place’ level before proceeding with potential initiatives to avoid any unintended consequences.

This potential new network could provide for near home working, social connection and the delivery of much needed help for local economies as people live and work locally. To move in this direction organisations have to understand the purpose of their offices and the elements that support it around leadership, behaviours, culture and working practices.

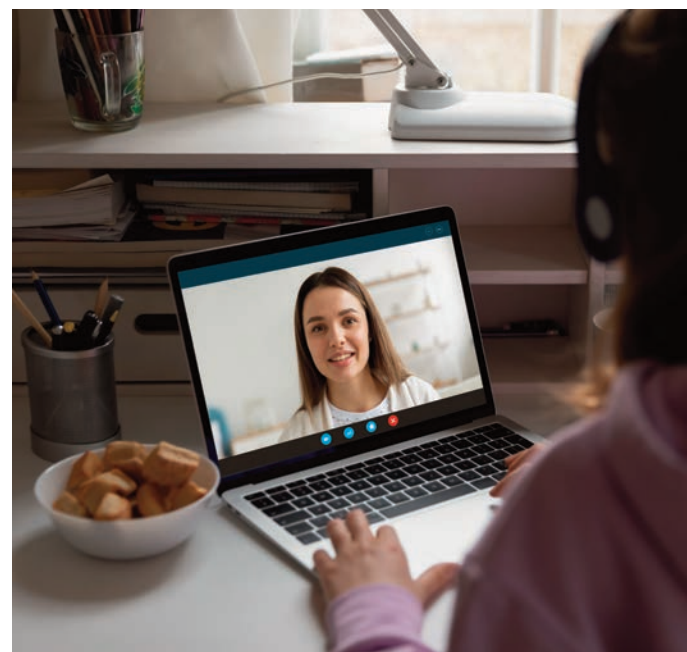
If we can develop work places, work practices and work cultures that support people, activity based working, autonomy and choice that would be a positive first step. If we can combine this with reduced overheads through the delivery of more effective workplace footprints and improved network opportunities, we think that this could be seen as a successful outcome.

This is the first in a series of studies that will look to explore this situation and try to understand how future ways of working will likely evolve. We look forward to taking this journey with you, continually asking ourselves how ambitious our organisations want to be.

COVID-19

Challenging perceptions

02



The COVID-19 pandemic is probably the biggest disruption to 'normal' life that many of us have experienced in our lifetimes. When the country went into lockdown on the 23rd March 2020, organisations had to mobilise quickly and develop their response to the situation for their staff, their customers and the services they deliver.

It has definitely brought its challenges, but for the office based workplace it has also resulted in some fairly significant opportunities to explore the way we do things and is showing a new way forward for activity based and smarter working. Within the space of a year now, we have all questioned our long-held beliefs around 'work' and 'workplace' and we have started to understand how we might look to change these areas in the future – both individually and organisationally.

For the last ten years, public sector organisations in Scotland have really challenged themselves to deliver efficient and effective workspaces for their staff through smarter and new ways of working. They have genuinely sought to understand their workplace vision and how people work to deliver the leadership, cultural, technology,

process and workspace elements to support that vision. This has included;

- A shift away from owned workspace where people “own” their desk
- The development of ‘our workspace’ models where people share a range of work settings to allow them to use the right space to support their work activities
- The move towards mobile devices, Office 365 and other tools that support a more transient workforce
- The move towards a trust culture that allows people to work in the best way to support the task at hand

There has always been a line that organisations have struggled to cross around developing truly distributed work models and service driven activities across organisational boundaries. In a matter of weeks and, in some cases, overnight, organisations went from having a handful of offices where people spent the majority of their work hours to many thousands of workplaces as employees moved to work from home.

For some organisations, this has been an extension of their smarter and activity based working programmes with people transitioning through the situation easily. For others it has been a steep learning curve where supporting technologies and their organisational culture have had to evolve very quickly.

We should probably add that working from home during these times has been anything but normal – it should be remembered this is a temporary situation and the current model built around creating home-based workspace at pace will likely change again.

The genie is now out of the bottle and we have generally proven that we can do this. What should we do next, how should work be structured and how should our “Workplace of the Future” look and feel once we have seen the end of physical distancing and this particular work from home model?

Smarter Working Group

03

Since April 2020, Scottish Futures Trust Asset Strategy Team has been working with the Smarter Working Group, a small group of smarter working professionals from across the public, private and third sector who have been sharing best practice knowledge since 2018.

By December 2020, the group had grown to approximately 100 people across 65+ organisations. In the early days of the pandemic, it was very much about supporting each other – finding information, sharing it and benchmarking it against what others were doing to support their people in the short-term.

The group very quickly mobilised to encourage all organisations to check in with their people but also to start to understand the impacts of this situation and to gather

insights into how people would want to work in the future. These insights are allowing us to better re-imagine both the workplace and work force of the future – something we have termed “New Frontiers for Smarter Working”.

The work to date has been carried out by three breakout groups, all comprising of individuals from the Smarter Working Group who offered their expertise to explore key topics further. The three groups mobilised quickly with one exploring COVID-19 re-occupy (Section 5.0), one focussing on Capturing Impact (Section 6.0) and the other looking at those long-term New Frontiers issues (Section 7.0).

This work will continue through 2021 and beyond and be represented through future studies.



Working Remotely during COVID-19

04

Many organisations struggled on a variety of levels to move from a physical to a virtual workplace so quickly. They had to ensure their teams were enabled to work remotely with the right ICT hardware to access their organisational systems and they had to enable virtual platforms to allow their people to connect. Bandwidth was an issue for some and finding a virtual platform that allowed connection across organisations was a challenge in the first few months.

Ensuring people had space and were comfortable to work at home was also a key concern. Most organisations chose to allow staff access to kit such as task chairs, monitors and keyboards from their office while others encouraged people to purchase essential items themselves.

COVID-19 has changed how we use virtual tools such as MS Teams, Skype and Webex in a big way. Although virtual

workplace tools have been around for some time, many people weren't comfortable with using them. Most people have accepted this new virtual normal and we are now used to seeing ourselves on screen. Many people have commented that they 'feel' more connected to colleagues as they meet each other's children, pets and see into each other's lives and homes, albeit virtually. It is ironic that for some anyway, this physical separation has actually encouraged people to feel more socially and emotionally connected to one another.

Managers in the early days reported elements of fatigue as they worked to support people using the key areas of focus (Figure A). Staff in some cases reported over communication as everyone gained an understanding of the type and frequency of communications required. The

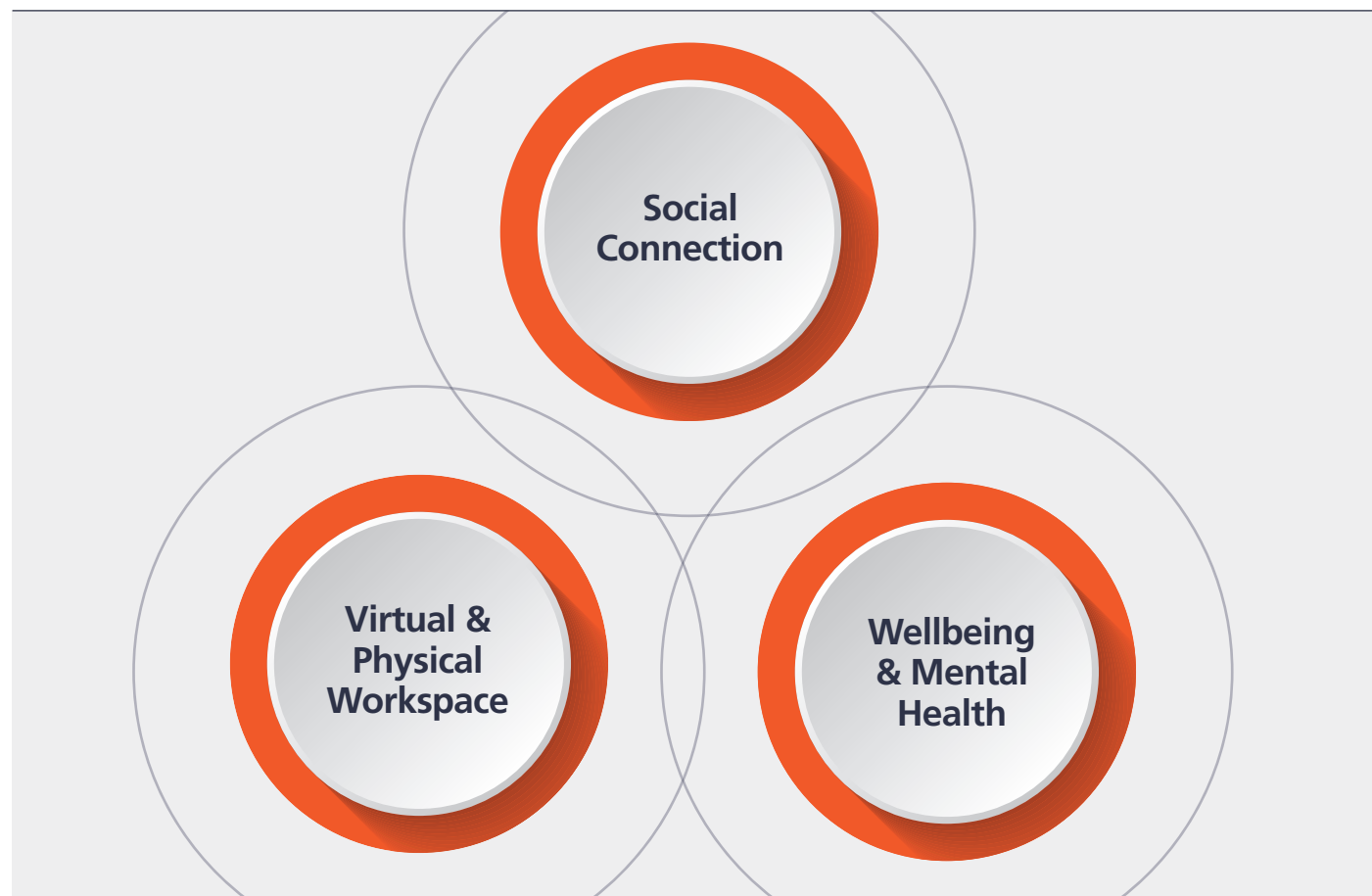


Figure A:
Key areas of focus
for work from home

Working Remotely during COVID-19 (continued)

04



natural move in the early days was to manage all forms of communication via virtual platforms but people soon started to understand when Whatsapp, Yammer, phone calls, emails, texts and other methods of connection were more appropriate.

