

Smarter working in Essex



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Smarter Working during the COVID-19 pandemic: One-page guide for Smarter Working

Apply public health guidance in making decisions on where people work

Based on the tasks involved in each role, consider whether travel is essential, whether social distancing can be achieved safely, and what cleaning protocols are appropriate.

Remember to review organisational structures, technological infrastructure, policies and processes, and working practices to accommodate changes in where people work – drawing upon the creativity of team members and advice from external sources of support where required.

Recognise the challenges that people are facing, and watch out for signs of problems

Some people will find it easier to adjust to social distancing and working from home than others – due to a combination of personality traits, personal situation, health conditions, and practical matters such as space and comfort at home.

Ensure that managers check in frequently to make themselves aware of challenges faced by their team - accepting those that are manageable and helping to resolve genuine problems as early as possible.

Develop a culture of trust

Develop a single framework with common expectations and methods of organising work for everyone, trusting individual employees to decide how best to deliver results within this.

Be candid about the impacts of the pandemic on your business and provide clarity about how hours worked and absences due to COVID-19 will be recorded and managed.

Find new ways to come together

Consider how previous face-to-face interactions can be replaced with virtual alternatives, applying technological and other solutions to ensure that nobody is left out. More frequent or different types of communications and interactions may also be necessary while social distancing is in place or people are working from home. This may be to provide important information, maintain a team's identity or provide opportunities to celebrate successes together during this challenging time.

Prepare to sustain the change

Once your business is able, make efforts to understand the costs and benefits in terms of technology and communication, staff wellbeing, results achieved, and environmental resource consumption. This may prove valuable after the pandemic to reap the rewards from this period of change.

A section of Essex County Council's website is designed to support businesses in the current situation: www.essex.gov.uk/support-for-employers-and-businesses

You can also follow our dedicated [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) accounts for the latest information.

What is Smarter Working?

We are sharing this guide, which we have developed using a document courtesy of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to promote agile and flexible working. We believe this pack will help businesses to change the way their businesses are run to help cope with the demands of all of us to stay home and stay safe.

Businesses are advised to allow workers wherever possible to work from home and to work more flexibly than ever in response to the rapidly-changing demands of the wider economic environment.

We hope you find the advice we are sharing useful.

Smarter Working brings together changes in working practices, new thinking about workspaces and creative uses of new technologies.

Being smarter and more flexible in how we work has many benefits both for the business and for individuals. As Smart Working develops, our skills in managing and being part of teams who often work at different times or locations need to develop too, in order to deliver these benefits.

Most of the core management competencies are the same, but they have to be exercised over distance as well as face to face, and asynchronously, as well as in real time. There's a greater emphasis on being more systematic, and on using new channels of communication effectively.

What's in a name?

We're calling it Smarter Working, but it's also known as Agile Working, Modern & Flexible Working, Worksmart, Workwise, Smart Working, Dynamic Working, Anytime Anywhere Working and a host of other names used internally by companies transforming the way they work. They all mean pretty much the same thing.

Despite the variety of brands that organisations use, there is cross-sector agreement about 'what good looks like' in the field. It's brought together in the British Standards publication PAS 3000: Smart Working Code of Practice (2015).

Central government organisations are required to adopt the Smarter Working practices in PAS 3000 by 2022.

And many more private, public and not-for-profit organisations are adopting it because it makes good business sense.



These are the key principles underpinning Smarter Working:

- Work takes place at the most effective times, and the most effective locations
- Flexibility becomes the norm rather than the exception
- Employees have more choice about where and when they work, subject to business considerations
- Management focuses on results, rather than on time or presence
- Work has less impact on the environment
- The costs of work are reduced by working in new ways
- Working practices enable employees to lead more balanced and healthy lives.

This is a major shift from traditional ways of working, where people are expected to always turn up to a specified workplace at specified times.

Moving work to people, rather than people to work

Portable technologies such as laptops, tablets and smartphones enable us to work just as effectively away from the traditional workplace. The new collaboration technologies reduce the need always to have physical meetings.

Rethinking work for the 21st Century

In an increasingly knowledge-based economy, more work tasks can be carried out from a wider range of places. Even in sectors with a lot of 'hands-on' work like manufacturing, construction and retail, increasing numbers of people can do much of their work on a more flexible and mobile basis.

So it's time to rethink how we work.

The difference between smarter working and flexible working

Since 2014 all employees who have worked for a company for six months enjoy a 'right to request' flexible working ([see "Smarter Working and the Law on Flexible Working in the UK" on page 9](#)). This involves a contractual change to one's working pattern, e.g. to work part-time, term-time, compressed working week or work from home (for some or all of the time).

