

2024 – 2025 Business Plan Workstream Activity

End of Year Report

Introduction

This report sets out milestones and year-end achievements against the 46 activities published in SFT's [Business Plan 2024-25](#). These activities are set out against the Company's 15 workstreams.

The achievements in 24/25 add to those identified in the [5-year Review](#) published in summer 2024 as an additional year of activity in the under our last Corporate Plan.

In our [2019-24 Corporate Plan](#), we published ten infrastructure outcomes which further the goals of Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, and to which our annual business objectives are directed. Quantitative and Qualitative indicators of progress towards these outcomes is presented on our [Outcomes Website](#).

Work Stream Reports

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Workstream	Improving Project Delivery
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Activity1

Progress with partners the work on developing and implementing initiatives to improve briefing and evaluation, setting up projects for success, and the enhanced role of consultancy to improve outcomes.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- The Briefing & Evaluation framework has been applied on 8 projects and we have continued to support the adoption of the framework across projects, programmes and portfolios.
- The Project Development Support function continued to support 4 projects. This included Peterhead High, Botanic Gardens, Baird & Anchor and the Newton Nursery project.
- We continued to chair the Local Authority forum Improving Construction Across Local Authority (ICALA) and have held fortnightly meetings and an away day in Nov 24.
- The programme focussed on improving how consultants are appointed to increase the value of these appointments, Transforming the Value of Consultancy (TVC), has been reevaluated and reshaped this year and the work now has relaunched the existing resources as well as a new programme plan for future delivery.

Additional areas of related activity

As a team we sought to engage with Industry through site visits and engagement sessions on construction sites. The team have attended or supported 5 site visits through the year.

Within the project development support function, we developed a new role with Jordanhill College and have supported the review of their campus.

Activity - 2

Provide leadership and support for the Construction Accord Transformation Action Plan

Key milestones and achievements in year

SFT supported the Transformation Board for the delivery of the Transformation Action Plan through the CEO co-chairing the Board and a team member acting as it's programme manager:

- Reporting – the team reported to 6 Construction Leadership Forum (CLF) meetings with programme updates and presentations
- Addressing Collaboration- Held -nearly 50 Board / working group meetings and sessions
- Addressing diversity - curated a diversity survey, showing representation across the Board and Working Groups.
- Increasing transformation collective voice - updated the CLF website, issued 4 CLF newsletters, 3 sector surveys, 1500 CLF followers on LinkedIn, 60 social media posts.

SFT staff led and supported working groups in their activities and a wide range of outputs during 24/25

- New information, guidance and technical insights through Procurement, Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative (CQIC), Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), Construction Pipeline, and Communications
- The Programme Manager commissioned and delivered an impact and evaluation process, working with Glasgow School of Art, which has informed the annual reporting and monitoring process for the CLF.
- The annual report was approved by the Transformation Board in March and will be presented to the CLF in May and published on the website.

SFT led the Transformation Board on the development of a new structure and focussed agenda that will be finalised in June 2025.

Additional areas of related activity

SFT issued a Transformation Board survey in December, the outputs from which has informed a refreshed operating and meeting structure in 2025.

Activity - 3

Work with partners to support the implementation of the Construction Quality Improvement Collaborative (CQIC)

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Up to the end of March 2025 there were 122 organisations committed to the Charter. These organisations employ some 46,000 people in construction.
- We continued to chair and manage CQIC business and activities.
- Development and publication of annual review for the CQIC.

Additional areas of related activity

We undertook an extensive programme of forums, presentations, webinars and podcasts during the year in support of the campaign to improve the quality culture. This exceeded the original plan for the year due to taking up opportunities that arose during the year.

- A quality forum was held in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) on 12 June. There were 22 attendees.
- Workshop held in partnership with the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) on quality of information held in August.

Compliance Plan – Lessons Learned from Early Adopter Projects

Through our work with Building Standards Division, we agreed to support them in Oct 24 with an additional piece of work to deliver engagement and a lessons learned report on the early adopter projects for the new compliance plan work. This activity was successfully delivered from Oct 24 to Mar 25.

Activity - 4

Continue to support partners in the south-east regional housing collaborative to develop new approaches for the delivery of new homes focussing on the increased use of off-site construction, and explore opportunities with others

Key milestones and achievements in year

- On the South East Regional Delivery Alliance for affordable homes, SFT continued to support co-ordination and delivery of the group through:-
 - Development and launch of new knowledge hub to host
 - Update and refresh of affordable housing pipeline.
 - Delivery of webinar on approach in April 2024.
- Continued to chair and manage the MMC National Working Group for the Transformation Action plan and this involved the development and publication of a survey on MMC.
- Developed pipeline prototype for Highlands & Islands Enterprise housing initiative for the North West region.

Additional areas of related activity

We continued to attend and engage with the working group for Passivhaus Equivalent Standard and engage with Building Standards Division to support their work.

Compliance & Assurance for Very Low Energy Buildings

Through our engagement with Building Standards Division, we were approached in October 2024 to work in partnership with them to deliver exploratory research and engagement with projects to capture lessons in the delivery of very low energy buildings. This research was designed to inform future guidance planned for 2026. The work was successfully delivered through the appointment of consultancy support and delivery of report and findings in March 2025.