As we move through this situation, issues such as virtual fatigue have emerged where people go from one online meeting to another with no breaks in between. While virtual meetings are a more efficient use of people's time, it does mean physical connection, decompression and networking time are lost. Those valuable little moments as you are walking out of a meeting room chatting to a colleague or processing time on the train or journey home are gone. We need to find ways to recreate these and build in time for people to breathe again. For essential workers, processes have been developed to allow them access to physical workspace but in most cases organisations have chosen to only open a limited number of buildings in each locality to support this.

While we are still being asked to work from home if we can, most organisations are challenging people's need to access physical workspace to keep numbers low and have an essential workers policy that only allows those with a genuine reason access to physical workspace.

Practical enablers people have put in place to date are as follows;

- Access to virtual tools to allow people connect with their teams and external organisations

- Helping people to set up the right type of home workspace by allowing them access to chairs, keyboards, mouse, etc.
- Daily "connect and finish" meetings work for some to structure work allocation for the day
- Virtual coffee breaks to allow colleagues to connect and socialise
- Holiday allocation managed by a pro rata split to ensure people take adequate breaks
- Effective communication to ensure people are engaged
- Wellbeing groups offering hints and tips to help people to support their own mental and physical health
- Understanding people's experiences and if they are okay – finding out whether they are having a positive or negative experience
- Ensuring meetings and interventions are in place to provide focussed support for work issues, social connection and wellbeing.

One of the real successes of this period of time has been how individuals responded quickly to issues and situations to keep things running. People have developed innovative solutions to problems that previously would have taken many months, even years to resolve. An example of this is MS Teams being launched in a matter of weeks within some public sector organisations instead of using the usual testing and soft launch type approaches.

Re-Occupy Strategies for Physical Workspaces

05

Non-essential offices in Scotland remained closed during 2020 and into the first part of 2021. For councils and other key organisations, only a small percentage of staff (in some cases around 3% of the workforce) with essential needs to access physical workspace have re-occupied it, with the majority of workers, who can work remotely, remaining at home.

Updates to the guidance have been issued regularly since April 2020 on the Scottish Government, UK Government and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) websites and most organisations are 're-occupy ready' (Figure B). The majority of the guidance and interventions around physical distancing, hygiene and occupancy monitoring tools are in place awaiting confirmation that people can return to their offices.

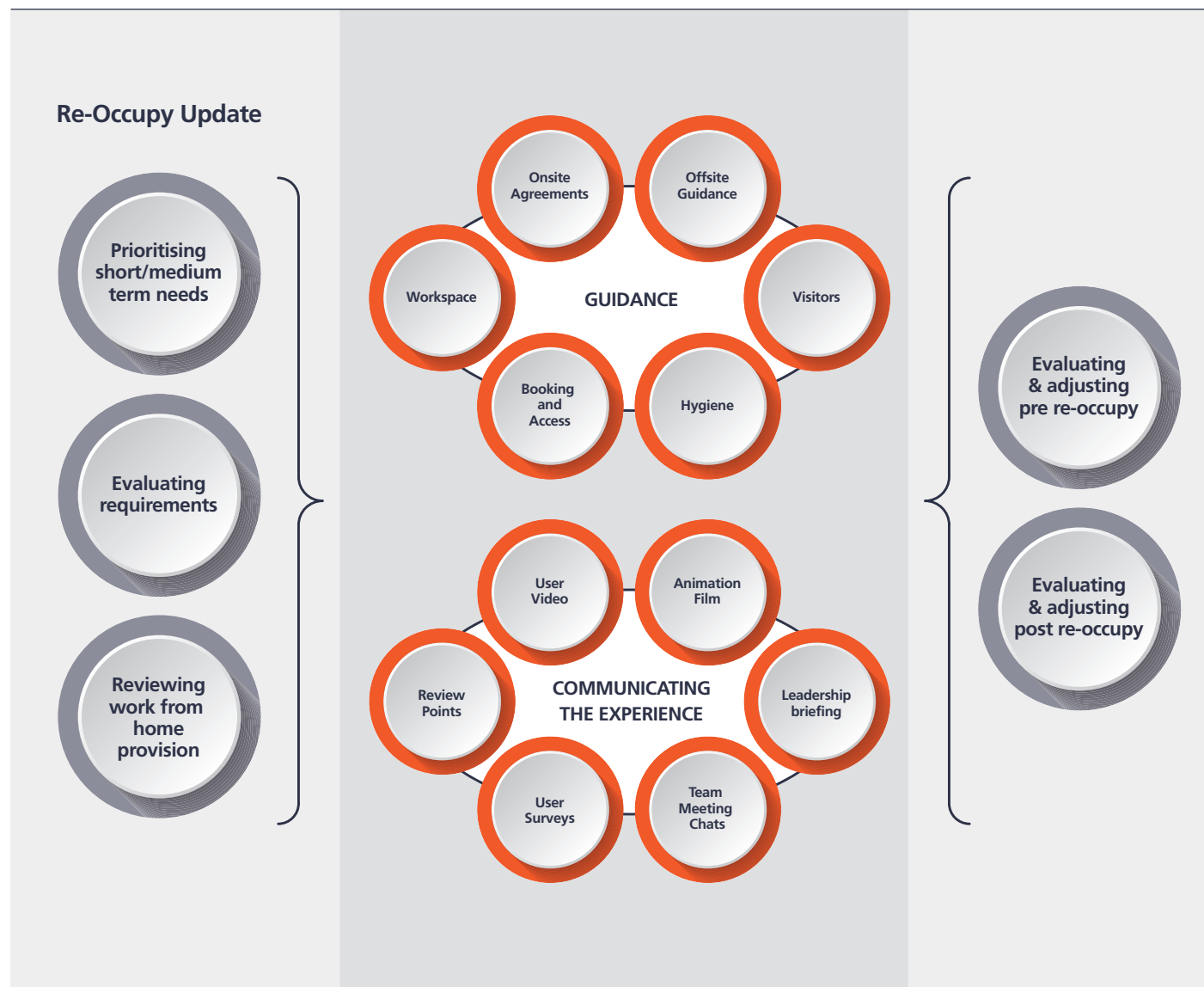
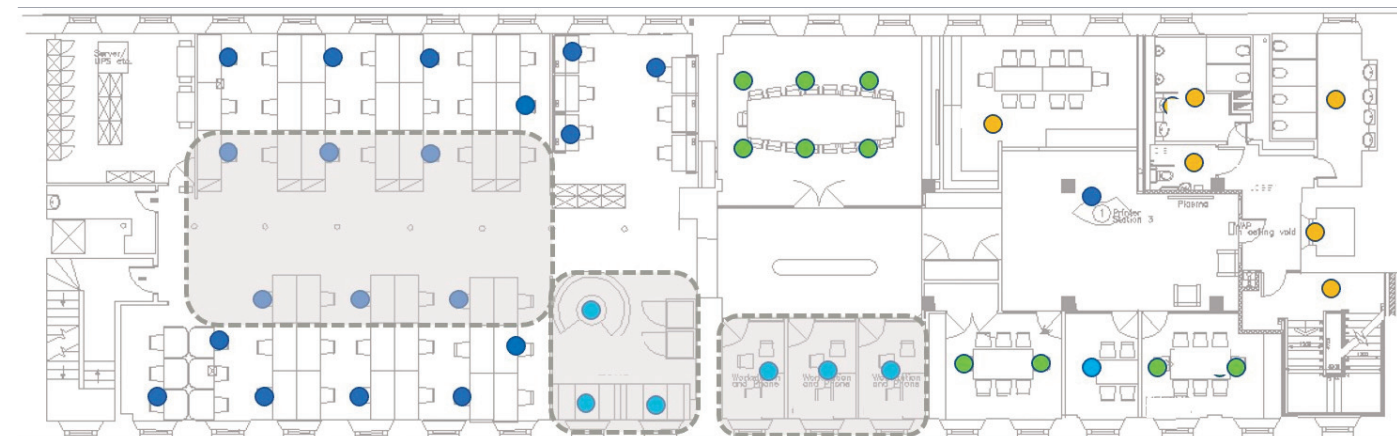


Figure B: Sample 're-occupy ready' plan for workplace



- Desk Based Working
- Calls & Individual Work
- Collaborative Work
- Restricted access to w.c.s. lifts and stairwells
- ▭ Additional protocols in place

Maximum of twenty people on site at any one time with cleaning regimes in place between users

Figure C: Re-occupy plan for a small office space (approximately 450m²) with clear protocols in place to manage utilisation of all the available workspaces

Many organisations had taken the decision to announce they won't return to physical workspace until at least spring 2021 with return dates changing as new information emerges. In July 2020, Natwest announced that 50,000 staff would be working from home until 2021 with a hybrid future for home working predicted. Google have gone further and informed employees they won't be returning to physical workspace until September 2021 with Twitter and Facebook telling their employees that they could be working at home indefinitely.

As the work from home period extends and we move towards spring, issues are emerging and organisations are working on interventions to support those who are struggling.

Social isolation and mental health issues are affecting employees with the lowest impact scores from worldwide studies undertaken by Leesman during the summer of 2020 showing that 35% of people felt disconnected from colleagues, 30% felt disconnected from their organisations and 28% felt unable to support a healthy work life balance.

When restrictions lift and organisations do re-occupy their offices, they are looking at short-term occupancy levels of between 25% and 50% while physical distancing requirements are still in place. This is dependent on the layout and design of the building in order to maintain physical distancing; so an assessment of need is critical to managing expectations around access in the short to medium term.

The sample office above (Figure C) shows 39 desks, 6 booths, 6 quiet desks and three quiet rooms and the organisation envisages that office occupancy will be limited to 20 people with strict hygiene measures in place to support them.

The emergence of multiple vaccines and new strains of the virus are impacting on the approach and timing for re-occupying physical space.

Organisations are starting to understand individual, personal and role requirements when prioritising returns in the short to medium term. This includes situations where wellbeing, mental health or social isolation have been identified as an issue.

However, the important thing is to communicate how different our offices will feel while physical distancing is in place. We still do not know how long physical distancing will be required, so it is important to have a clear strategy and plan to support it.

While having guidance in place is important, it is every bit as important to communicate the new office experience to people (Figures B & C) through the creation of animations, videos and other visuals that will help people understand what the temporary normal will be like.

Capturing Impact

06

6.1 KPIs

The Capturing Impact Working Group asked organisations to gather data around some key areas that would help our understanding of people's work from home experience, how productive people feel they have been and how they would like to work in the future.

6.2 Approach

Given the amount of engagement underway across the public and private sectors, the group chose not to issue their own survey but to gather data from the organisations they were working with.

Most organisations had issued workplace surveys to their people and data was gathered from a sample of nineteen organisations. Results were collated from 15,511 individual respondents within those organisations and were analysed to allow us to understand the emerging trends.