Smarter Working adds to flexible working by embedding 'flexibility as normal'. Possibilities for flexibility and mobility apply to everyone, subject to the needs of the work. Instead of applying for a change of working pattern, employees are trusted to make appropriate decisions about where and when work activities are carried out.

Smart working embeds flexibility as normal, rather than exceptional

Smarter Working depends on using technology ([see "How we work"](#)) to work in these new ways, and usually involves different ways of designing and using the workplace ([see "Where we work"](#)).

Developing a mindset for innovation

Smarter Working is not about doing the same things only at different times and places. It involves a rethinking of processes, technologies, workplaces and behaviours to bring about the benefits we've outlined above.

Old assumptions of necessity should be challenged around traditional working places and times, e.g. the default position of working 9-5 at a specified workplace.

Managers and team members should think how changing times and places of work can improve effectiveness, reduce travel and resource use and drive down the cost of work.

Benefits for your business

Smarter Working brings positive impacts on the 'Triple Bottom Line' – benefits for the business, for people and for the environment.

In this document we are focussing mainly on the benefit to business and to people. We will be producing a document in future to help businesses think about how changing working practices can also keep our environment healthy and safe.

Business Benefits

Key to Smarter Working is having a strong focus on achieving results, rather than on presence or the hours of work. This helps to keep productivity and customer service at the forefront of everyone's mind, rather than just turning up to the workplace every day.

Smarter ways of working can also help to retain valued staff, for example after maternity leave or when people move out of the area for family reasons. And it can widen the net for recruiting the best people for the role, as people may not need to travel so often to the main workplace.

More details can be found in the "Appendix: benefit checklist", from page 17 onwards.

Continuous challenge and improvement

Central to Smarter Working is a constant quest to improve working practices and business processes as new opportunities emerge. A useful way to do this is through the CAN Test – to **Challenge Assumptions of Necessity** around traditional or habitual ways of working.

- It involves asking questions such as:
- Why are we doing this (at all)
- Why are we doing this here?
- Why are we doing it in this way?
- Why are we doing it at this time (rather than another time)?

Having identified practices and processes that could be done differently, the next questions to ask are whether using Smarter Working techniques there are ways of doing these things that are:

- Faster?
- More flexible?
- Lighter (i.e. less heavy on resources – time, energy, physical resources)?
- More in line with customer needs?
- More in line with employee aspirations?

People are encouraged to propose new ways of working that will deliver benefits. Focusing on practical questions in this way not only delivers benefits, but helps to embed Smarter Working behaviours and mindset.

Source: Lake, A. Smart Flexibility – Moving Smart & Flexible Working from Theory to Practice. Routledge 2015

Where we work

Collaboration in the smarter workplace should also be designed to include people working remotely wherever possible, joining on screen by technologies such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

Making this work, however, depends on developing a new culture of flexible collaboration and elective meetings (see “How we work”). All this adds up to a new landscape for work – both in the workplace and beyond.

Figure 1 (see page 8) sets out the emerging model of the work place. The desk is now seen as just one of many activity-based spaces where people can work.

Planning the right balance of spaces is based on an analysis of how and where people work, and analysing how this can change under Smarter Working.

Post-Covid 19, employers should think about how as well as the spaces in the main workplace, there can also be other employer-owned workspaces where – depending on size – the model of the main office is replicated. In addition there are third-party places, such as customer or partner premises and workhubs, public places and employee-owned spaces where people can work.

These are all linked up together by technology. The ideal is that **employees can work seamlessly across all locations, choosing the best places and times according to the needs of the tasks in hand.**

A major factor for determining where and when to work is saving time and expense from unnecessary travelling.



Figure 1: Where shall we work?

Working beyond the workplace



Smarter Working and the Law on Flexible Working in the UK

Legislation which came into effect in June 2014 gives the 'right to request' flexible working to all employees after 26 weeks' service.

The law requires employees to make a case showing that the new work arrangements are workable and will not adversely affect business.

Employers are not obliged to grant a request, but must give sound business reasons if they refuse. Employees may appeal if they feel a request has been unreasonably refused. Guidance from ACAS sets out a code of conduct for applications and dealing with them. Most large organisations now have policies to address the needs of the law.

It is a useful first step, but it is not the same as having a comprehensive approach to Smarter Working. Smarter Working enables us to have a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to flexibility that addresses both business needs and employee aspirations, delivering a wider range of benefits.