Activity - 5

Maintain and develop data and insights support in key areas for improving project delivery, including the Construction Industry Pipeline Forecast Tool, and the Community Infrastructure Cost and Carbon Benchmark Database

Key milestones and achievements in year

Construction Pipeline Forecast Tool

. We had submissions by 45 public bodies and continued to engage with new procurers to encourage their support. The last update recorded £18.1bn worth of public sector projects. We continued to progress and scale the use and impact of the tool across Scotland. We published two updates in July 24 and January 25. We have also held two webinars to coincide with each publication. We published updates to the tool in Sep 24 to improve user engagement and applications.

Community Infrastructure Benchmark Database

The database and associated projects continued to grow and this year saw the inclusion and update for a number of Learning Estate Investment Programme Projects. There were 19 of the 47 LEIP schools added to the database and available for use by the public sector clients. Further projects will be added to the system in the coming year.

Baseline Skillset Tool

The baseline skillset tool continues to be adopted across the LEIP programme. The tool has remained operational, and the team have offered support to public bodies as and when required to support adoption and use.

Additional areas of related activity

Across our data tools and systems, we have maintained ongoing engagement through speaking at meet the buyer events, institutional working groups and managed our national pipeline working group.

We have also continued to support and attend the Scottish Tender Price Assessment Panel, conceived and developed by the team, and now managed by BCIS.

Workstream	Infrastructure Technology
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Activity -6
Maintain leadership and continue to provide support to implementation and scaling of digital and data-led strategies and solutions within the planning, design, and construction stages of projects

Key milestones and achievements in year

- The Standard Information Management Plan (SIMP) for major projects continued to be adopted across the LEIP programme. The SIMP is now adopted on £2bn worth of projects, across 53 projects and 23 public bodies.
- Due to increasing interest, we developed the initial version of the Standard Information Management plan for minor projects with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde & Maryhill Housing Association.
- We continued to chair cross industry working groups to support the development and adoption of Building Information Management (BIM) and the SIMP through chairing 3 working groups.
- We continued to manage and maintain collaboration through our MoU with the Irish Government on their own BIM programme.
- We launched Project Information Handover guidance on the BIM portal in Oct 24
- Our work in relation to the digital twin / asset management dashboard was a finalist in UK Construction Computing awards and was awarded runner up in October.
- We developed and deployed a new digital/asset management tool for East Renfrewshire Council and there is growing demand for its application across other councils.

Additional areas of related activity

We continued to support and engage with wider industry working group with team members involved standards development and members of BSI committees.

The team have also supported academia, and members have contributed to Strathclyde Masters programme for Building Information Modelling as visiting lecturers to the University.

Activity - 7

Maintain leadership and continue to provide support to implementation and scaling of digital and data led strategies and solutions to support asset performance and analytics

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Successful launch and publication of the Guide to Smart Infrastructure for the Learning Estate in August 2024.
- New guidance and requirements for smart schools and enhanced monitoring being adopted on all LEIP phase 3 schools projects.
- We held and convened 2 national digital estate working group meetings to share knowledge and created 3 new case studies for Lasswade High School, Mauricewood Primary School and an Asset Optimisation case study.
- We established and delivered front runner projects as part of the new Data & Insights Lab for SFT including the development of a forward plan for the group.

Additional areas of related activity

The team are active in Standards development and our Senior Associate Director is leading the work for the International Standards Organisation on ISO TC/267/AG1 - for the development of a standard for change management for FM.

We continued to support wider awareness and knowledge sharing through webinars to promote the work of the SIMP and the new guide for smart infrastructure.

Workstream	Hub Programme
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Activity 8
Continue to manage the programme level operation of hub, including assurance, performance, and shared learning

Key milestones and achievements in year

Work continued on activities for programme assurance, performance, medium term strategy, and shared learning. The pipeline of projects and appointments for strategic services continued to grow during the year.

Activity 9

Support enhanced engagement across the hub Territory Partnering Boards
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Key milestones and achievements in year

Useful progress was made with the Territory Partnering Boards, working alongside the Hub companies, to facilitate and support the preparation of Territory development plans. There has been good engagement across all the boards. In each of these areas, the outputs from strategic planning activities have been assembled, and more work is now required to shape these into prioritised work plans.

Activity 10

Support public bodies with their deployment of project delivery improvement activities.

Key milestones and achievements in year

Useful progress was made in the arena of improving construction quality. Participants in the east, west and southwest, along with their hubCos, are supporting the development of the Building Standards Compliance Plan Approach with the provision of Early Adopter projects.

The gathering of data for the cost benchmark database continued and we will seek to enhance this in the future. A significant highlight of the year was the development of the carbon element of the database.

Meaningful work began in most areas on developing approaches for enhancing the approach to decarbonisation moving towards delivering net zero.

Additional areas of related activity

The work in the North to establish a programme across several schools is a highlight of collaboration, involving SFT's learning estate and improving project delivery teams.

Activity 11

Increase capture of project level information to support programme management and improvement activities
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Key milestones and achievements in year

The highlight of the year was the enhancement of the social impact database work. A major reportable event was reached when the Programme's (monetised) social impact delivery exceeded £1bn.

Delivering social impact through the Programme's construction projects is now business as usual. Through the collective efforts of the SFT team and the hubCos, initiatives which deliver greater levels of inclusive economic growth are being deployed. The "Build" initiative, which originated within the South West Territory, has now been adopted by East Central and West Territories. This directly supports micro businesses on their path to business maturity.