Key findings include;

- There has been a huge amount of commonality across organisations with people enjoying a little more control over their work life balance and spending more time with family
- Isolation and mental health have been issues for some and this is more prevalent in organisations with poorer technology
- Some people have reported feeling more deeply connected to their team members
- We know that the next round of insights is likely to produce different results so we need to be mindful of how people's responses change over time

6.3 Positives & Challenges

Ten organisations asked their workers about the benefits they felt working from home have had on their lives. It was possible to aggregate approximately 17,200 responses on the personal benefits of working from home (respondents could choose more than one benefit). The main personal benefits were identified as:

- Financial savings from having no commuting costs and not spending on food and drinks at work
- Having more time as a result of not having to commute to work, and being able to use this to spend

more time with family, walk pets, exercise and take part in hobbies

- Better work/life balance and flexibility to suit working hours around other commitments, such as childcare

Workers across nine organisations identified a series of work-related benefits. These included more collaboration and communication with colleagues and line managers as a result of everyone being online, more time to work due to less commuting, increased autonomy and fewer distractions from colleagues in the workplace.

The following benefits were seen as particularly valuable;

- Increased autonomy
- More time to work as a result of not commuting
- Fewer distractions from colleagues than in the workplace

Eleven organisations asked workers about the challenges they had faced when working from home. A predominant finding is that what some workers regard to be a benefit, others see as a challenge. This is likely to be partly associated with different personal circumstances.

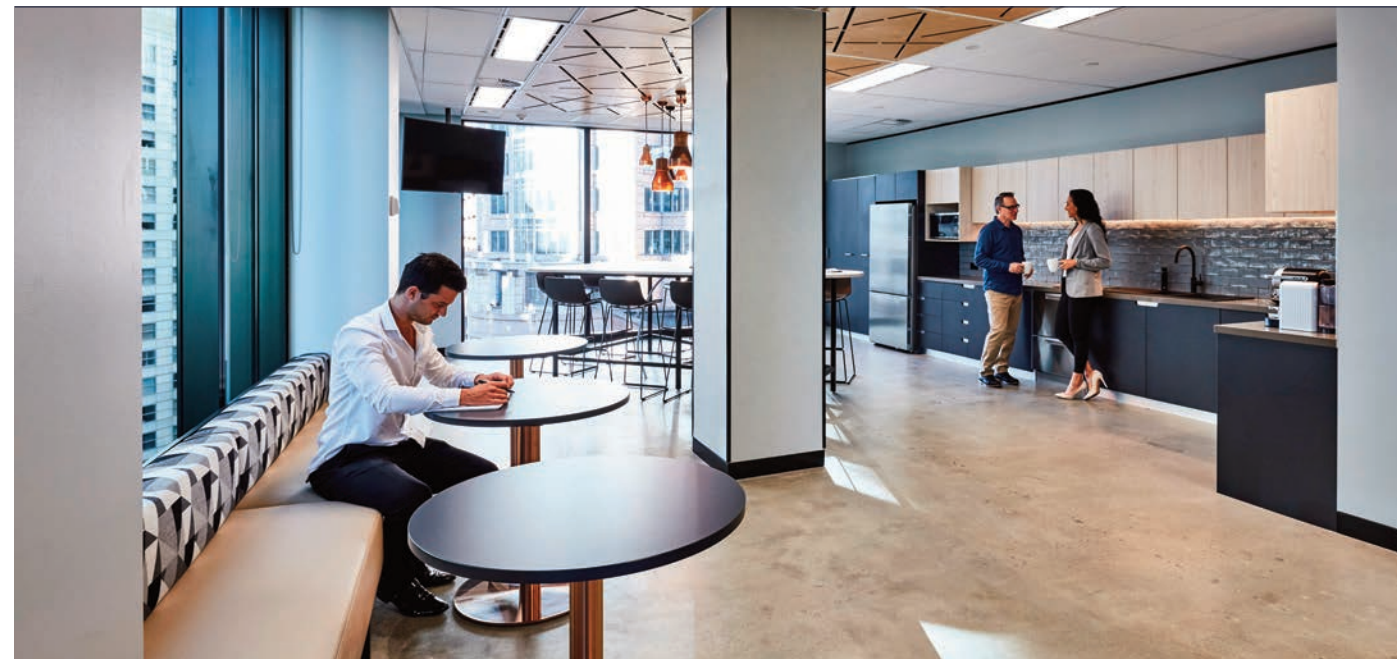
Challenges were largely identified as:

- Not having appropriate equipment and workplace settings available at home, including access to a secure and fast internet connection - a particular concern for workers living in rural areas
- Social isolation, with 70% of responses in one organisation alone affected by this
- Less connection to colleagues, with workers missing the "buzz" of the office and informal chats
- Difficulty switching off from work, with responses reporting working late and checking emails when they should no longer be working
- Perceived financial costs associated with increased use of electricity and heating at home

6.4 Performance

The analysis aggregated 3,721 responses on the effects of home working on productivity across five organisations.

Around 54% of public sector workers found that working from home had positively impacted their productivity and personal performance, whereas 46% felt that their productivity had been negatively affected as a result of



working from home. Perceptions of productivity improvements were more common among public bodies' workers (82%), than among those working for local authorities (49%).

Factors identified as impacting productivity included:

- The availability of an appropriate workspace at home
- Suitable internet connectivity
- Caring responsibilities at home
- Access to necessary equipment and systems

6.5 Wellbeing

New working patterns have had an impact on public sector workers' physical and mental health. Whereas the effect on physical wellbeing tends to be positive, with workers now having more time to exercise, impacts on mental health are more variable.

Eleven organisations asked workers questions regarding their wellbeing. The analysis could aggregate 5,525 responses. Overall, 55% of respondents stated that working from home had positively impacted their health and wellbeing. Conversely, 45% of public sectors workers felt that their wellbeing had been negatively affected by working from home, causing anxiety and isolation.

Impacts on wellbeing varied based on whether workers were employed by local authorities or public bodies, with those working for public bodies more likely to have experienced wellbeing improvements.

Feelings of anxiety were partly associated with the coronavirus pandemic, as opposed to work-specific factors.

6.6 Trends for the Future

Eleven organisations asked questions about their employees' preferences with regard to future modes of working. This corresponded to 9,252 (60%) of the total respondents (15,511) to the surveys covered in this study. Overall findings include:

- Most respondents held favourable views towards having the option of working from home and flexibly in the future
- This was even more the case in the short to medium term
- Where workers' modes of work prior to COVID-19 were considered alongside future preferences, it emerged that the most positive attitudes towards homeworking were held by those that had already experienced it

Out of a total 4,961 people who answered questions on the number of days to spend in the office or working at home (Figure D)

- 4,394 (88%) wanted to work at least one day a week from home
- 10% (486) of the respondents would prefer not to work from home at all
- 24% of the respondents would be happy to continue working from home full time

Given the type of organisations canvassed, it is likely that there are some workers whose roles do not allow for the possibility of working from home.

The hybrid model is clearly the preference for individuals, but this will obviously need to be matched with the organisation's needs during future phases. However, this does open up opportunities for organisations to consider how they can work differently in the future.

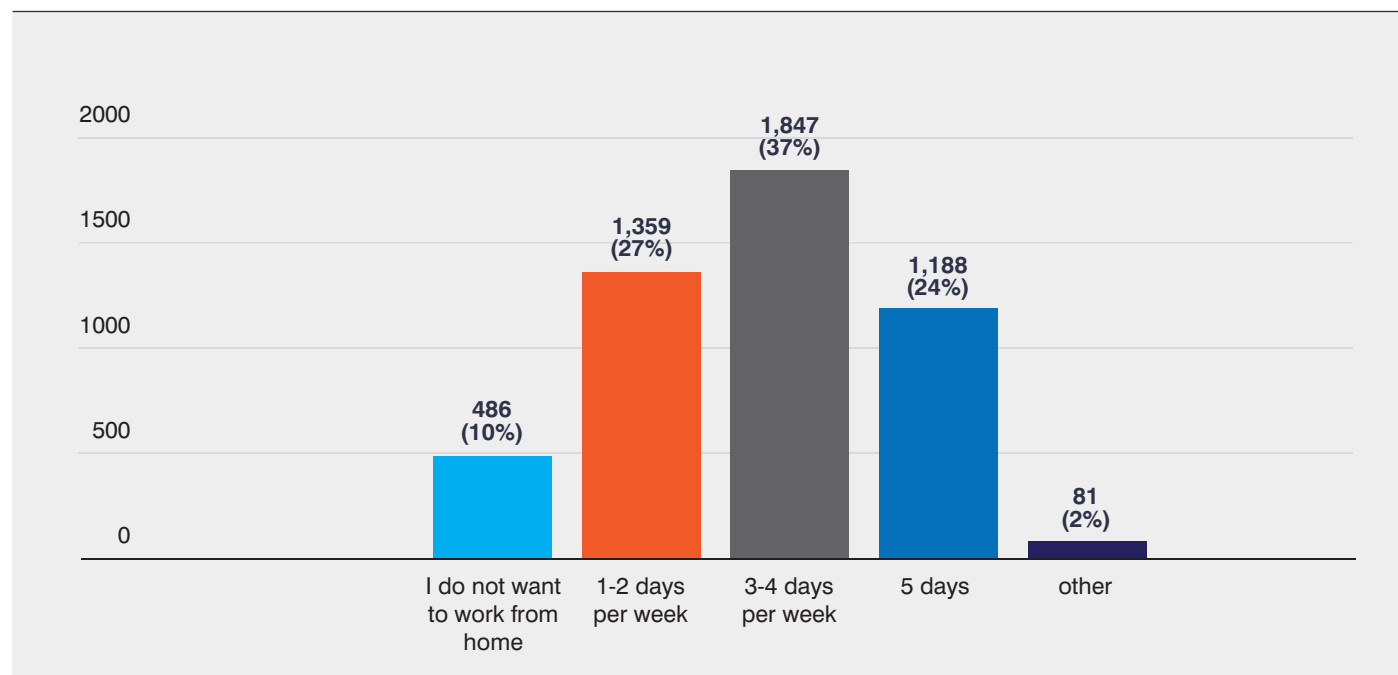


Figure D:
Future trends graph
from analysis

6.7 Conclusion

There is real potential to deliver significant change to how, where and when people work and it's important that organisations approach this carefully.

We know that there has been some shift since the surveys were completed as the 'novelty factor' wears off and it is likely that preferences have changed over the winter months. It is important to factor in these changes in as they emerge.