'Spaceless growth'

Many organisations now recruit the expertise they need from a wider geographical area, without requiring people to move. This increases the available pool of talent and can enable services to be delivered in new areas. As people are not expected to turn up at the main workplace every day, this growth can be achieved without increasing the amount of space needed for staff.

Remote working

With Smarter Working, remote working is not seen as something exceptional or problematic. It's part of the normal way of working. The remote location is considered as much part of the workplace as the base (if there is one!). The ability to work anywhere is made possible by laptops, tablets and other smart devices with wireless internet connections and by smartphones. The main issues are to do with security, confidentiality, safety and health.

Safety concerns relate both to personal security (e.g. not using portable equipment while driving or in unsafe locations) and data security. Prolonged use of laptop computers in inappropriate positions can lead to health problems.

These kinds of issues are sometimes raised as reasons for not working smarter. The key principle is the same as for homeworking: the employer's duty of care is the same wherever employees are working, whether in the employer's workplace, at home, on the move or in some other 'third place'.

This means that people need to be both properly equipped and trained to work in these other places, and a mechanism needs to be in place for periodic assessment of risk.

The aim has to be to enable rather than prohibit – that is to enable people to work safely wherever is the most effective and efficient location to get the work done.





Good practice for working at home

When people are working more than occasionally from home, it is important that their home workplace environment is set up properly with a desk and appropriate chair, and suitable lighting.

If a member of staff is designated as a 'home-based' worker (i.e. working most of the time from home) then the organisation's policies may specify the required furnishing and set up of the home environment. For people who work less often from home, there should be guidelines for a good ergonomic set-up, need to have regular breaks, etc. Usually there is training in best practice and online risk assessment.

There are no specific H&S regulations for homeworking as such: all the provisions that apply in the workplace apply wherever an employee is working. In general, however, the evidence is that working from home does not carry substantial additional risk, and where it reduces travel it actually plays a part in reducing risk.

Even so, it is necessary for everyone to be aware of the regulations that need to be observed and how to optimise their remote work spaces ergonomically. There are issues of good practice that are mainly a question of common sense and taking ownership for one's way of working.

When working at home, people should be fully contactable and able to connect to all systems and processes. The ideal scenario is one of seamless connection, with the computer integrated with the network and the phone acting as if it were an extension of that.

It is also important that home-based working has a 'professional face'. While it can help staff achieve a better work-life balance, it is important that home does not intrude into work.

The reverse also applies – employees need to feel in control of the home/work interface, and not feel pressured into allowing work to intrude into their personal time.

Cutting storage and going primarily paperless

Smarter Working involves moving as far as possible into an all-digital working environment. This is essential for people to be able to work flexibly and remotely and have access to all the data they need.

Creating, printing and storing paper (unless your work is in producing print media) needs to be avoided. Simply put, paper processes anchor people to the workplace. And people who are paper-dependent often limit the capacity of others to work smarter too.

How we work

Effective use of digital devices and communications is central to working smarter. Using these technologies, people can work more effectively both at the workplace and away from it too. In this section, we look first at the technologies that make a difference and then what to use them for to maximise the range of benefits achievable.

What technologies support smarter working?

Smarter working is supported by a combination of portable devices, cloud and remote working technologies, unified communications and technology infrastructure in the workplace and beyond.

Technology	How the technology supports Smarter Working
Laptops rather than desktop computers	Support greater mobility of work both within and away from the office
Tablets or other handheld devices	Support mobility, and may be more appropriate for some tasks rather than laptops
Thin client technology	Allows users to log into their applications and data at any thin client terminal, or through a software application running on a laptop or other computer
Smartphones	For communications and access to email, internet and other applications on the move
Electronic document management and records systems	Replace paper processes and can be accessed from anywhere
Remote access technologies	Allow employees to access their corporate networks, including legacy applications, securely from home and on the move
Cloud applications	Enable people to work anywhere using the same systems and data
VOIP (voice over internet protocol) telephony	Enables people to use their computer as a telephone or can be routed to a smartphone, and can replace desk phones
Collaboration applications	Teamwork is enhanced by applications that combine voice and video communications, instant messaging, screen sharing, file transfer etc and can integrate with email, calendars, and room booking
Business social media	Applications that enable posting of information, discussions, forming of groups etc –important for distributed teamwork, knowledge-sharing and maintaining informal business contact
WiFi	In-workplace, public, mobile and home wireless connection – essential for being able to touchdown and work wherever needed
Broadband	Broadband infrastructure both wired and wireless (Wi-Fi, 4G, 5G) – underpins all communication and work activity over networks. Visit www.superfastessex.org for more about broadband improvements being made in Essex

It's not only about using technologies – it's about what you use them for

At the outset we outlined the key benefits from Smarter Working. So when deploying new technologies, it's vital to keep the benefits you are aiming for in mind.

