smarter working

Smarter Working handbook

your guide to working at NLBP Building 2 and Barnet House

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

Contents

Introduction

Smarter Working is our plan for the way we want to work in Barnet, with facilities and working practices which help us do our jobs effectively, reducing the amount we spend on accommodation.

There are three key things that our Smarter Working plan focuses on improving:

- people – engaging and investing in our people
- accommodation – better use of workplaces
- technology – ICT designed for your needs.

By delivering this, the council will save an estimated £5million a year, as part of a wider plan to save £45million between now and 2023/24. There is a clear trade-off: maximising savings on accommodation reduces the impact on jobs and frontline services. This will initially mean moving from three sites to two, coming out of NLBP Building 4 to locate in NLBP Building 2 and Barnet House, which will happen in the summer of 2015. Eventually we'll go down to one building based in Colindale, which will happen in 2017. Colindale will be a brand new building, planned and designed to meet our needs and at the heart of the community.

Smarter Working aims to ensure that across the council, and with partners working in our buildings, we will create a workplace where people and their teams can work in an environment that allows us to do our jobs effectively and efficiently and have more of a say in the way things are done.

This handbook sets out the benefits of Smarter Working and the practical information you will need to make the most of what Smarter Working has to offer us.

We will continue to work with you and your managers, using the all staff training programmes, the Management Academy and Leadership Academy that were launched last year, to ensure you have the right skills to do your job. We will also be assessing the IT we need to deliver the ways of working that Smarter Working promotes.

Andrew Travers,
Chief Executive

1. Smarter Working office environment

The Smarter Working office space at NLBP Building 2 and Barnet House is what is typically called an 'agile environment'. It is made up of different types of workstations, meeting spaces and breakout areas. In this environment you are expected to hot desk within team spaces and across the organisation where relevant.

Benefits of working in a Smarter Working office environment

By changing who you sit next to, you get to:

- have an opportunity to see the way other people work

- build better working relationships with a range of colleagues, supporting a more collaborative approach

- not always have to use meeting rooms.
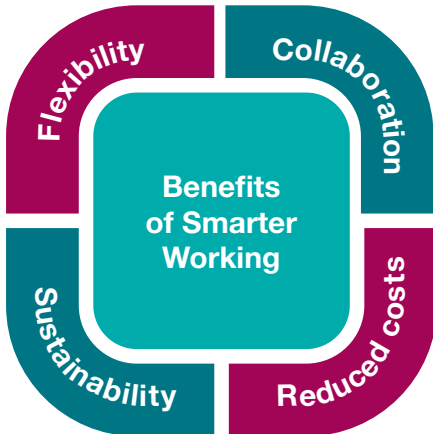
Make the most of the Smarter Working office environment

- you can mix up who you sit next to – move around on different days to help 'get the job done'

- there is no best seat, as seating arrangements will vary day by day

- you can work flexibly with your colleagues; consider swapping if they need to sit next to someone

- work with others across the council, by sitting with them when you need to

- collaborate to make the most of our new office spaces.

Flexibility

Collaboration

Benefits of Smarter Working

Sustainability

Reduced costs

Team spaces

Each 'team space' comprises of 'shared team desks', 'specialist desks' and 'team storage' and is designated for the use of a specific team or part of a service. This area is primarily used by members of this team as a base to preserve the team ethos. However, colleagues from other teams within your Delivery Unit can use any 'shared team desk' in the area that is unoccupied, if a touchdown desk is not available.

This means in most instances you would sit in your designated team space, however this is not a strict rule; there must be a degree of flexibility to accommodate everyone and to make the best of the new environment.

There are three types of work station:

- shared team desk (often referred to as a hot desk)
- 'specialist' desk
- touchdown bench.

There are two types of storage:

- team storage
- personal lockers.

> All desks, including specialist desks and touchdown benches, must be cleared at the end of every working day or whenever they are vacated.