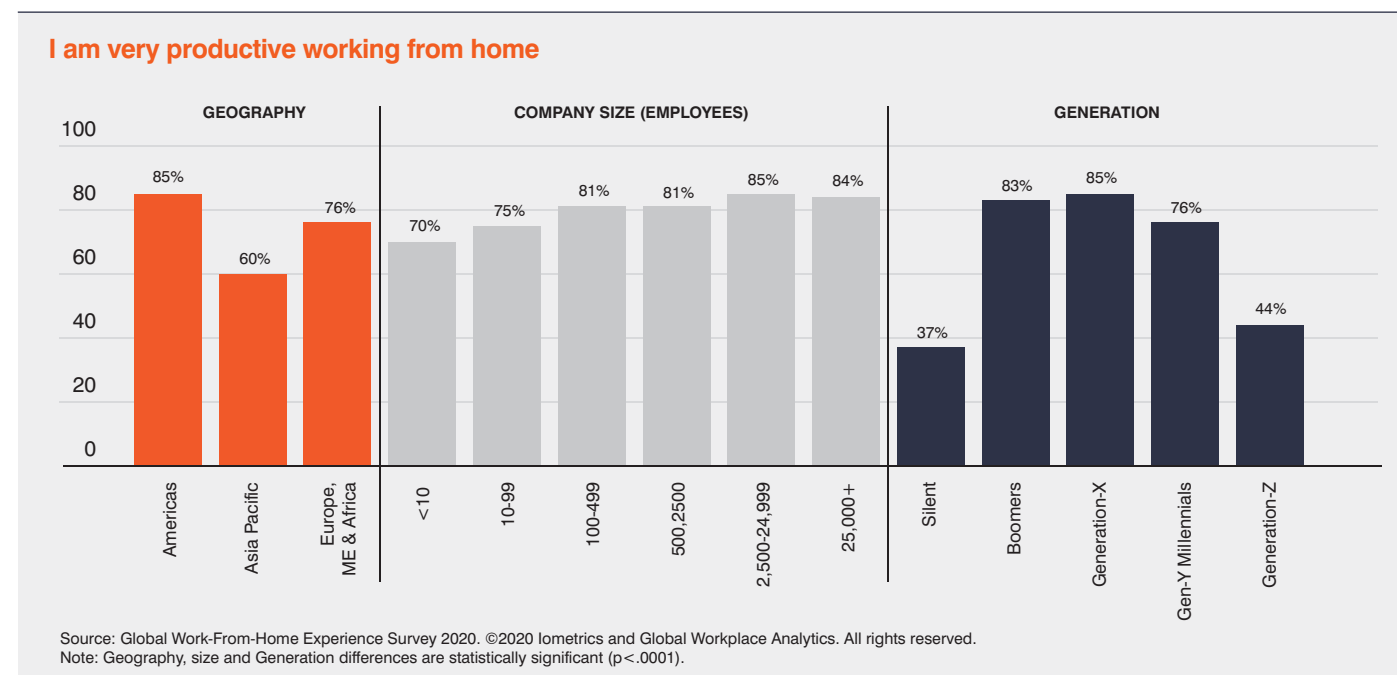
While many roles have adapted well to work from home, some have not. We know some people will remain office based. This includes roles that require access to secure space, specialist technology systems, site specific roles, etc.

In addition, workers who are new to organisations, such as new starts and interns, have struggled with work from home more than those who already have pre-established relationships and team cultures in place. Demographically younger workers (those in the Gen Z category) feel less productive working from home than their Gen X and

Boomer counterparts. This is shown in the study undertaken by Global Workplace Analytics (Figure E) where only 44% of Gen Z agree that they are productive working from home compared to 86% of Gen X. This could relate to difficulties with mentoring via virtual workplace scenarios, or relate more to their personal circumstances and the fact they do not have the right space to work from at home. Visibility, or the lack of it, is another issue that we need to be mindful of with regard to career progression. If people are less 'seen,' does that impact chances of promotion, project involvement, etc.

The model of the future has to support the people who are struggling with working remotely while embracing the opportunity for the 88% of workers who are keen to embrace a new normal.

People are generally feeling productive at home and we will see if the next tranche of surveys, which will hopefully be completed by late spring of 2021, remain consistent with those undertaken during 2020.



Source: Global Work-From-Home Experience Survey 2020. ©2020 Iometrics and Global Workplace Analytics. All rights reserved.
Note: Geography, size and Generation differences are statistically significant (p<.0001).

Figure E:
Global Workplace Analytics, Work from
Home Experience survey 2020

During the early days, we asked organisations how they would like to see their organisation change their remote work practices in the long-term as a result of your COVID-19 experiences. 50% of those who responded said they would like to revolutionise the way they work with no-one suggesting they would like there to be no change.

At a recent Smarter Working Forum organised by Scottish Futures Trust, over one hundred people representing sixty-five organisations joined together to explore the future of work across two mornings. The objective of the Forum was to;

- create ambition around the workplace of the future
- encourage as many people as possible to think beyond simply re-occupying their office
- support the idea of workplace as a strategic tool

The sessions showed there is a desire to think differently and to explore the opportunity to use 'the workplace' as a tool to support organisational culture, reduce overheads and promote change in the future.

If the number of people wanting increased remote working is indeed significant, there is the potential to create a smaller, leaner more efficient estate across all sectors. The opportunity this offers to use our workspaces in much more effective ways, to better support our people, to create a network of choice and to reduce property related overheads and carbon implications is phenomenal.

We have defined the elements of New Frontiers for Smarter working as focusing around the following:

- Organisation and culture
- People focussed future
- Distributed working – home, hubs and HQs
- Leadership and supporting distributed culture
- Virtual workspace
- Physical workspace – The workplace of the future

7.1 Organisation and Culture

'How do you create culture when you don't have a building?' is a question we have been asking ourselves throughout this situation. Smarter working has been around for some time but as we have said, COVID-19 has given us a unique opportunity to push the boundaries. Presenteeism has now been challenged and the reasons for preventing remote working for most office based roles are no longer valid.

Location neutral working, where workers can be located anywhere provided they undertake the activities they are paid to do, is now a very real possibility for most organisations. The opportunity exists to create a much wider, more distributed network for delivering outcomes. As we have seen, people are very keen to work in a more distributed way but what about organisations?

Many organisations are seeing this as an opportunity to both reduce property related costs and to introduce service driven efficiencies around the way people work.

Whether organisations are thinking in terms of a home and main office model or a wider range of distributed Hub type settings, the issues around creating and supporting culture across a more distributed network is a key issue for most organisations. Where existing connections and relationships exist, this is fairly easy to maintain but where new teams are being created or new people join a team, care will be required to ensure the culture embeds.

The main values we have relied on during this time period have been accountability, collaboration, agility, creativity, integrity and autonomy.

It's also been incredibly important for individuals to feel that their organisation supports their wellbeing and work life balance and most of the surveys that have been issued focus on how people are feeling and how they are coping with their home and work life situations.

It's also likely that Human Resources (HR) and Organisational Development functions will need to think differently around work contracts and the persona model in section 8.0 is a start in helping to frame these discussions.

As we move forward, it is clear that some sort of 'collaborative' physical workspace will be needed to support our workplace future. Virtual presence has been fantastic throughout the recent period but we know people have missed out on the social aspects of work, which, in

'We have done more in the last seven months than we could have done in five years. Our long-term approach focuses on a 'one campus' approach where agile workers can work from any of our assets, improving flexibility and resilience for the future'

North Lanarkshire Council

turn, have impacted on our cultural connection. Those two minute chats at the tea point or copier asking people how they are doing, the quick discussion you have as you leave a meeting room that help consolidate some of the items discussed during the meeting. These little interactions are incredibly important and help embed company culture and need to be re-created 'virtually' as we move towards our new future.

From a cultural perspective, it will be interesting to see how people blend the various options of choice around physical workspace typologies e.g. home work space, local work spaces and their main offices to support their culture in the best way possible. If we are in our offices for less time, we need to really think about how we use that physical space, how we access it and what we chose to do there. How can physical space become a strategic tool to support change?

If organisations can understand their future work vision, understand the purpose of physical workspace across all typologies and the tasks the organisation undertakes versus the needs of their people, they are more likely to be successful in re-imagining their new work future. When do people need people, when does it help us to be together and how does that support our organisational culture?

7.2 People Focussed Future

The Smarter Working Group working on the New Frontiers Model collectively see wellbeing and people needs as being key to future workplace. We know that remote and home working does not suit every person or every role, so we need to focus on developing a strategy for work that supports wellbeing and social needs as well as outcome delivery.

We know that most people want to do a good job and deliver their outcomes to the best of their ability. We need to understand what stops people delivering well and try to ensure our New Frontiers model recognises and aims to address the issues around this as we move to a more distributed network of choice.

What are the building blocks that organisations need to put in place to support their vision? What qualities, behaviours, skills are needed for the future?

The group focussed part of their thinking around The Buurtzorg Model described as 'humanity over bureaucracy' as a good focus for thinking about future workplace. It is a pioneering healthcare initiative that revolutionised community care in the Netherlands.

The key principles of Buurtzorg are;

- People want control over their own lives for as long as possible
- People strive to maintain and improve their own quality of life
- People seek social interaction
- People seek 'warm' relationships with others

As it relates to basic human needs, if we can apply this thinking to work and workplace as a foundation to the way we want our organisations to work in the future (Figure F).



Figure F: Examples of new work style definitions

Hybrid - Knowledge Worker

<p>How I work</p> <p>My role involves engaging with public sector partners and sharing knowledge with them.</p> <p>I was previously considered a flexible worker prior to COVID19 but now I'm a hybrid worker and only visit the office when I need to.</p> <p>I minimise travel by using virtual tools and to only go into my main office when I need to collaborate with others. I generally plan in collaborative activity to support my outcomes.</p> <p>I generally work from home as I have a young family and need flexibility to suit their scheduled. I also use the local library for quiet work and book space in my local hub when I need to.</p> <p>I chose my work hours and days dependant on outcomes and use my diary to communicate this to the team.</p>	<p>Work style</p> <p>'I work in one organisation with different teams, working between home, office, hubs and informal spaces e.g. café, park'</p> <p>My organisation has multiple offices and I have access to them all if I need it.</p> <p>My organisation has pre-arranged access for me in a local hub for up to a day per week. I just have to phone ahead and book.</p>	<p>Place</p> <p>I work in a hub when I need wi-fi or a more secure location.</p> <p>I work from home when I'm dealing with individual tasks.</p> <p>I work from my main office when I need to work collaboratively with colleagues.</p> <p>When I'm in the office, I need access to private space occasionally.</p> <p>I use the places I work in to deliver the activities I'm responsible for and to support my work life balance.</p>
	<p>People</p> <p>Supporting polices – I work 30 hours per week and I can deliver these at any time. Some days I take a 3 hour break during the day and work into the evening. Some days I need more family time so flex my hours to suit.</p> <p>Wellbeing – Exploring emotional intelligence and gaining insight into own responses.</p> <p>Skills and capabilities – self managing and autonomous, self motivated and driven to do the best I can.</p> <p>Communication preferences – generally planned communications via informal routes with urgent matters preceded by text. Use Whatsapp and Basecamp to communicate on projects.</p>	<p>Technology</p> <p>I access my data via Office 365 and secure wi-fi.</p> <p>I use a Surface Pro, Surface Hub and I-Phone on a daily basis.</p> <p>Is use my I-Phone hotspot when secure wi-fi is unavailable.</p> <p>I have an app to log my hours to support my own wellbeing and one to book physical workspace across multiple locations when I need it.</p> <p>Virtual collaborative tools including Whatsapp, Basecamp and Yammer.</p> <p>Virtual meeting tools including Webex and MS Teams.</p>

Figure G: Persona and profile for a hybrid worker

How can we ensure that everyone within our organisation has autonomy around how, where and when they deliver their outcomes within the context of their role? How can we ensure we provide clarity around what is expected of people as we move to a more distributed model? The persona development tools in Section 8.0 starts to help with that as we create stories (Figure G) around how and where people will work.