This means also that people don't only learn the basics about how to use the technologies, but have a clear idea what to use them for. This involves a transformation journey, so that people are not trying to work in the old ways with new tools.

Rethinking meetings

Using the new smarter technologies, you can move from a meetings culture to one of flexible collaboration. Here's how:

- Ensure the meeting has a purpose, not just a title. Cancel meetings that don't have a clear purpose
- It's a good idea to have an option in all meeting invitations to join remotely, and only insist on physical presence when that adds significant value, e.g. in a more interactive type of learning event or working through a complex issue together
- Challenge if everyone needs to be there all the time. If your part of the meeting is only a few minutes out of a two-hour session, arrange to be instant-messaged five minutes before you're needed, and then walk to the meeting space or join remotely
- Ensure people have all the information for the meeting beforehand, and then the meeting can focus on key issues and decisions.
- Have shorter meetings. Or just short and purposeful interactions in a breakout area (rather than formal meeting room) or online.
- Using mobile telephony or collaboration tools like Microsoft Teams and Zoom it's easy to invite people to join in a call, turning a two-way interaction into an ad hoc meeting. No need to arrange further meetings because you need information or a decision from someone else.

Going paperless – freeing people up to be mobile

In the previous section we looked at the need to reduce storage. And that depends on reducing paper. The 'paperless office' has been talked about for many years, and some people are sceptical it will ever arrive. But there are many advantages in setting a goal of being at least 'primarily paperless'.

This often requires a review of existing processes, in order to replace paper with electronic systems appropriate to the activities being carried out.

But it's also about changes to behaviours. Around 95% of the paper used and stored in offices is produced internally, and often for temporary purposes. This is expensive, inefficient and environmentally unsustainable.

The information is printed for uses such as editing, taking to meetings, sharing with colleagues, storing as a record of activity. But it already exists electronically, so is mostly wasteful duplication – we should work with the electronic versions whenever we can.

With applications such as Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Word, it is possible for people to work on documents together simultaneously, and online. Having a single version is the best option anyway, rather than emailing copies as attachments. Instead colleagues can be notified by a link (in an email or instant message) to the location of the document to review or work on.

This is important discipline for people who work remotely, so everyone has access to the same information, regardless of the location. Handing out 'the latest version' of a document on paper in a meeting is very bad practice. And it often creates problems for people trying to work smarter.



BT Case Study

BT launched a Work Modes scheme in 2006 so that they could model work patterns, space utilisation, desk take-up and task-type.

On the foundation of this modelling work BT is revolutionising its working practices. Eighty per cent of its workforce is already working agilely. And in the next six years the telecoms behemoth is aiming to increase its people per workstation ratio from 1.1 to 1.6, a move that would see 23,000 workstations eliminated in the UK. The reduction is a necessary precursor to a considerable reduction in the company's gargantuan 75.3 million sq ft portfolio.

It isn't just the office-workers either; call-centres too are increasingly working agile. They call it home-shoring. This is the advent of the virtual call centre: staff working at home in split-shifts, some as short as 30 minutes. Carers make up 80 per cent of the home-shoring workforce.

The company has declared war on hierarchy and territoriality: collaboration is the new watchword. Staff work in large team zones (like property and HR) within which they hotdesk. Each of these zones has desks made available for visitors from other teams.

And there are also spaces (the World Zone) in which anyone can book space. Cellular offices and the old "status-based" laptops are out. The only remaining "private" offices are HR offices where confidentiality is an issue, but Paton says that even these are "multi-use" rooms; the sense of ownership is gone.

Waters soberly says: "It's not a panacea, but what we have found is that people are happier and healthier." The UK average rate for staff returning after maternity leave is 40 per cent. At BT that figure is now an almost implausible 99 per cent; and when mothers are asked why they come back they point to the agile working initiative. The whole-life cost of losing a member of staff and recruiting a new one is estimated at £10,000.

Last year remote conferencing helped BT to reduce its carbon footprint by 97,000 tonnes.

Source: FM Link (Date unknown) British Telecom moves one step beyond Flexible Working — to Agile Working:

<https://fmlink.com/articles/british-telecom-moves-one-step-beyond-flexible-working-to-agile-working-2/>

Making the change

How do we make this happen?