Background on Team Spaces

Significant planning has been invested into locating Delivery Units and team spaces within the office space provided, in particular to ensure that teams are located closely to similar teams. This is to make the working environment as practical as possible, whilst also ensuring teams dealing with sensitive and confidential information are next to each other. The floor plan was agreed with Directors and Move Managers prior to occupation.

Workstations

Shared team desk

The majority of desks across the floor are 'shared team desks', comprising of a desk, chair, phone, monitor, keyboard, mouse and access to corporate systems via a network cable that plugs into your laptop.

Touchdown bench

These are located around the floor space, they are not associated with any particular team (even if they are based next to your team), and are available to any employee from any team or service.

Storage

Personal locker

Everyone will have a 'personal locker' for the storage of their laptop, work equipment and personal belongings.

Team storage

This comprises of shelves in cupboards and has been allocated based on business need. This is used for storing business-related materials including files, reference materials and any other equipment that the team owns. It can be used to store items that are used by an individual officer and also for any items that are shared between the team.

Specialist desk

These are workstations set up to meet a special requirement and are allocated by managers to:

- employees with a disability or medical reason that requires an adapted workstation, as advised by Occupational Health
- employees with an agreed specialist business need (for example, extra large monitor for CAD).

People who have been allocated a specialist desk will return to the same desk every day. However, specialist desks will be shared by other team members in periods of leave or absence. Generally, specialist desks are used by other officers (primarily, but not exclusively from within the same team) when the officer is absent from the office.

Things to note about 'specialist desks'

If you adjust any equipment you need to ensure that it is returned to its original position at the end of your working day

A sharing arrangement does not apply if the desk is unsuitable for sharing because of the detailed specific adaptations

Always use a shared team desk or touchdown bench in the first instance… a specialist desk is a last resort.

Manager responsibilities

Engage your team in understanding the new Smarter Working arrangements and ensure they comply with the new ways of working needed in regards to team desk sharing and use of the office space.

Where special arrangements are required in team desk areas for individuals who need a specialised chair or piece of equipment, you should request a DSE risk assessment in the normal way. Only by following the DSE risk assessment process can a specialist desk be granted.

General principles

When arriving at a workstation

Arrive in the office

Find a 'shared team desk' If you can't, find another team desk or touchdown bench

Plug in laptop cables

log on to phone

Set up to DSE requirements

Set up your workstation to suit your DSE requirements (see section in "Looking after yourself and your colleagues" on page 17), such as adjusting the chair, screen and keyboard.

Remember sitting with different people or teams is an opportunity.

Remember

Although nobody has their own desk, you should still treat all equipment on the desk responsibly and report anything that is damaged to the right team (e.g. IT or FM).

Also keep Outlook calendars up to date, so that your manager or colleagues can locate you.

At the end of each day or when leaving a workstation for more than two hours

All workstations (including specialist desks and touchdown benches) must be cleared at the end of every working day or whenever they are vacated for a period of more than two hours.

Clear the workstation for another member of staff to use it, by:

- logging off and putting away your laptop
- packing up, removing and storing any equipment being used
- removing any personal belongings
- putting away any items that may indicate that the workstation is occupied such as files, folders and stationery
- returning files to team storage areas or personal lockers when not in use
- reducing the opportunity for security breaches, fraud and identity theft, by ensuring unsecured, sensitive or personal information is not left on desks at any time.

Working on a different council site

If you are out of your main office, such as on another site, you are required to inform your manager or team of your location for the day. Also when working on another council site, you should seek to use team shared desks or touchdown benches in an allied Delivery Unit or service to your own in the first instance.

2. Making the best use of meeting spaces and time spent in meetings

The meeting space at NLBP Building 2 and Barnet House includes a combination of meeting rooms and break out spaces.

It's important that we make the best use of these; every room is available on the all staff booking system, giving us all flexibility and the ability to book rooms that are the right size for your meeting.

In many instances you will use the rooms closest to you, however the rooms on every floor are open to any booking.

Meeting rooms

These are available in various sizes to accommodate business discussions that require a discreet room. All meeting rooms can be booked on the same booking system, which means you can use a room anywhere in the building. Meeting rooms are primarily intended for meetings with larger groups of staff (as a guide – five or more) or for confidential meetings.