7.3 Distributed Working – Homes, Hubs and HQs

COVID-19 has already re-shaped the way we deliver work and is encouraging us to re-imagine how work and workplace will look in the future. It has broken the trend of long commutes to a central office and allowed people to see the benefits of work from home with many looking for more choice as we move through the recovery phase.

Given that the work from home opportunity does not work for every task or every person, there is an opportunity to embrace near home and local work models via cross sector models. Concepts such as the 20 minute neighbourhood supports the vision for local work hubs by encouraging essential services to be brought together locally, reducing the need to travel for work, leisure and education.

As organisations review their future thinking for the workplace, it is likely their overall space needs will reduce, and this could support the creation of a network of interconnected hubs across rural, urban and suburban areas. These local hubs could support virtual meetings, local collaboration or even just individual work on the days people are struggling with their Wi-Fi. This network could be extended to include libraries and schools – all within the local area.

Within rural areas, the hubs could include services such as banking, council services, policing and local care. Members of the public would be able to book spaces for virtual calls with their GP, business start-ups could use them as touchdown space and they could provide a commuter hub for those who would prefer not to travel to the office but would like community space and social interaction. It would help keep small communities going as people would buy their lunch and other items locally, thereby supporting the local economy.

'We have started to explore the opportunity for a network of collaborative hubs across the rural locations we serve. Informed through a 'place based' approach the emerging vision is that the hubs will be designed to provide a range of flexible shared workspaces that will support both improved public sector collaboration and wider community needs.'

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)

Day in the life of a hybrid worker of the future

'I start my day with a walk to the library which is near me – I spend a couple of hours working on my report and then have a quick coffee break in the library café where I've arranged to meet a colleague – we go for a walking meeting in a nearby park afterwards as it's a nice day. I travel rarely these days but I'm heading off to a hub in a nearby town to spend the afternoon with a colleague. The hub has been set up in a partner office using some of the space they no longer need due to the impact of remote working. I've used the phone app to book out a two-person private space there so we can work collaboratively on one of our projects and call others in virtually if we need them.

I've forgotten to book coffee so I do that on the train and decide to book some touchdown space for after the session. I reach the hub and my phone code allows me access to the centre. I can see the space I have booked on the visual screen as I enter the premises and I make my way to it. I authorise my coffee order and take our coffees to our meeting space – the technology connects seamlessly. My colleague arrives and we complete our session. We are reminded to 'reset and clean' the space before we leave which we do. I spend a bit of time in the touchdown area before I go and then head home'

For some organisations the options could be just home and their main office but for others, there is the opportunity to create a rich network of choice that builds resilience and reduces risk for the future (Figure H).

This isn't about building something new but about considering the use of the buildings we already have to support people locally.

For office based locations, if our staff are coming to our workplaces less, we should be able to make better use of the physical space to open the potential for local hubs to support near home working.

The distributed network for work 'thinking' is still at an exploratory stage and its unlikely to be suitable for every organisation. For some organisations, the choice will simply be home or office. Other organisations will make better use of their existing asset network, allowing people choice in which locations they work from. For others, a rich cross organisational approach could work and it just depends how creative and ambitious those organisations want to be while weighing up the financial implications of those ambitions.

7.4 Leadership and Supporting Distributed culture

Leaders need to use this unique moment in time to explore how they can reinvent their organisations and create a better experience that attracts new talent, improves collaboration, supports performance and reduces overheads. The key to this will be culture and a move from management of teams to leadership of people.

Creating an autonomous culture through self-managed teams is central to empowering people and encouraging ownership of work and outcomes. The future is likely to be less about 'people management and control' and more about 'leading and supporting' your people through adaptive and distributed leadership techniques.

We need to understand what works and what needs to change to support the future work model. We need to develop a learning and development culture and we need to explore tools that support transformational change and innovative thinking such as the Three Horizon Model (Figure I) to help us understand how the future post COVID-19 could look.



Figure H:
Distributed work
model

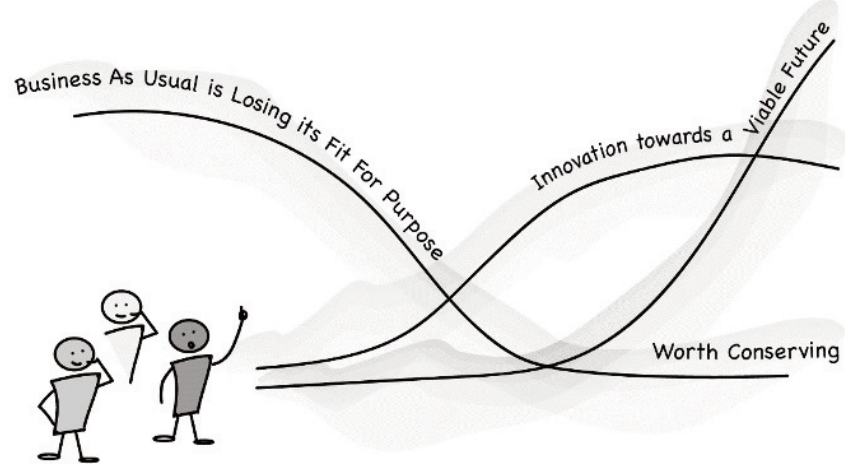
The introduction of more distributed ways of working means that organisational culture and personal identity become increasingly important to both the individual and the organisation. Everyone has to work to maintain this and we need to create innovative opportunities for connection both virtually and physically. It is also important to ensure that power dynamics don't impact our new future e.g. people aren't treated differently or become less visible because they aren't coming to a specific place or location often enough.

The reasons for preventing home working for most roles have now been proved invalid. People have been working successfully in this way for over a year now, showing greater autonomy and creativity in the way they deliver their outcomes and tasks. As people have found new ways to do things, the old adage 'people are good with change but hate to be changed' has never been more prevalent.

Going forward, it is more about supporting people to deliver a different set of behaviours focussed around a softer set of 'self-management' skills.

We need to work harder at building our culture;

- We need to build in different types of interactions around social, wellbeing and work to ensure people remain connected
- We need to understand individuals preferred communication styles
- We need leaders not managers who are trained to work differently. We cannot rely on the 'old' ways of doing things in this new distributed world
- We need to support organisational and social connection at every level



Map what to let go of, what to conserve, & transformative innovation to reach a shared vision.

H3Uni.org iffpraxis.com

Three Horizons

Figure I
Three Horizon Model from
H3Uni.org

7.5 Activity Based Working for the future

Activity based working has been with us for a while and is really about selecting the right space to undertake the task at hand. Rather than delivering all your tasks from a single workstation, it is about having a rich range of work settings that people can choose from that support the tasks undertaken in a day.

The types of work settings that support activity based working generally include;

- Team tables, ancillary spaces and collaborative rooms to support tasks delivered in collaboration with others
- Quiet rooms to provide people with much needed space to support thinking, individualised innovation and tasks such as report writing
- Individual rooms where people can take a confidential call or have a private meeting with others – all sized to suit the need
- Secure environments provided for tasks covered by legislation
- Welfare areas to support wellbeing and allow people to connect with colleagues
- Opportunities for mentoring and development provided throughout the space

The benefits of activity based working include:

- Greater autonomy and choice around how, where and when you deliver your tasks
- Improved concentration as you can find the right work setting to suit the task and your work style
- Enhanced performance and creativity as the right systems are in place to support your activities

- Attraction and retention benefits for the organisation
- Trust – the ability to build trust between colleagues and across the organisation

The post COVID opportunity means we can deliver true Activity Based Working with the virtual and distributed workplace as part of the solution. It means we can create a supportive workplace that provides the right spaces to support the tasks we do.

7.6 Technologies and IoT (Internet of Things)

Many IoT and Artificial Intelligence solutions are emerging that can help us understand how we use our workspaces and keep people safe within buildings in a non-obtrusive way.

You can use apps to book spaces in buildings before you get there and temperature checks can be supported using unobtrusive systems as people enter the building. You can create a virtual key using an app and even order drinks from the coffee machine to reduce the number of touchpoints people come in contact with and also ensure better flow within the space itself.

You can create virtual reality and BIM models of the space to support behavioural change and to understand the environmental conditions around air quality, temperature, etc.

This area is evolving all the time and the five case studies in Section 8.0 visualise what these opportunities might look like.

New Frontiers for Smarter Working (continued)

7.7 Future Work and Workspace

7.7.1 Overview

Organisations need to be ready to embrace the new future for workplace once physical distancing is no longer an issue.

For most, this will include the learnings from their COVID-19 experience and, as we have said, most organisations want to make some sort of change whether that is increasing remote working for a number of individuals or implementing a hybrid model as outlined in section 7.3.