Workstream	SFT Investments
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Activity 12
Protect SFTi's investment in the 5 hub companies by supporting the hub companies in the delivery of best in class community infrastructure.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Through our board representation, SFT Investments worked closely with the companies and the hub PMO in developing and delivering project pipelines – this is fundamental to the success of the programme and the viability of the companies.
- The impact of higher inflation over the last few years and public sector budgetary constraints continue to provide challenges with project development cycles taking longer due to affordability challenges. The hubcos are managing this effectively and mitigating the impact to an extent through staged payments.
- At the financial year end there were no immediate concerns regarding financialbility of the hubcos. Tier1B contractor (Connect Modular) on the £9.5m Young Persons Supported / Almondvale Housing project in the South East territory went into administration in early January – Ogilvie was appointed replacement contractor and hub SE worked closely with the administrator and West Lothian Council to mitigate the impact on the company and its finances.
- Participants are increasingly turning to the hubcos to undertake more front-end strategic work. The type of work is across several areas and sectors, including territory wide net zero collaboration groups, education estates planning, wider place-making initiatives, and exploring potential social housing delivery models. This strategic support work enables the hubcos to build on and develop client relationships and to shape and influence future capital projects. It has also resulted in wider collaboration across territories e.g. the North and West hubcos are working together on a standardisation model for the housing sector.
- In summary, Investments has met the activity programme and companies continue to successfully deliver high quality projects, have a healthy pipeline of projects, and SFTi's shareholdings (including a working capital loan to hub West, noting that the working capital loan to hub South West was repaid during the year) are considered safe - robust monitoring processes are in place in companies and in SFTi.

Additional areas of related activity

- One key area emerging area is the cross-over between SFT's Net Zero Buildings and Investments teams. Ongoing dialogue is held between Net Zero Buildings, Investments and Operational Contract Management teams to explore e.g. Power Purchase Agreement feasibility studies.

Activity 13

Manage the portfolio of DBFM investments ensuring that the best interests of the company and its stakeholders are supported and, as far as possible, base case target returns are delivered to SFTi.

In addition, support DBFM companies in their steps to ensure that facilities continue to be maintained to a high standard and encourage the move to net zero carbon where possible promoting sharing of learning across the DBFM portfolio.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- DBFM Investments are managed through investee company board representation and investment portfolio monitoring. In addition to this, an independent commercial review of the investment portfolio model was undertaken ahead of the annual statutory audit.
- Investments are monitored in accordance with Investments Management Policy with portfolio performance confirmed through portfolio model review (undertaken May 25) and statutory audit. This confirmed target returns were met for FY2425 and no impairment was recognised although as noted previously, there is a risk that increased corporation tax will have an impact on future subordinated debt repayments. Potential mitigants are being explored to manage this risk.
- During the financial year a few projects were subjected to senior lender lock-up restrictions. Two projects (Dalbeattie and Inverclyde) were in funder lock-up at the financial year end.
- At time of writing c20% of the portfolio is under enhanced monitoring / formal watch. These projects are being pro-actively managed by the investee company boards and their Operations Teams. Although requiring more time and resource, currently we do not expect an impact on returns.
- Contractor appointments were made for the initial latent defect surveys (earliest hub North and South East DBFMs). The first couple of survey have been undertaken and findings reported. . Lessons will be shared for future latent defects surveys across the programme.
- Progress has been made during the year on assisting the DBFM projects with their transition to net zero, particularly through actions to address energy usage. Challenges around funding for significant carbon reduction investments (e.g. through replacing energy systems) remain although options are being explored through lifecycle plans.

Additional areas of related activity

- Transfer of FM contract from GTFM to FES FM on Alford school completed in May 24. The handover of service provision ran smoothly and service provision continues to perform well.
- DBFM finance teams worked with tax advisers to submit updated tax returns for the six projects which have been identified as being eligible for DLP tax relief.

Workstream	Digital Connectivity
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Activity 14

Identify and develop options for extending wireless connectivity across Scotland in areas of strategic need, that facilitates sustainable and inclusive outcomes and optimises existing investment/ committed funding.
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Key milestones and achievements in year

- Engagement was undertaken across the industry and with key anchor organisations around the application of different wireless connectivity solutions building upon principles such as enhancing coverage, sharing, cost efficiency for roll out and neutral hosting / user solutions: this engagement shaped a series of trial projects and opportunities.
- A report was produced for Scottish Government detailing trends, opportunities and new technologies.
- Initial findings of the Streetwave mobile coverage measurement exercises (e.g. in Argyll & Bute) were collated and used to inform a series of small cell trials in Prestonpans, Barr (South Ayrshire) and the Western Isles.
- FarrPoint were appointed to produce an updated mobile coverage map for Scotland, alongside a cluster analysis exercise to explore where there are still significant 'not spots' / lack of coverage for communities. This information is being used to inform future industry engagement, trials and solutions and analysis.
- Foundation work was undertaken to bring together partners to develop small cell trials to improve connectivity in Lerwick with Shetland Islands Council and at Loch Katrine, both with Vodafone.,
- Orkney Ferries: The Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite WiFi trial on Orkney Ferries has installed a high-quality user experience on three vessels and a benefits realisation exercise was developed for launch..
- Scotrail: The LEO satellite trial on the Far North Rail Line progressed with installation. The timeline has been influenced by the technical / engineering solutions to be developed / put in place.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity 15