Break out spaces

These provide a flexible area for meetings, located in the open plan office. These spaces include tables and sofas and are provided on each office floor.

These spaces cannot be booked and are there for you to: take phone calls, have informal meetings, read documents away from the desk setting, or hold small meetings that don't suit a formal meeting area. The Atrium in NLBP Building 2 and the Break Out Room in Barnet House can be used as break out spaces.

Making the best use of space

When booking a meeting room, consider the following guidelines:

✓ use meeting rooms when you need to discuss sensitive information or for meetings for five or more people

✓ use 'break out spaces' for more informal meetings, or meetings of four or less people

✗ don't book a room that is bigger than you require

✗ don't block book rooms

✓ consider meeting at client sites or at other London Borough of Barnet sites

✓ cancel room bookings in advance if you no longer need the room, check if everyone is still attending; if the group has fallen below five people, could you now hold it in a break out space?

✓ if you need to set the room up in advance or change it back after your meeting, please book additional time at the beginning and end of your booking.

Do you always need a meeting room to hold a meeting – could you use a break out space?

SPACE

meetings

Making the best use of time

When planning a meeting, consider the following guidelines:

✓ don't wait for a meeting to make a decision

✓ ensure meetings are planned, disciplined and structured – running to time

Challenge the length, frequency and attendance of regular meetings. What more could be done outside of meetings?

✓ keep reports short and sharp and ensure they are circulated early enough, so that time in meetings is focussed on what needs to be achieved in the group setting

✓ read reports for meetings in advance so that time is not wasted on reading the papers during the time allocated for the meeting

✓ advise guests to arrive early to clear security and arrive on your floor to minimise the risk that a meeting will start late and run over into the next meeting slot

✓ schedule meetings to end a few minutes before the end of a half hour or hour, to ensure they don't overrun and impact on other teams needing to meet in the space

✗ don't be late for meetings; start meetings at the agreed time.

3. Making the best use of storage

As an organisation it's very important that we make the best use of the space we have, do not waste money on space that is not genuinely needed and actively manage our records and other equipment. This means only keeping hold of the things we need to do our job.

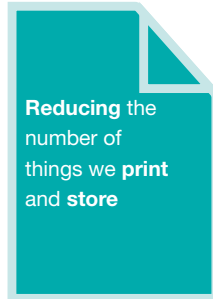## There are four key ways of doing this

Keeping on top of **records retention** and appropriately disposing of files or records that are no longer needed

File indexing records and files that are not needed on a regular basis

Keeping on top of **clutter build-up**, by disposing of what is not needed

Reducing the number of things we **print** and **store**

File indexing

Like many councils and government departments, Barnet has decided to invest in the use of an off-site specialist storage facility to manage the storage, retrieval and destruction of hard copy (paper) records and some electronic media. The majority of records managed by the service will be business records of a current or inactive nature, that still need to be retained for a specific period of time before they are disposed of. Files can be retrieved from the off-site facility within 24 hours and emergency files can be retrieved within three hours (in exceptional circumstances).

An overview of the process

Team member requires file retrieval from off-site storage

Team member requires file to be stored off-site

Team member contacts appointed Records Co-ordinator for their Delivery Unit

Records Co-ordinator contacts Archive Manager by email

Archive Manager will contact supplier to carry out request

If files are requested for return from storage, they will be delivered to Records Co-ordinator by following working day (or same day in exceptional circumstances)

If files are required for collection to return to storage, Archive Manager or appointee will collect from Records Co-ordinator by following working day

Benefits to using a file indexing service:

- these services provide a far higher level of security than we could provide locally, ensuring that the confidential archive information we hold about our residents and projects is properly cared for

- they provide a more organised service, making files far easier to access when needed

- the organised approach to file management results in better file retention and destruction management, within the right timeframes.

File indexing in practice

Each Delivery Unit will nominate at least two Records Co-ordinators. These people will act as the liaison between the Delivery Unit and the Records Management Service. The Records Management Service is based in the council's Information Management Team, in the Commissioning Group, and is managed by the 'Archive Manager'.