Smarter Working Programmes have done so much already but this next phase requires a new level of discussion. This new thinking will be focussed around;

- The vision and purpose for a post COVID-19 workplace

- How work is supported by a distributed model
- The types of activities to be delivered from physical space
- How, when and where outcomes will be delivered
- The types of workspace and work settings required to support the above

This breaks down how, where and when work takes place as per the Future Work Model detailed in Figure J;

- Where – main office, home, local solution, near home solution, rural hub
- How – physical, virtual, technologies, collaboration, individual working and specialist needs
- When – business hours, outcome focused and citizen focussed

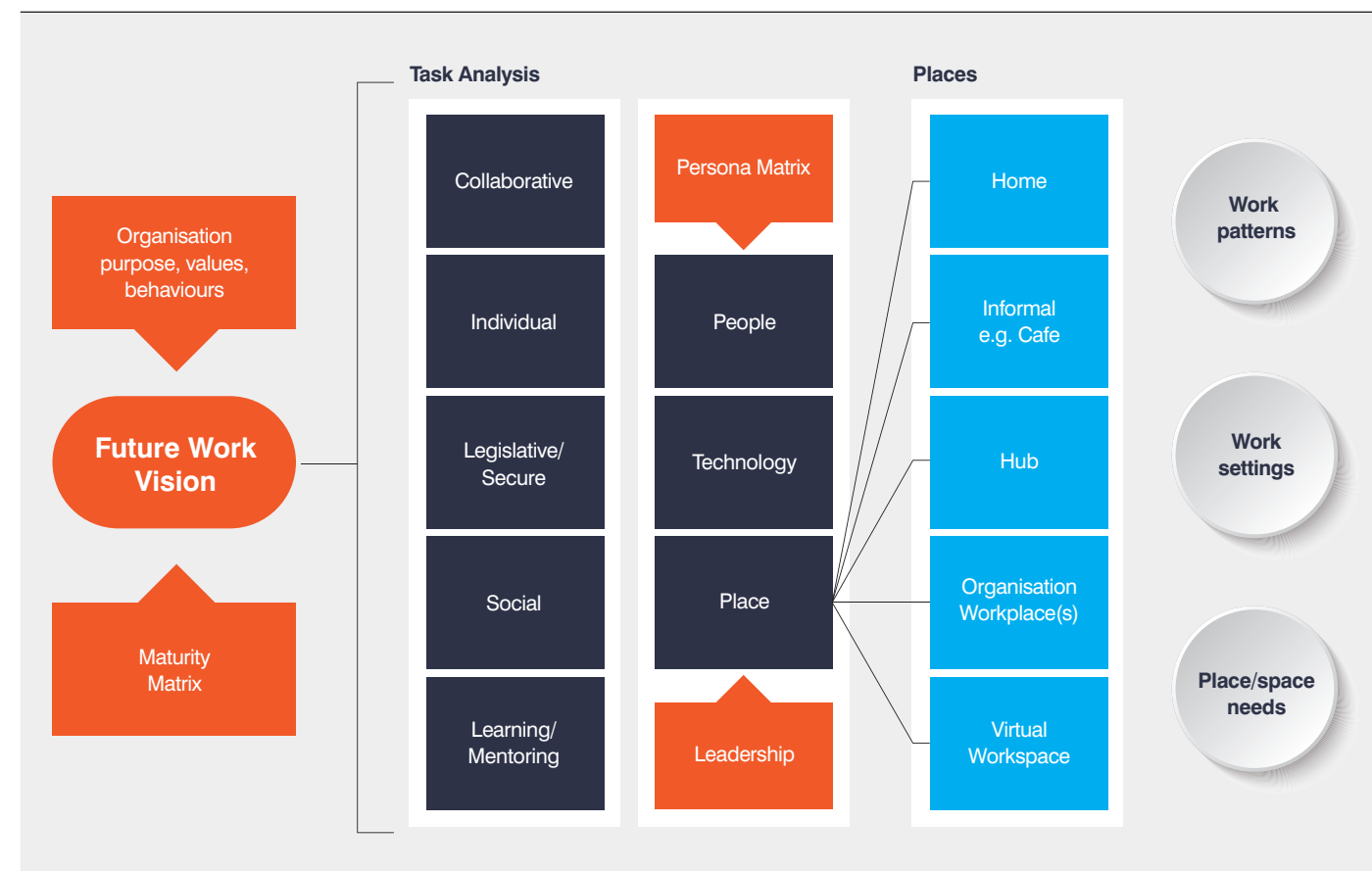


Figure J
Future Work Model

The key element people have indicated that they have missed during this period has been their connection with colleagues – both through work and socially. Some organisations have also cited issues with mentoring new starts and how to deliver this best remotely.

We need to learn from our approach to virtual meetings during COVID-19 where some people are experiencing a full day of back-to-back virtual meetings with no breaks in between. As we have said, people have missed the decompression time they used to have when travelling between locations or meetings and we need to work on our own approach to this in the future.

Our workplaces of the future needs to provide places where people can come together to interact and connect effectively. They need to provide spaces that allow quiet work and focus for those who are on site and provide choice for the users while being multi-functional, flexible and future proofed.

If we are working in more distributed ways, our physical workspaces need to embrace technologies that allow us to connect with people working from other locations. Both, the spaces we provide and the processes we use, need to support mentoring of younger employees and new starts in an organisation where new relationships are being forged and the organisational culture is perhaps less well established.

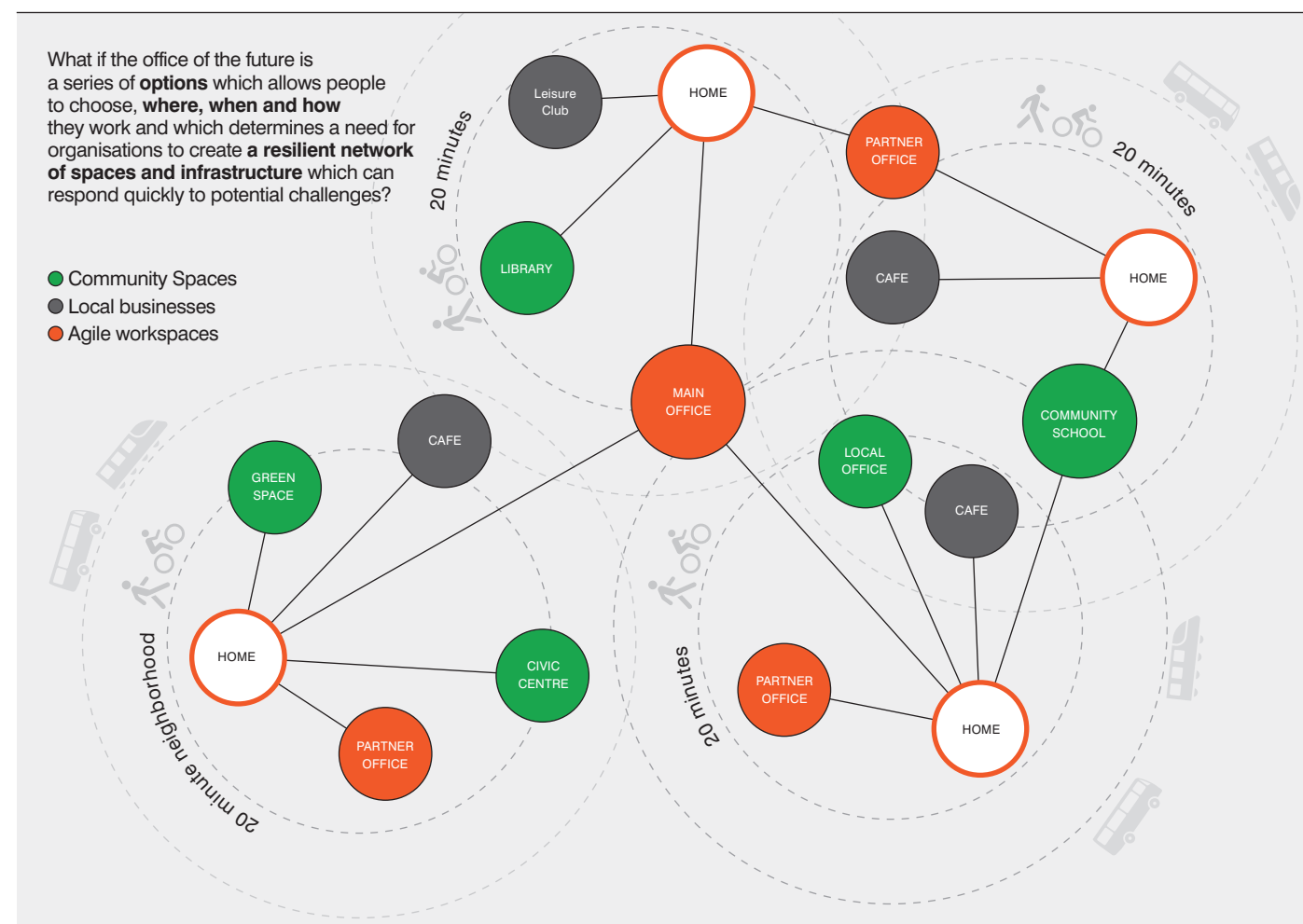


Figure K
Place based approach to the Distributed Work
Model as developed by Space Strategies

7.7.2 Supporting Ambition and Maximising Opportunity

People and tasks will be at the heart of the workplace purpose and aims, with the opportunity to use physical workspace as a tool to support organisational culture. The workplace of the future should be less about presence and more about creating a place to deliver real connection and change within and across organisations.

If thinking can start at a place-based level (Figure K and L), we will ensure we maximise all the opportunities and benefits available as many organisations in a locality will be dealing with the same issues around Net Zero Carbon, Inclusive Growth and Place.



Figure L
Place based approach to the
Distributed Network for Work

It is also important that organisations understand how ambitious they want to be with their thinking across all the touchpoints of work.

- How will they adapt their People and HR policies to suit outcome delivery and will people work across organisations?
- How will they embrace physical and virtual workspace and how much control will they allow people to have over how and where they deliver their outcomes?
- What behaviours and skills will be needed to support this new culture – both practical training around remote working and the type of behaviours that support it?

The New Frontiers Maturity Matrix (Figure M) helps organisations start to build their model for the future and a link to the latest version of this tool is provided in section 8.0.

