



Cabinet Office

# Government Soft Landings

Executive Summary



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Government Soft Landings (GSL) is a key element of the design and construction process maintaining the “golden thread” of the building purpose through to delivery and operation, with early engagement of the end user and inclusion of a GSL champion on the project team, and commitment to aftercare post construction.

The Government Construction Strategy (May 2011) identified the need to improve the value offered by public sector construction. The approach known as soft landings was identified as one of the ways to improve performance of buildings by “aligning the interests of those who design and construct an asset with those who subsequently use it”.

The Government Soft Landings (GSL) Policy was developed by the Government Property Unit, working with a Task Group of industry specialists. The GSL policy has been subsequently approved by the Government Construction Board in September 2012. The GSL policy will apply to all new Central Government projects and major refurbishments and should be implemented by Departments during 2013, working towards a mandate in alignment with Building Information Modelling (BIM) in 2016. The GSL policy can be found at the following: <http://www.bimtaskgroup.org/gsl> . GSL is an opportunity for the whole industry to work as one for better outcomes from Design and Construction to Facilities & Asset Management.

The on-going maintenance and operational cost of a building during its lifecycle far outweighs the original capital cost of construction, and GSL identifies the need for this to be recognised through early engagement in the design process. The policy is supported by this GSL Implementation Guide which provides structure and guidance for central government departments on how to embed and deliver GSL into central government. The policy is aligned with the principles and stages recommended by the BIM Task Group and the digital plan of work.

The following benefits have been identified in the adoption of GSL:

- Provides an asset that meets the end users’ needs and required operational outcomes;
- Enables end user involvement at an early stage and throughout the project;
- Enables early challenge of design decisions that may impact upon on-going maintenance and operational cost of the asset, which form the majority of the expenditure during the asset’s lifecycle;
- Provides fully populated asset data from the BIM model, reducing the cost of data input to FM asset management systems;
- Ensures that full training, commissioning and handover is provided at an early stage, which reduces the cost of protracted handover and means the building will reach optimal performance sooner;
- Post occupancy evaluation, which monitors the project outcomes three years post completion against performance and cost criteria, with lessons learnt captured for future projects.

Fundamental to the concept of GSL is collaborative working across the supply chain and key stakeholder engagement at all stages of the process. End user engagement is delivered through the role of the GSL Champion who will be embedded into the project team. The GSL stewardship group will be set up this year and GSL will continue to be implemented and developed across government through the BIM task group.

GSL is based on a body of work called Soft Landings <http://www.bsria.co.uk/services/design/soft-landings> that has been published by the Usable Buildings Trust <http://www.usablebuildings.co.uk> and the Building Services Research and Information Association (BSRIA) <http://www.bsria.co.uk> .

The term “soft landing” already exists in some parts of the construction industry and reflects the need for a smooth transition from the design and construction phase to the operational phase of a built asset. Combined with the concept of Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE), it seeks to compare the required performance outcomes with the actual performance outcomes. The key points of the policy that need to be addressed are shown on the following page:

- GSL will be a key element of the design and construction process maintaining the 'golden thread' of the building purpose through to delivery and operation
- Early engagement of end user and inclusion of a GSL champion to direct the end user engagement with the project team during the design/construction process.
- Commitment to aftercare (post construction) from the design and construction team.
- Post occupancy evaluation and feedback to the design/construction team and lessons learnt captured for future projects.

This document is written to assist Government Departments in their implementation of the GSL policy and is for guidance purposes. Detailed steps towards implementation will be determined individually by Departments.

The Guidance notes address the following elements that should be considered by government in implementing the policy.

#### Required Outcomes (To be measured by Post Occupancy Evaluation)

- **Functionality & Effectiveness.** Buildings to be designed to meet the business and social performance requirements and needs of the occupiers as well as providing healthy, safe, effective, productive and appropriately attractive working environments.
- **Environmental Performance.** Designed to meet Government performance targets in energy use, carbon dioxide emissions, water usage and waste production.
- **Cost performance.** Meeting government capital and operational cost targets.

#### Process (To be measured by Key Performance Indicators)

- **Facilities Management.** A clear, cost efficient strategy for managing the operations of the building/asset.
- **Commissioning, Training and Handover.** Projects delivered, handed over and supported to meet the needs of the end users.

Other areas that the Guidance notes consider are:

- Roles and Responsibilities, particularly that of the GSL Department Lead and GSL Champion.
- Aftercare to support the client in gaining optimum performance.
- Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE).

This document provides advice to the government client and should not be seen as a technical guide. Government Soft Landings needs to be seen as a tool to support a collaborative approach so that all stakeholders can realise optimum performance from the buildings and assets created.

The development and production of these documents has been done with significant input from the following:

Nick Shaw – Vision 4 Ltd

Roy Evans – BIM Task Group, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

Jaimie Johnston – BIM Task Group & Bryden Wood

Deborah Rowland – Government Property Unit, Cabinet Office

Rob Manning – BIM Task Group & Construction Industry Council

The Government Soft Landings Task Group consisting of members

from industry and academia.

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This document is available for download at <http://www.bimtaskgroup.org/reports>