Support the SG Digital Connectivity Division team to consider factors relating to public sector investment in digital infrastructure and the interface with wider publicly funded infrastructure projects.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- In May, SG invited the Senior Associate Director for Digital to lead their Broadband delivery programmes in a role embedded within the government team for a minimum of 12 months. The role includes taking policy into delivery for a major infrastructure programme, coordinating across geographies and with the market to improve outcomes for people and places. It aligns closely with SFT's core competencies as well as being a high priority for Government.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Workstream	Innovative Finance
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Activity -16

Develop and support long term innovative funding and financing models to mobilise greater private capital towards priority areas of additional infrastructure especially those to support the transition to net zero

Key milestones and achievements in year

- The Deputy First Minister set up the ‘Increasing Investment Programme’ and SFT has proactively contributed to the work of the DFM and her officials over the year. This work included setting out our focus on developing alternative approaches to enable the funding and financing of public infrastructure; understanding how market conditions might be shaped to draw in infrastructure investment over the medium- and longer-term, and a focus on housing investment.
- Support was provided to Economy, Infrastructure Division, Lifelong learning and Skills, Housing and Health to: analyse ad hoc external private investor proposals; and to support a number of Scottish Government bodies on drawing in investment or potential for income generation to support infrastructure investment.
- Engagement undertaken with private investors, the National Wealth Fund and Scottish Government and UK Government officials in relation to energy decarbonisation.
- SFT delivered a workshop on electricity market reform to a wide ranging Scottish Government policy group - heat, transport, onshore wind, networks, offshore wind, hydrogen and whole energy systems.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity -17

Provide ongoing commercial support on revenue funding mechanisms and reporting on revenue funded public infrastructure projects

Key milestones and achievements in year

In our role as Nominator of the Public Interest Directors (PIDs) for 15 NPD/ NPDO companies, we have supported the rotation or reappointment of 13 PIDs that were due in the financial year. SFT also hosted the quarterly PID forums covering a range of topics relevant to the PID duties.

Data updates were published on the SFT and Scottish Government websites to continue to support transparency around the NPD and hub DBFM projects. SFT collated data from public bodies to update the estimated future revenue commitments associated with the 51 projects in the NPD/hub DBFM programme projects..

Workstream	Operational Contract Management (OCM)
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Activity - 18
Continue the implementation of the programme approach to the handback of Public Private Partnership projects including ongoing project support.

Key milestones and achievements in year: -

The OCM team provided ongoing support for both health and non-health projects within the Handback programme throughout the year. For health-related projects, the team worked closely with colleagues from the Specialist Support Team (SST). Activities undertaken included :

- Using the Handback Readiness Reviews (HRR) as a diagnostic tool, the team followed up on progress with all four authorities on the reviews conducted in 2023/24.
- 14 additional HRRs were completed in year
- The team provided ongoing support for the education handback forum and for individual handback education and health projects (jointly with NHS Assure for Health)

Additional areas of related activity

The team have actively engaged with public and private sector partners to maintain our corporate profile and promote key initiatives. This included presentations at the Business Services Association (BSA), Adlleshaw Goddard’s Scottish handback conference participating in the Operational PPP Summit and NHS National Conference, and maintaining ongoing dialogue with the IPA, investors, MSA providers, and FM service providers.

Activity - 19

Adopt a systematic approach to the delivery of a Net Zero transition within Scotland's PPP/PFI sector and help engender a step change in attitudes towards energy use in the built PPP/PFI environment

Key milestones and achievements in year.

- Energy Compliance Assessments, were carried out on 3 projects, following assessment, similarities were found across all sites. A Guidance Note was created to raise awareness of effective actions Boards can take to optimise energy usage.
- The team supported both NHS Highland and the Highland Council handback Net Zero projects as part of the wider handback workstream.
- The team developed a Net Zero/Decarbonisations register for operational PPP/PFI projects in consultation with the collaborative groups and rolled out across all non-health public bodies.
- Through a combined SFT/SST approach the team set up a programme of engagements with Semperian, Equitix Management Services, Roberston Capital Projects/Investments and Galliford Try Investments to discuss opportunities for leveraging any ESG/investment opportunities around the NZ agenda. This identified an opportunity to consider a feasibility study around the development of Power Purchase Agreements for Hub DBFM projects which will form part of PPP Team's workplan for 2025/26.

Additional areas of related activity.

None

Activity - 20

Maintain operational contract management support for education and health projects to continue efficient and effective management of PPP assets to support service delivery

Key milestones and achievements in year.

1. A standard operational contract performance review template was developed consistent with the handback readiness process. The document will be subject to further development as each time a review undertaken.
2. Three operational reviews were undertaken with follow-up issues being dealt directly with the relevant contract managers.
3. Collaborative network events were conducted and supported by the team throughout the year with meetings typically being held on a quarterly basis. A range of topics has been covered by way of training sessions or experiences shared sessions.
4. Ad hoc commercial support provided to 15 public bodies as issues arose

Additional areas of related activity.