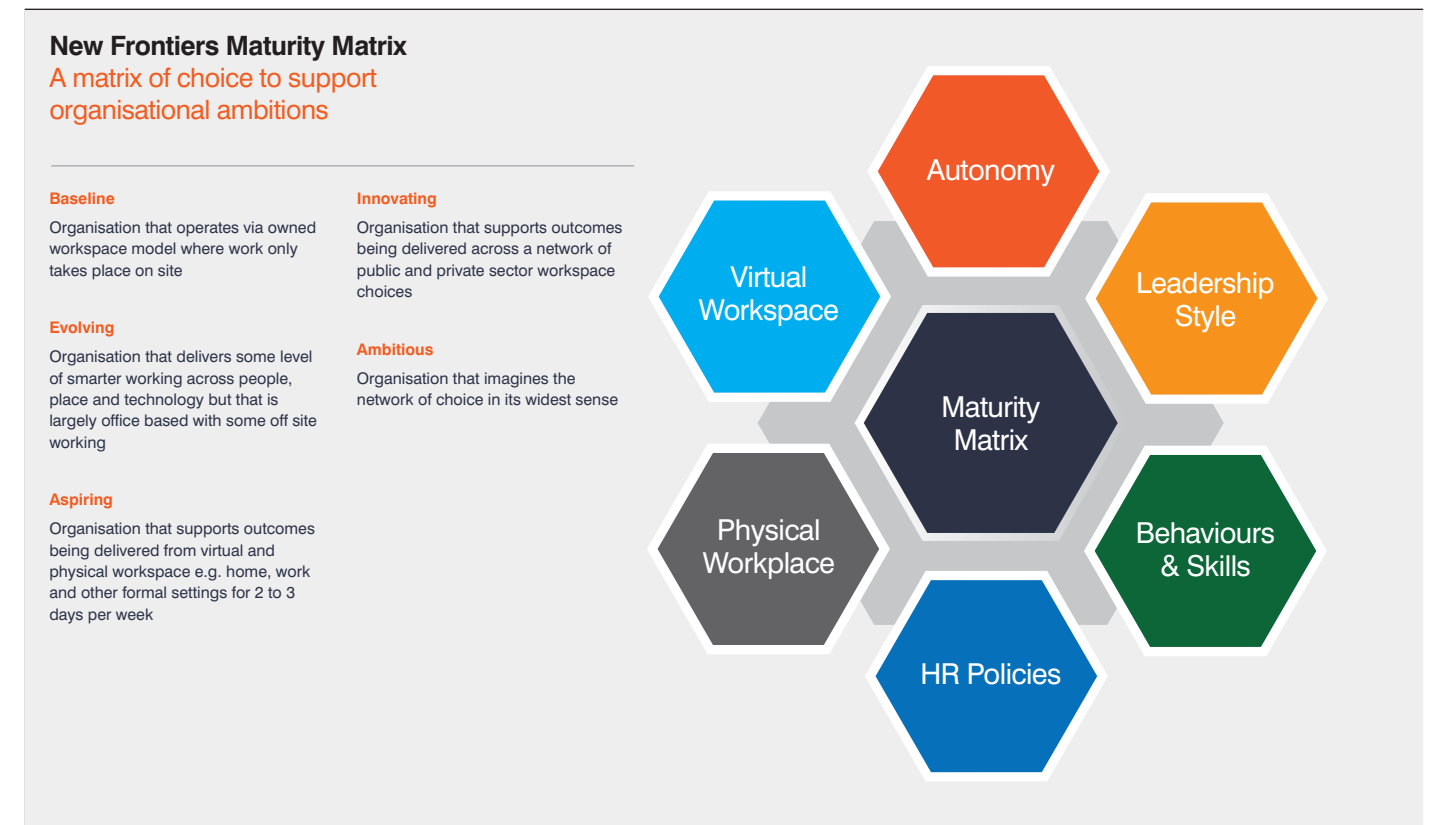


Figure M
New Frontiers for Smarter Working Maturity Matrix



Figure N
Workplace predictions
for the future

7.7.3 Space Standards

Our new workplaces of the future will likely be less focussed around traditional settings such as desks and formal meeting rooms. The focus is more likely to be around spaces that encourage us to work together and collaborate while allowing quiet work and introspection to also be supported on site as required.

The potential to occupy a smaller office footprint is there and the opportunity to rebalance that space to better embrace the new future is definitely available to us as well (Figure N).

The Michael Laird Architects case study in Section 8.0 shows how thinking is emerging with the prediction that net internal areas for offices could reduce by up to 40%. Of the remaining space, 70% could support shared collaborative activities, while the remaining 30% could focus on individual tasks, with ownership reducing to increase the flexibility and agility of the space (Figure O).

7.7.4 Look and Feel

The future workplace will be all about creating a great experience for the people that use it (Figure P)

Some people will be based in the office all the time but the majority of workers will visit once or twice a week so our new spaces needs to work for everyone.

At its heart, it needs to support that need for 'connection' that people have been craving during this period and it needs to do it well. It needs to support, culture, wellbeing and the social aspects of work.

Innovation and creativity need to be central to the purpose of the workspace and our new workplaces need to bring the best elements of home to the office. 'Flow' around the physical space needs to be seamless while allowing for physical distancing measures to be implemented easily should we be faced with another pandemic in the future.

Flexibility and the opportunity to reset and reconfigure spaces as needs change are critical (Figure Q)

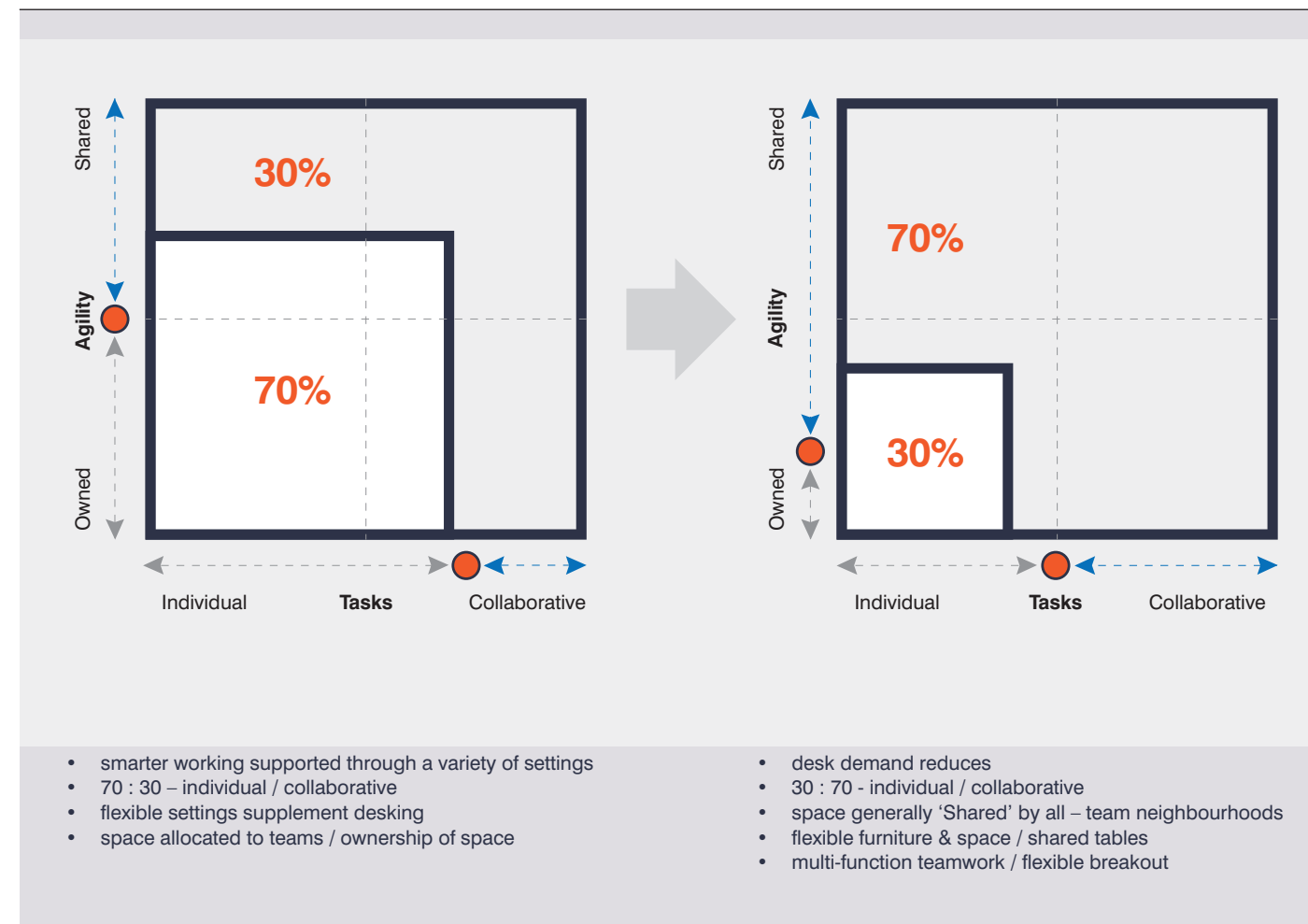


Figure O
Michael Laird predictions
for the future.



Figure P
Form DC, Workplace
of the Future

The five case studies in section 8.0 really bring this to life and illustrate the following perfectly;

- 'space' built in– wide corridors and generous spaces for people to meet and connect in social and work situations
- understanding that the workplace will be more about connection and collaborative work than individual working
- importance of wellbeing through spaces that are well lit and provide access to natural light, good air quality, temperature control and natural elements such as Biophilia and views to the outdoors
- Importance of accessing non work activities e.g. fitness classes within multi-functional space
- non-invasive technology solutions to support ease of access, hygiene and safety concerns

- feeling of autonomy over the work environment e.g. options to make changes to the workspace, flexible and multifunctional spaces, rental models to maximise opportunity to change

7.7.5 Kit of Parts

In summary, going forward we will likely need less desks, less formal meeting spaces and more areas that allow collaboration, networking, group work and places to deliver virtual sessions when in the office and everyone else is at home (Figures R, S, and T).

We need good quality social spaces with great coffee and places that encourage those little interactions that are so important to work culture.