It's important to work with colleagues to understand their current working patterns and business priorities. So we need to look at how we are working now to understand where, when and how we work and why.

Larger organisations will probably gather data on how premises are being used through a space utilisation audit, and survey employees about how their working patterns and their aspirations for greater flexibility and mobility.

Smaller organisations may not need to be so structured in their evidence gathering, but consulting with staff and helping them understand the possibilities for working smarter are essential.

Creating a culture of trust

Managers and team leaders have to learn to trust employees to make informed decisions. That can be quite a step change if managers and employees are used to a more 'command and control' style of working. The first of our Smarter Working principles was 'Work takes place at the most effective times, and the most effective locations'. It's not simply a matter of employee preference. It's about making a mature and informed decision about where work activities can be carried out.

Employees also need to work with each other, so there need to be broad agreements about how teams will work together, so that everyone knows where their colleagues are and when they are available for calls and working collaboratively.

Managing by results, not presence

Management needs to focus on the results people achieve, rather than time spent at work or the hours logged, or watching over people in the office.

This is good practice in any case. But in reality, it can be a big step for managers to do this.

It requires:

- Clarity about the output to be achieved and longer-term outcomes
- Routines for having work-in-progress available in systems or shared areas, so managers and colleagues can have access to it
- Clarity about reporting both progress and any issues e.g. delays, problems with resources, etc
- Employees taking greater 'ownership' and responsibility for their work.

A new approach to recruitment

To keep the momentum going for Smarter Working, it's necessary to make sure the organisation's people policies and processes have been 'smart-proofed'.

For example, when advertising new posts it can be routine to specify a job as full-time, standard hours and at a specific location. In a Smarter Working context, a new approach is needed.

This will involve not only a different approach to advertising posts, but also working with hiring managers and recruiters so they understand the new possibilities.

There is a wealth of under-employed talent out there amongst returnees looking to work on a more flexible basis. These could provide ideal candidates for the post.

And if looking for specialist skills, one can widen the potential talent pool by not limiting the search to the local area or people willing to relocate, if much of their work can be done remotely.

It is also sometimes routine to specify that employees above a certain grade must be able to drive. But this is something open to challenge in a Smarter Working context. And it opens the talent pool to people who have various kinds of mobility challenges.



Supporting employees' work-life balance

Numerous studies have shown a connection between having control over one's working life with good work-life balance, health and wellbeing.

Enabling employees to work in more flexible ways helps them to reduce stress and anxiety about work. A key area of stress in the working day is the commute, so eliminating this or allowing more control over when to travel helps to reduce stress.

This is one factor in promoting employee engagement and loyalty to the business.

Find out more about looking after your mental wellbeing while staying at home on the NHS website here www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/

Dealing with issues

Few want to return to the old ways of working once they get used to working smarter and have the tools and new work spaces to support it.

All the same, problems can occur as in any traditional workplace. It is the responsibility of teams to look out for each other, and in particular for managers and members of dispersed teams to spot problems and resolve them before they become major issues.

Another area of concern is the potential for over-working. Having the technologies for work to be accessible to you at all times shouldn't mean that you work all hours. But the temptation may be there to check outstanding tasks and communications in the evening and at weekends. The best way to prevent this is to work through expectations with the team and the importance of being able to switch off, and to incorporate these understandings into team agreements and company policy.

Appendix: further information

More detailed advice and guidance for Smarter Working can be found in the following publications:

- ACAS, The Right to Request Flexible Working: An ACAS Guide
- Andy Lake, Smart Flexibility: Moving Smart and Flexible Working from Theory to Practice, Routledge
- British Standards/HM Government, PAS 3000 2015: Smart Working Code of Practice
- CIPD, Employee Outlook: Commuting and Flexible Working
- **Flexibility.co.uk**, The Smart Working Handbook, 2nd edition
- Lambert Smith Hampton, Total Office Costs 2019. www.lsh.co.uk/tocs
- Peter Thompson & Alison Maitland, Future Work: Changing Organisational Culture for the New World of Work, 2nd edition, Palgrave MacMillan
- BEST growth Hub <https://southeastbusiness.org.uk/>
- Imperial College London - Top Tips for Managing Smart Working Teams www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/about-ict/smart-working-at-imperial/smart-working-toolkit/smart-working-for-managers/top-tips-for-managing-smart-working-teams/
- Gartner - With Coronavirus in Mind, Is Your Organization Ready for Remote Work? www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/with-coronavirus-in-mind-are-you-ready-for-remote-work/
- Gartner - 9 Tips for Managing Remote Employees www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/9-tips-for-managing-remote-employees/
- Smarp - 10 Tips to Help Your Teams Stay Productive While Working From Home During the COVID-19 Outbreak blog.smarp.com/10-tips-to-help-your-teams-stay-productive-while-working-from-home-during-the-covid-19-outbreak
- Redshift - 10 Best Practices to Support a Remote Workforce-and Ease Stress-During COVID-19 www.autodesk.com/redshift/remote-workforce/
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce - Coronavirus: 8 Things Your Small Business Needs to Do www.uschamber.com/co/start/strategy/business-owner-tips-coronavirus-pandemic
- Citrix - I'm working from home. Now what? Tips and tricks for remote work www.citrix.com/blogs/2020/03/12/im-working-from-home-now-what-tips-and-tricks-for-remote-work/
- Business West - Tips for working at home during the coronavirus pandemic, with kids www.businesswest.co.uk/blog/tips-working-home-during-coronavirus-pandemic-kids
- National Cyber Security Centre - Home working: preparing your organisation and staff https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/home-working?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

Appendix: benefit checklist

The following three tables provide headline guidance about how to achieve the benefits listed in “[Benefits for your business](#)”. They cover business benefits and benefits for people.

Business benefits include:

Benefit	How does that work?
Improved productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liberate time from traditional meetings to do something more productive• Work at most effective times and places for work activities• Streamline processes• Focus on results not presence• Reduce or even eliminate travel for routine meetings
Better customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create more interactions with customers through online collaboration• Reach new markets without the need to travel
Speed to decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New meeting and collaboration formats and focus on results make for faster and better decisions
Improved collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make full use of the digital collaboration tools to work together• Smarter office design supports different kinds of informal and formal collaboration
Improved innovation and adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the CAN test (see page 6) and ‘lean thinking’ techniques to develop a continuous improvement approach to processes and working practices – this embeds innovation in everyday worklife• Design spaces to be reconfigurable so as to be able to create new teams, create new project areas (etc) according to business need in fast-moving markets
Improved processes for work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliminate paper processes• Improve workflow, knowledge management and project management systems to better support remote collaborative working and managing by results• Adopt an ‘enter once, use many times’ approach to capturing and using data

Benefit	How does that work?
Reduced travel costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote working to reduce commuting and business mileage • Virtual meetings to cut out unnecessary travel for business meetings
Reduced real estate needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationalise property in line with actual usage • Support more remote working as company grows, embracing 'spaceless growth' as a strategy • Operate as a (mostly) virtual company
Workplaces better designed for the activities you do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign workplaces for 'activity-based working'
Reduced absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow people to work part-days (from home), according to their self-assessment, when they feel unable to complete whole days or feel unable to cope with travel to work, rather than be absent for whole days • Allow people with disabilities/chronic conditions to manage their conditions better, have medical appointments (etc) by focusing on output rather than presence or hours
Improved recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widen the pool of talent by removing barriers to recruiting from wider geographical area, and from more diverse communities
Improved retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable people to return from maternity/paternity leave working on a part-time and/or more flexible basis • Enable people who move for family reasons to continue working in the company, on a more remote working and flexible basis
Working time better aligned to operational needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use options such as flexible hours, annualised hours, time accounts (etc) to meet customer preferences or peaks and troughs of demand • Support employees to work from home if they have to collaborate or provide service across different time zones

Benefits for people – employees, contractors, self-employed, freelancers, jobseekers – include:

Benefit	How does that work?
<p>Better work-life interface/balance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable a wide range of flexible and remote working possibilities, with a focus on results rather than time or place • Provide training in managing the work/life interface • Enable people to work round family/life commitments
<p>Reducing commute travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up employees with remote-working technology and permissions • Ensure people working from home or local to their home are fully involved in relevant meetings and interactions (etc)
<p>Reduced stress, improve health and wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow employees more control over where, when and how work is done, focusing on the needs of the tasks involved • Use sit/stand or standing desks to break up long periods of sitting • Encourage mobility in the workplace, and taking breaks when working elsewhere • Have walking meetings • Ensure employees are socially involved both in the workplace and when working elsewhere
<p>Opportunities for more varied work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make good use of technology to remove geographical constraints over opportunities for project work, promotion and career development
<p>Overcoming disadvantage in the labour market</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specify and advertise posts as being open to all kinds of flexible work patterns, and highlight how your Smarter Working culture supports diversity