- Developed a tool to provide a high-level introduction to the main components of the HAI-SCRIBE framework (the Healthcare Associated Infection Systems for Controlling Risk in the Built Environment), outlining key steps and, importantly, the practical interfaces required by contracting parties.
- Targeted training was provided during the year to a number of NHS boards and Councils.
- Presented to the quarterly Public Interest Director forum on a topical contract management issue.

Workstream	Learning Estate
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Activity 21

Manage the delivery of the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP), by embedding programme processes, initiatives, and outcomes-based funding across all project stages.

Key milestones and achievements in year

Programme progress and governance

FY24/25 saw significant activity take place across the LEIP, supporting programme processes on Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects and with the addition of the Phase 3 projects in year. This included workshops, sharing initial funding calculations, ensuring the programme Terms and Conditions are embedded across the programme and hosting pre planning and pre construction workshops. An operational management process was put in place for projects now completed and open, collecting the required evidence for outcomes based funding payments to be made.

Programme management remained the backbone of the teams activity, including the reporting to the LEIP governance forum which is co-chaired by Scottish Government and COSLA and were SFT provided the secretariat function.

6 projects went into construction FY24/25 (initial target 16 projects)	3 projects opened FY24/25 (initial target 6 projects)
Nairn HS	Dunfermline Learning Campus
South West Fife HS	East Calder PS
Callander PS	Montgomerie Park PS
Westerhailes HS	
Dumfries HS	
Paisley Grammar School	

Project Delay

The number of projects starting construction or opening to pupils was lower than forecast. In addition to technical, land acquisition, planning and procurement process delays, high tender costs continued to pose challenges to projects with extensive value engineering often having to be conducted. Projects experienced delay in construction partly due to complexity (eg Passivhaus requirements) but also to changing/more flexible work patterns across the construction sector leading to elongated construction programmes. A delay mechanism to manage and mitigate the risks for the programme was introduced.

Additional areas of related activity

An initial review of area and cost metrics was undertaken. The initial findings were shared with the programme board in March 2025 and further assessment is planned.

Following discussion with the Scottish Government Learning Directorate, Advanced Learning, Early Learning & Childcare and Infrastructure Investment Division, initial work has commenced on a refresh of the Learning Estate Strategy that was published in 2019. Preparatory work also commenced on the potential for future investment in the schools estate. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills reiterated her ambition that 100% of schools should be in condition A/B and that work should progress to explore how this could be achieved.

Activity 22

Work with local authorities and delivery partners to support the design and technical development and delivery of the Learning Estate Investment Programme.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- The team continued to challenge and support projects on all aspects of design including pre planning **design workshops** with all projects to share best practice in advance of securing statutory Planning approval.
- On direction from the Cabinet Secretary, work continued on the **Learning Estate Efficiency Discussion (LEED)** to explore if schools in Scotland could be delivered in a more efficient manner. This group includes experts from across industry and public bodies. The group presented initial findings at the Learning Places Scotland Conference in November 2024 and a follow up workshop was held on 21 March 2025 .
- Contractor engagement continued to be held to gain insights into challenges and issues being faced across the construction industry.
- Shared Learning Events were held quarterly on topical issues. These were well attended with representatives from most councils participating and were facilitated in conjunction with Architecture and Design Scotland.
- The annual **Learning Places Scotland Conference** took place in November and was a platform for gathering and disseminating information and making and maintaining relationships across industry, public and third sector. The team participated in the Advisory Group, designing the government stand and presenting/chairing conference sessions.
- **Post Occupancy Evaluations (POEs) and Post Project Reviews (PPRs)** have been conducted across a number of projects in the programme with useful insights being gained that can be shared across the programme. Of the 9 completed LEIP projects, 8 PPRs have been completed with one outstanding. Of the 4 POE reviews due, all have been undertaken with 2 outstanding reports due.

Additional areas of related activity

Due to SFT’s design and technical expertise, we were referenced in the **ASL inquiry** recommendations to undertake a piece of work looking at how the physical learning environment can impact users of the learning estate with additional support needs. This work was commenced. The team also continue to advise SG and Ministers on the prevalence of RAAC within the school estate and what rectifying action has taken place.

Activity 23

Monitor the delivery of the remaining infrastructure aspects of the 1,140 early learning and childcare expansion programme
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Key milestones and achievements in year

1140 expansion - The team continued to liaise with SG on a monthly basis regarding the remaining projects to be completed in the 1,140 hours expansion programme. From an initial programme of 900 projects costing £500m, there are now 16 projects with a value of £35m remaining. This has included the preparation of two infrastructure programme reports throughout the year.

ELC Learning Places Scotland – Through involvement with the Advisory Group, the team ensured that the ELC sector was represented in the conference sessions and encouraged projects from the 1140 expansion programme to participate in the Conference Awards.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity 24

Support the delivery of infrastructure to facilitate the expansion of the Free School Meals programme

Key milestones and achievements in year

Continued to work with Scottish Government and Local Authorities regarding the infrastructure aspects of the Free School Meals Programme. This included:

- Preparation of templates and cleansing of returns to enable data gathering for both Universal and Scottish Child Payment FSM provision;
- Support to government on budget setting and funding allocation (£58m capital distributed by need in agreement with COSLA)
- Provision of advice regarding potential pilots for further expansion to the FSM programme

Additional areas of related activity

Supported Scottish Government regarding the potential expansion of FSM to S1 – S3 SCP pupils.