The Records Co-ordinators

They will take a lead role within Delivery Units for the co-ordination of sending files off site, as well as requests and returns. They will liaise directly with the Archive Manager on behalf of the Delivery Unit. Most people will liaise directly with the Records Co-ordinators when they want to retrieve or return a file.

The Archive Manager

They will be the lead co-ordinator within the organisation responsible for liaising with the off-site storage company and the Records Co-ordinators, as well as managing the retrieval and distribution of files when they arrive on site. Most people will not liaise directly with the Records Store Manager.

File retention and disposal

Getting organised and ordering the files you need:
• give your Records Co-ordinator as much notice as possible – last minute requests will make it more difficult for them to do their job
• where possible send your co-ordinator a list of files you need, rather than sending each request separately
• consider scheduling yourself a weekly timeslot to plan ahead and review what files you will need. Include time to think about what needs to go back
• could this be a regular item on your team meeting agendas, to help your team get more organised?
• remember to send files back. You can request them again in the future. Keep the shelves in your team space available for active files
• plan what you intend to do with the file when it arrives, taking account of meetings you are attending, off-site visits, home working and annual leave.

How to decide what goes in off-site storage

The file indexing service is used for paper files that are created as part of Barnet's ongoing business activities and need to be kept for legal or operational purposes. There is no legal requirement to retain paper copies of electronically generated records; electronic records are admissible as evidence under the same conditions of authenticity and reliability as paper records (most of which are now simply printouts).

Items that do not need to be sent off-site include:

- printouts of files that exist electronically
- published materials such as books, pamphlets and manuals
- paper items that have been scanned and are stored electronically
- duplicates such as photocopies of existing documents.

Sending files off-site

When you need to send a file off-site to the storage facility, you will need to liaise with your Records Co-ordinator to arrange for files to be removed.

Retrieving files

To retrieve a file, you'll need to give details to your Records Co-ordinator; they'll ask you for certain details (this will vary between Delivery Units). The Records Co-ordinator will then process the order through the Archive Manager for delivery within 24 hours or as an emergency within three hours (if a valid reason is provided). The supplier will deliver the files to the Records Co-ordinators, who will arrange for them to be distributed.

Requesting emergency files

There will be occasions when you need a file back on site very quickly and the normal 24-hour period is too

long. In this case, files can be back on site within three hours of your request. However, requesting files in this way is very costly and therefore this service should not be used when there is not a real requirement for it or to replace getting organised and planning ahead.

When do I really need this by?

Am I in meetings the morning after it arrives?

Is it an emergency request?

How much time do I have to action the file when it arrives?

Will I have left for the day when it arrives?

Will I be in a meeting when it arrives?

Returning files

Once you have finished using a file, you should contact the Records Co-ordinator to arrange for the file to be returned to off-site storage. This must be done in a timely fashion and at least within a week. The Records Co-ordinator will re-pack the records and re-submit them for storage.

Disposal of files

Once files are no longer needed and they have expired their retention period, they will be flagged as ready for destruction. This will be done by the supplier who has on-site secure disposal facilities.

The Archive Manager will inform the Delivery Unit Records Co-ordinators when a file reaches its pre-assigned destruction date. No file can be destroyed without the appropriate manager's consent, which will be sought by the Archive Manager in writing (by email).

Reporting a problem with a file

You should report any damage to retrieved files or missing information to your Records Co-ordinator, who will raise it with the Archive Manager.

Records Co-ordinators will report the loss of retrieved files to the Archive Manager in line with the Data Protection Incident Management Policy.

Reducing the number of things we print and store

With improvements in technology over the years, a need to reduce the amount of paper wasted, and greater need to keep information secure, most organisations have become paper-free.

Benefits of being paper-free

Increased security. All laptops are encrypted, which means they have an additional layer of security attached to them, which paper records do not have. Actively reducing your paper will help to reduce risks.

Easier to work in a hot desking and clear desk environment when you store most things electronically.