Figure Q
Graven, Workplace of the Future

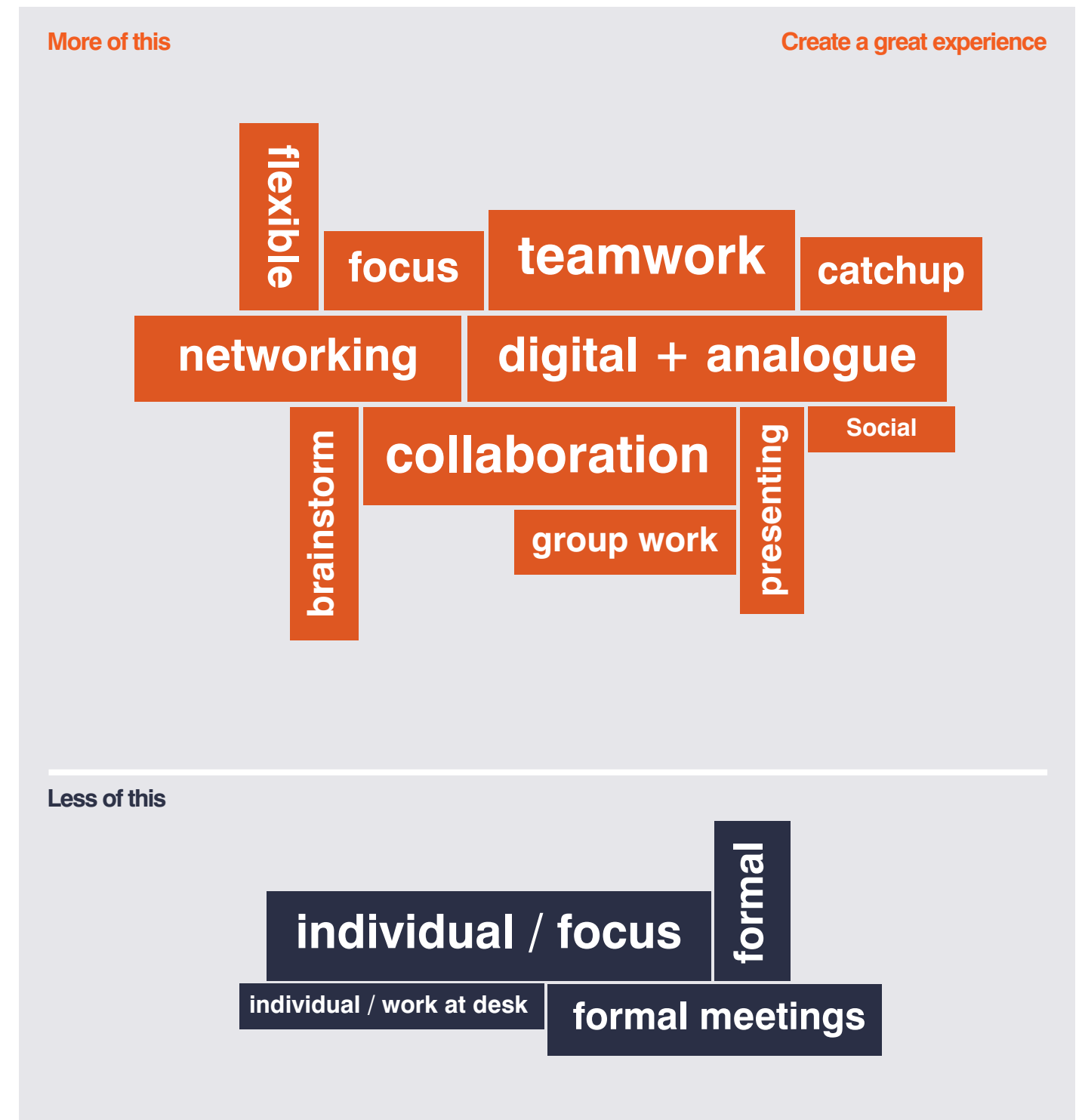


Figure R:
Adapted from Michael Laird Architects,
Workplace of the Future predictions

Public Workspace



Invited Workspace



Private Workspace



Figure S: Space Solutions, Workplace of the Future

Agile Workspaces

Can we design meeting spaces that can expand and contract to accommodate social distancing?

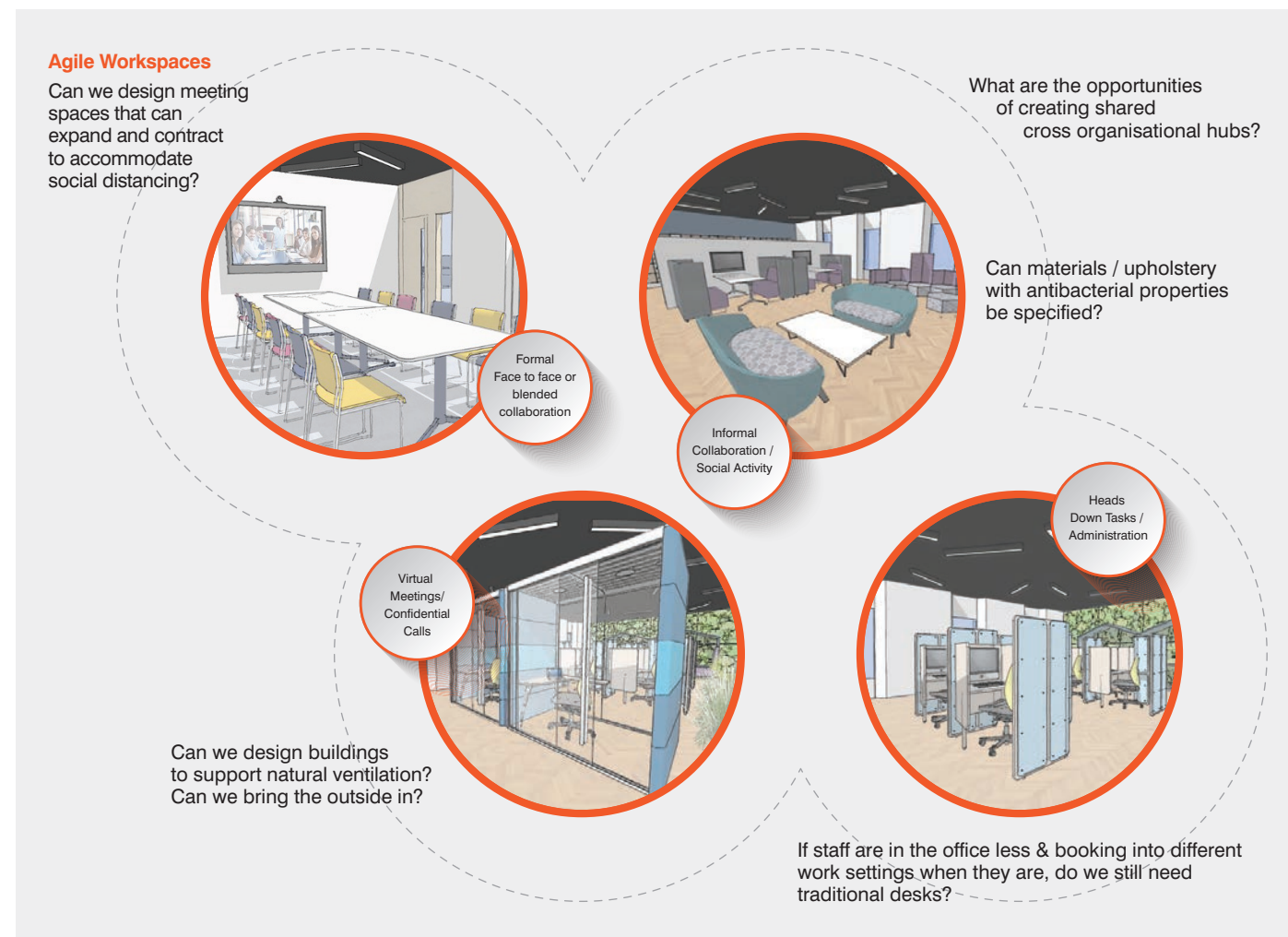


Figure T
Space Strategies,
Workplace of the Future

7.7.6 Working from Home

We also need to consider the approach to home working spaces as home becomes another setting for the delivery of work (Figure U)

As per the HSE website, an employer has the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other worker, whether its permanent or temporary.

In addition to a correctly set up workstation as per the relevant guidance outlined on the HSE website, organisations should aim to ensure that people working from home have access to;

- A workspace that supports posture, health and wellbeing
- A designated workplace that allows them to make that separation between home and work at the end of the day
- Good quality lighting with the opportunity to stretch your vision at points through the day – either near a window or being able to go outside

Different organisations will take different approaches to how they ensure the home work settings meet the needs of their employees. Whether they supply homeworking kit or support people to make their own choices, the important thing is that the home workspace is compliant with legislation and provides a safe space to work.

The financial implications of homeworking are also issues that have been raised. For many workers, the financial and time savings from reducing their daily commute will offset any potential cost impacts from working at home but for some, more discussion and analysis around this will be required.

Home Working



7.7.7 Protocols (virtual meeting etiquette, cleaning, resetting space)

A clear set of guidance and etiquettes will be essential to allow people to understand their responsibilities with regard to work and workspace.

For hub models where multiple organisations are sharing a collaboration platform, clear guidance has to be developed to ensure the facility works for everyone.

Where the opportunity exists to adapt the collaboration platform and physical space, there needs to be clear guidance in place to support resetting of that space and adherence to hygiene and safety protocols.

Guidance is also needed for managing virtual meetings to ensure equity for all those on the call. As we re-enter the physical workspace, this will be even more important as virtual tools work best when 'everyone' is accessing the call remotely.

More will follow on this as thinking evolves and examples will be added to the Toolkits contained in Section 8.0 as they arise.

8.1 Workplace of the Future Case Studies

The following studies are mentioned in the report and you can access links to the full studies below. Please reference both this report and the associated consultancy if you use any of the information or images contained within them.

8.1.1	Space Solutions	▶
8.1.2	Form Design Consultants	▶
8.1.3	Michael Laird Architects	▶
8.1.4	Space Strategies	▶
8.1.5	Graven	▶

The following tools to support this report are available by accessing the links below. Some are still being tested so we would be grateful for your feedback.

8.2	Leadership and Visioning	▶
8.3	Space Analysis Methodology	▶
8.4	Day in the Life Template	▶
8.5	Maturity Matrix	▶
8.6	Personas and Future Work Styles	▶
8.7	Placeholder for Emerging Tools	▶

Q: Should staff get an allowance for setting up their home office?

Q: Who pays for your broadband?

Q: What if you don't have a spare room?

Figure U
Space Strategies,
Workplace of the Future

Conclusions and Challenging New Frontiers

09

We have a small window of opportunity to deliver on the positive impacts that this period of enforced home working has brought about. The vaccine is already available and organisations are finally able to start considering how they will return to physical offices.

Since March 2020, people have had the opportunity to deliver and embed significant change to the way they work. There is a risk that people will return to physical space, perhaps get used to a temporary norm based around physical distancing and other interventions and we will lose some of the momentum and thinking we have developed during this period.

We now know that;

- It is possible to deliver the majority of office based roles remotely
- That people have enjoyed the lack of commute to and from work
- A significant cohort of people want change and a significant number of organisations are looking to deliver change
- Some people are struggling with mental health and social isolation issues
- Physical workspace is required to support the delivery of some tasks and to support the cultural and social aspects of work
- Organisations who capitalise on their employees' preferences to work differently will likely need less (or at least different) physical workspace
- The opportunity exists to work across organisations and sectors
- Opportunities exist for some organisations to create a new future for work based around the home, hub and main office. For some organisation, this will only involve home and hub but for others, a rich cross organisational approach could work though it must be balanced against financial considerations

Each public sector organisation will have to explore the economic, social and environmental impacts of any changes to their working models (including distributed working networks) and will have to weigh up carefully the benefits and risks prior to any decisions being taken. The public sector has a role in understanding potential risks at a place-based level and the development activity for any distributed working networks will need to recognise those risks and understand the potential impacts.

To re-explore our question from the beginning, how ambitious do we want to be?

The Way Forward

10

This is an exciting time to be working in the workplace sector. Please feel free to contact us for advice and assistance in delivery of this more distributed model for work. We'd also be keen for you to share your stories and successes with us as we will be updating this report at regular intervals.

Our goal is to gather as many insights as we can to help us both develop new tools and to help the organisations we deal with to learn from each other and deliver the best workplace experience for their people.

If you would like to connect with us, our contact details are as follows:

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