Workstream	Net Zero Buildings
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Activity 25

Working with Scottish Government, public bodies and broader stakeholders, develop commercial models which can scale up and accelerate the decarbonisation of buildings.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Completed further detailed reports and engagement on two of the models featuring in the initial SFT report on commercial models for Heat Networks produced in February 2024 – the Centrally-led and Regional Heat Partnerships models.
- Engaged with stakeholders across the heat network industry.
- Completed and launched a report on funding and financing options for the decarbonisation of social housing. [Summary Report - Financing and funding the decarbonisation of Scotland's social housing](#)
- Worked with Scottish Government on options/approaches/considerations for decarbonisation of public sector estate and commenced a report on investment approaches for the estate.
- Supported Scottish Government to deliver the Green Heat Finance Taskforce Phase 2 report. [Green Heat Finance Taskforce: report - part 2 - gov.scot](#)
- Developed financial model, associated guidance/ training materials to support the Scottish Government led work to consider the costs of decarbonising heat in Scotland and the affordability challenges. The SFT designed model was handed over with the guidance to enable SG to use this to inform the modelling of their assumptions going forward.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity 26

Provide support to the deployment of heat networks in Scotland, as part of the Heat Networks Support Unit.
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Key milestones and achievements in year

- Supported Scottish Government with the delivery of capital grants via the Scottish Heat Network Fund, a £300m fund seeking public or private body matched investment.
- Worked with the Heat Network Support Unit to deliver and monitor the Unit's performance against key KPIs supporting 7 projects completing feasibility studies; 2 delivering outline business cases and 7 local authorities receiving Strategic Heat Network Delivery funding & support.
- Completed scopes of work (drafted by local authorities with SFT support/input) setting out a strategic approach to the rollout and deployment of large scale heat networks in their respective areas to initiate/support achievement of their long term outcomes.
- Launched and hosted the first Local Authority Forum which brings together authorities receiving Strategic Heat Network Delivery funding from the Heat Network Support Unit.
- Worked with the HNSU to develop and publish a 'Route Map' setting out the process for procurement and delivery of a heat network.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity 27

Use infrastructure delivery expertise to support Scottish Government as it progresses Heat in Buildings (HiBs) regulation.
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Key milestones and achievements in year

- In relation to the HiBs, SFT have contributed to the evidence base that will inform SG policy development in relation to decarbonisation of public sector estate. This included sitting on a steering group overseeing analysis to estimate the cost of decarbonisation of the public sector estate. This cost analysis will be used to inform SFT analysis on funding and financing options and Scottish Government future policy development.
- Worked with Scottish Government on options/approaches/considerations for decarbonisation of public sector estate.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity 28

Continue to support Scottish Government in its ambition to have public sector buildings using clean heating systems by the end of 2038 whilst encouraging the adoption of the Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard for new and existing buildings.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- SFT developed, promoted and hosted two “Meet the Standard” events. Over 1,000 days on from its launch and the Standard has had a major influence on significant new-build projects across the public sector in Scotland. The value of projects registered to the Standard has exceeded £3bn in the year and the Standard’s emphasis on clean heating for new-build projects is being adopted into regulations.
- Produced a schedule which collates key Scottish Government public sector estate decarbonisation policy ambitions to be considered when investing in retrofit construction works on existing assets. This schedule will form part of the Net Zero Public Sector Buildings Standard documentation and be used by project owners to inform their approach to retrofitting buildings.
- Established an independent reviewer group to support interpretation of the Standard to one sector-specific context (higher education).
- Provided technical support to Scottish Government in order to progress the re-procurement of the Non Domestic Energy Efficiency framework and Support Unit for retrofitting public sector estate. The focus drew upon our building services expertise in order to review and update supporting contract schedules.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Workstream	Net Zero Transport
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Activity 29
Support the programme management and delivery of the EV Infrastructure Fund

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Two multi authority EVIF projects commenced procurement during the year and several other multi authority projects were close to starting procurement.
- The North of Scotland project ended the financial year close to appointing a preferred bidder.
- The Ayrshires Project commenced their EVIF project procurement in the final quarter of the financial year.
- The South of Scotland project have issued a Prior Information Notice and the Glasgow City Region plan to do so soon.

Agreement has been reached to allocate the full £30m of EVIF funding across seven initiatives.

SFT's template contract has been well received and is being used by many of the EVIF projects across Scotland as the basis for engaging the private sector.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Activity 30

Support accelerated standalone private investment in EV public network for cars and vans
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Key milestones and achievements in year

- SFT assisted Transport Scotland (TS) with a roadmap to target a further 24,000 chargepoints by 2030.
- SFT remained in close contact with all the major chargepoint operators (CPO) investing in the DC charging network across Scotland. 24/25 saw substantial investment from these parties across the country - with an estimated investment value of £30-40m. SFT monitored the overall picture of investment across Scotland and updated TS on a quarterly basis.
- SFT has supported the establishment during the year of a strategic transport electrification group bringing together the 2 Scottish DNOs, TS, SFT and the Regional Energy Strategic Planner. A key purpose of this group is to plan grid investment across the road network to support the ongoing electrification of transport across all transport modes.