Reduced build-up of waste and less time required to regularly reduce waste and tidy up.

Safer storage of documents on networks, where they cannot be lost or deleted.

Reduced costs of disposing of general and confidential waste.

Improved version control and better ability to share working documents with colleagues, as well as improved corporate memory when individuals move on.

Clear desk, clear cupboard equals a clear mind!

How to operate in a paper-free workplace

Always consider printing as the last resort, as well as:

- ensuring all mail is sent and received electronically where possible
- papers for meetings should be issued electronically in advance, giving people time to read them on their computers
- remembering to consider the sensitivities of the information and use secure email methods when sending sensitive personal data or confidential matters
- considering the data's confidentiality – sometimes an electronic version is more secure.

Keeping on top of clutter build up and disposing of what is not needed

Use the following tips to help you stay focused on keeping the office environment clear.

C lean your cupboard

L et go of what you don't need

U se your space wisely

T idy up team spaces

T ake home personal items

E very desk clear

R ecycle what you can

Manager responsibilities

Contribute to and support the good use of the office environment with a continual focus on clearing clutter and efficient use of archiving policies and procedures to limit the paper files held on site. You are also responsible for ensuring your team comply with the same.

4. Looking after yourself and your colleagues

Under the new hot desking arrangements it is vital that all staff actively take responsibility for the their own health and safety at work; this is not a new responsibility but it will become increasingly important given that you will be working at different desks each day.

What are your health and safety responsibilities at work?

- take reasonable care of yourself and others who may be affected by your work activities
- co-operate with managers and others on health and safety issues
- comply with all current policies, procedures and guidance notes that are issued on health and safety
- complete any health and safety training required.

What checks to do each day

When you arrive at your workstation for the day, always carry out health and safety checks before you get started for the day or afternoon, for example:

1. adjust your chair
2. review work station layout
3. adjust the screen height, brightness and glare.

When using your space…

Always use any DSE-improvement devices as required, such as foot stools, wrist rests, document holders. Smaller items should be stored in individual lockers and larger items in team storage spaces.

What checks to do annually or on a non-daily basis

All employees are required to **carry out the appropriate Display Screen Equipment (DSE) online assessments on an annual basis**, which should be monitored through one-to-ones and supervisions.

If you require a specialised chair or piece of equipment, this will need to be organised in the usual way through the full risk assessment process.

DSE Self-Assessment should be carried out annually, however **if an accident/injury occurs or individual circumstances change (for example you become pregnant), then a new assessment needs to be carried out.**

Mobile workers, and field workers (when they work from home) are all classified as home workers under the Health and Safety regulations and are required to complete an authorisation form in consultation with your manager and ensure that you comply with the guidance in the employee handbook B7, in particular section 6.2-6.4.

As a lone worker you must have read and understood the lone worker guidance and completed a risk assessment as a lone worker, in liaison with your manager. A lone worker is an employee who undertakes a significant amount of their work removed from their colleagues, either by time or distance. For example, an office-based worker who works early or late when the rest of their floor is unoccupied would be a lone worker for part of the time; a librarian who works in a remote part of their library and only sees their colleagues sporadically would also count as a lone worker, even though members of the public are nearby. An employee popping out of the office to get their lunch, or going to collect a file from an unattended archive store would not count as a lone worker due to the brief nature of their separation from their colleagues.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 applies to all forms of employment, including flexible working activities that take place at the employee's home. Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (amended 1999) applies (duty to assess significant risks). The legislation applies to all work-related activities wherever and whenever performed.

Manager responsibilities

Ensure that each member of your team understands that they are responsible for adjusting chairs and work stations, and that they must familiarise themselves with the DSE assessment of work stations. Managers must review annually that staff have carried out a DSE assessment in the appraisal meeting.

Building information

Both NLBP Building 2 and Barnet House have their own fire evacuation procedures, which you are required to know dependent on what building you work in. You can find these in your building welcome pack or on the intranet. Each building has a joint First Aid Room and Mother and Baby Room. Each floor has a number of appointed first aiders and fire wardens.