Additional areas of related activity

SFT's monitoring of CPO investment has revealed the lack of investment in rural and island parts of Scotland. SFT has therefore started to consider with TS how to address these 'cold spots' and what, if any, might be the role of government in filling in these gaps.

Activity 30a

Carry out early engagement to start to support private investment into heavy duty vehicles
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Key milestones and achievements in year

SFT engaged all the key stakeholders in the haulage sector to consider what the key challenges are in the decarbonisation of this important sector. SFT is working closely to support Transport Scotland and put forward recommendations on next steps.

Additional areas of related activity

The challenges are significant for the haulage sector given the different technology options (biofuels, battery electric (BE), hydrogen), the suitability of BE vehicles at this stage for many use cases, the change in operations and maintenance that BE requires and the cost of BE vehicles. SFT is working closely with TS to consider the role of government in creating the market conditions for private investment over time.

Workstream	Net Zero Hydrogen
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Activity 31
Support investment into green hydrogen production in Scotland

Key milestones and achievements in year

SFT carried out significant research into the challenges of scaling up the green hydrogen sector in Scotland which must involve bringing the cost down and hence drawing power from the grid when it is plentiful and hence where the price is lower.

SFT remained engaged with DESNZ about these issues and the role of Scottish production, given the apparent high cost to the taxpayer of subsidising green hydrogen projects through the early Hydrogen Allocation Rounds.

SFT has commissioned work from LCP Delta to look at the interdependencies between new wind investment and new green hydrogen investment in Scotland.

Additional areas of related activity

None

Workstream	Net Zero Hydrogen
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Activity 32
Support investment into enabling infrastructure in Scotland for hydrogen including transport and storage

Key milestones and achievements in year

SFT carried out significant engagement with key private sector stakeholders, NESO and UKG around the vital role that future hydrogen network could play in balancing the GB energy system in the 2030s and 2040s and providing lower cost green hydrogen for large hydrogen demand in England, especially hydrogen for power.

Additional areas of related activity

SFT was also engaged on the viability and effectiveness of hydrogen blending into the methane network as a transitional stimulus to green hydrogen production until permanent hydrogen network is available.

Workstream	Net Zero Hydrogen
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Activity 33
Support the development of significant offtake markets for green hydrogen

Key milestones and achievements in year

SFT carried out significant work to assess the viability of the production of synthetic hydrocarbons (also known as ‘efuels’) for the maritime and aviation sectors as a potential major offtake for hydrogen. As part of this, SFT also provided input into Project Willow which is assessing future options for the Grangemouth industrial cluster including the viability of efuels.

SFT commissioned work from ERM to look at the viability of the emerging green iron and green steel sectors as a potential major hydrogen offtaker in Scotland. This study is looking at the key feedstocks and the required level of cost of renewables in order to compete with other international producers.

Workstream	PHEI
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Activity 34
Continue our Place based programmes and investment activity with key partners across the public, private and third sectors including a focus on delivering Place-based economic opportunities, improving Place ‘intelligence’ and coordination of the Islands Programme

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Scottish Borders: Supported the Scottish Borders Council Transformation programme enabling the Council to set strategic direction and investment priorities across the region (linking such activity to the Borderlands Growth Deal funding).
- Western Isles: Supported partners to develop the Western Isles Net Zero Economy Placemaking initiative, which looks to consider the future of the Islands’ economy and the strategic infrastructure and services response to this. SFT supported the programme, providing leadership on Place and helped secure additional funding for programme resources from SG.
- Grangemouth / GFIB: Provided place and infrastructure leadership for the considerations of the Grangemouth Future Industries Board, and Grangemouth itself, helping key partners to consider the future of Grangemouth.
- SG Place Group: SG supported the establishment of the cross-organisation Place Board: a board focussed in capturing and applying learning from Place activity and focussing on a set of strategic locations to provide guidance and support.
- Delivery of the Islands Programme Fund (£3m) – launched in June 2024, with funding allocated to successful projects in early October 2024. Projects are in delivery and SFT continued to support these and SG on the next stages of the Fund’s launch and operation.

Additional areas of related activity

- Supported the Granton Regeneration Project, considering the development of a series of Place improvement metrics to underpin the proposed outcomes based funding approach for the Granton .
- Facilitated engagement between City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian to consider a place based approach to collaboration and health and social care delivery.
- Place support provided to Fife Council as regards it investment plans and priorities: a Fife Place Programme will advance in 2025/26, building upon the success of the SFT support.
- SFT has supported the Moray Growth Deal (through a Place approach) to consider alternative plans for £21m of Growth Deal funding for innovation (and related infrastructure).

Activity 35

Support a number of strategic initiatives which strengthen places and contribute to the local and national economic growth.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Building upon SFT support, Scottish Ministers approved proposed changes to the Argyll & Bute TIF scheme. This will see further investment through the TIF in the surrounding Oban area, including both commercial development and 400 new homes.
- Granton Regeneration Project – SFT played a key role in developing an outcomes-based funding approach with Scottish Government and City of Edinburgh Council. (Place Accelerator).
- Carbon Neutral Islands Fund (£1m): SFT supported the launch of the fund and the identification and approval of the successful bids in September 2024. SFT provides ongoing support to the programme and is supporting SG in launching the fund again in 2025/26.