General information

Please visit the Health and Safety pages on the intranet for more information on:

- health and safety training and requirements
- chair and desk set up
- lone working
- working from home
- fire evacuation procedures
- health and safety policies and guidance.

5. Keeping information secure

As an organisation it is paramount that we take care of the information we manage. Information security is not an option; we are all required to maintain a minimum level of information security to maintain our legal and contractual obligations.

In a Smarter Working office environment it's important that we keep information management at the forefront of our mind, ensuring that we take the appropriate actions in our daily routine. Although in most cases you will be based with your team, there will be times where this is not possible, for example working on a touchdown bench or from a different site. You need to consider what impact that will have on the way you work, if you work with personal or business confidential information.

Everyone should take the time to ensure they understand the council's Information Management policies and consider the below as basic practices that are needed as part of your daily work. You are also likely to have specific requirements that relate to the work you do or the team you are based in.

We must be as careful with other people's personal information as we would expect others to be with ours and report any suspected data protection and premises security incidents immediately, following guidance in the council's Security and Data Protection Incident Management Policy. If in doubt, contact the Information Management Team on tel: 020 8359 2029 or data.protection@barnet.gov.uk.

Managing confidential information when in the office environment

Do

✓ Always carry your building ID with you, whenever you enter the building or leave your desk. Staff and data security are important so you may be asked to confirm your identity if you're not wearing it.

✓ Always consider the nature of your telephone call and ensure where relevant that calls are taken in sufficiently private areas, including designated meeting spaces and meeting rooms if appropriate.

✓ Your computer must be password secured when leaving a desk unattended. Do this by using Ctrl+Alt+Del to lock your screen, even if you are just going to a printer or break out area.

✓ Always shut down your computer before leaving the building. This enables encryption and secures the council's network and information.

✓ Book meeting rooms in advance, if personal or business confidential information is going to be discussed.

✓ Lock all laptops and paper files in secure cabinets when not being used.

Do not

✗ Do not leave personal or business confidential data unattended at a desk.

✗ Do not allow anyone to enter the building or team space that is not showing a council ID card and ensure you always collect your guests from reception.

✗ Cabinets must not be left unlocked for convenience. The location of keys must be kept confidential and not be easily accessible to unauthorised persons.

General information

Please visit the Information Management pages on the intranet. In particular look at the:

- Data Protection Policy
- Data Protection Compliance Toolkit
- Remote Working Policy
- Paper Records – Secure Handling and Transit Policy
- Information Security Policy.

Managing confidential information when you are off-site

Do

- ✓ Computers must be completely shut down during transport to ensure that the encryption is enabled.

- ✓ Ensure your devices are password secured if you leave them for a short period by using Ctrl+Alt+Del to lock your screen, even when you are working at home.

- ✓ Only hold confidential calls in private areas.

- ✓ You must get line management approval before removing any paper versions of personal or business confidential data and only take the minimum required to do the job.

- ✓ You must make a record of what personal data you are taking out of the office in paper format. This means that we can quickly and accurately assess the risk if the papers are lost or stolen.

- ✓ When working from home, paper records must be kept secure and separate from any valuable items such as laptops. Put them away in a cupboard or drawer when you are not actively working with them. Use a lockable cabinet if at all possible.

- ✓ Data taken out of the office should be returned to the place of work as soon as possible.

- ✓ Do not access your work emails or any confidential documents using an unsecure wifi connection, such as one available in a coffee shop.

Do not

- ✗ You must not use USB data sticks, CDs or other removable media as portable temporary storage for electronic files and documents unless they have been approved and encrypted by CT.

- ✗ Do not work on any confidential documents or emails, if someone could see over your shoulder.

- ✗ Do not access personal information in a public place, unless absolutely necessary.

- ✗ Do not leave laptops or other items visible in your car and when travelling on public transport keep items close by, storing any confidential or personal data in a separate bag from your laptop.

- ✗ Don't carry papers 'loosely' as this increases the risk of dropping or losing them; use a file or folder to ensure they are secure.

For more information visit barnetwork

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