Additional areas of related activity

- Support provided to the Edinburgh and South East City Deal to consider the advancement of a series of strategic sites with UK Government and SG, looking at possible funding options and needs for support for business cases. Granton and Blindwells are linked to this activity.

Activity 36

Continue to explore and/or advance the development of new approaches for the delivery of homes of different types and tenures reflecting local needs and the use of different funding and financing options.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Key Worker Housing ('KWH'): SFT produced a series of thought leadership pieces on KWH and has been working with key partners in the Scottish Borders / Dumfries & Galloway area to understand the need and demand for different tenures of housing for key workers.
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- Advanced a series of opportunities in relation to existing and new approaches. SFT has supported a number of local authorities to consider the use of the HOME model and the Housing Delivery Partnership approach, including Shetland, West Dunbartonshire and North Lanarkshire, amongst others. A number of these will see associated LLPs set up and homes delivered. This has taken us longer than we would have hoped, however, there is still strong interest and commitment to advancing the opportunities.
- We continued to develop the long lease approach for affordable housing through the modelling of a series of demonstrator opportunities. The aim of the exercise was to understand the value for money, affordability and the additionality of the approach (against comparator fixed debt approach). The results have been shared with SG and further discussion will be undertaken to determine any next steps.
- In partnership with Public Health Scotland, we appointed University of Glasgow to undertake research in relation to the quality of housing, and the benefits and impacts that good quality housing provides. The report was submitted at the end of March 2025.

Additional areas of related activity

- SFT has provided support to the SG convened Housing Investment Taskforce, seeking to bring its knowledge, understanding and expertise to bear. A draft report was produced at the end of March.

Activity 37

Continue to provide support to SFT Investments including the transition of the National Housing Trust (NHT) portfolio through operations of the existing NHT Limited Liability Partnerships and the related exit process, and operation of the two existing Housing Delivery Partnerships.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Agreed the basis of exits at Shrubhill and Sandpiper and are working towards an exit for Western Harbour- the three remaining NHT LLPs. Recognising the different stages they are at, work continues to advance the exits:
 - o Shrubhill NHT LLP: Homes are being sold through a void led exit process. By 1 April 2025, 7 homes will have been purchased (out of 93).
 - o Sandpiper Road NHT 2014 LLP: CEC's Edinburgh Living vehicle agreed to purchase the properties.
 - o Western Harbour NHT LLP: Various surveys planned/being undertaken in relation to the development in preparation for sale, with the preferred option for exit being based upon a local authority nominee purchasing the homes.
- The Hilton of Rosyth NHT 2014 LLP was dissolved on 18 September 2024. The efforts of the SFT team ensured a satisfactory outcome as regards the LLP, with the remaining partners supported to ensure they likewise achieved a satisfactory position following the liquidation.
- SFT has supported the Edinburgh Living MMR LLP consider a series of construction issues and defects at developments across its portfolio, providing support to the Council in relation to its approach, possible remedies and how the LLP should respond..
- SFT supported Edinburgh Living MMR LLP to purchase 47 new mid-market rent homes for the LLP in 2024/25, including 27 homes at Granton D1, where SFT Improving Project Delivery colleagues were involved in the design and construction of the homes.
- Support has been provided to the East Lothian Mid-Market Homes LLP to improve its governance and operational arrangements. This work concluded in February 2025.
- SFT, through its Partner Trustee role supported Lar Housing Trust to advance further activity and the delivery of homes. It now has a portfolio of 754 homes. At the end of 2024, given the likely direction of Lar, SFT relinquished its role as Partner Trustee given that it was unlikely further SG cost effective finance would be provided.
- Efforts to expand the Housing Delivery Partnership model continued, with active engagement with a number of authorities to deliver such a vehicle. This included activity with Shetland Islands, West Dunbartonshire and North Lanarkshire Councils, amongst others. Work was also undertaken to create a suite of style documents and guidance on setting up a Housing Delivery Partnership that can be shared with local authorities.

Workstream	Real Estate
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Activity 38

Engage with public sector bodies to assist with identification of opportunities and establishing strategies to secure best value and wider outcomes from the acquisition, disposal, and repurposing of real estate assets.

Key milestones and achievements in year

The asset disposal programme activities continued during the year, working mainly with NHS Boards, Police Scotland, Colleges/Scottish Funding Council and latterly Scottish Prison Service. Our programme approach has delivered in year receipts of £18.6M. This has also enabled recurring wider benefits in terms of direct GVA expenditure, amounting to an estimated £24.4M for 2024/25.

- **Dykebar, Paisley** – the former Dykebar Hospital was successfully sold to a consortium of housebuilders comprising Cala, Bellway and Barratt, providing a development of over 600 homes and a significant capital receipt to the health board as well as wider outcomes.
- **Fife College Halbeath Disposal** – the disposal strategy work supporting Fife College (despite change in college relocation programme and resource) was progressed and the was taken to the market in February.
- **Public Health Scotland/wider outcomes work** – initial commission completed with PHS/partners to highlight potential wider benefits from public sector land transactions, draft route map developed and starting to be tested with stakeholders.
- **Larkfield Unit, Inverclyde** – agreement has successfully been reached with IML (Project co) to acquire this PFI procured hospital at the end of the concession period in October this year.
- **Stoneyetts, Moodiesburn** – future sales growth overage provisions negotiated in the original sale of the former hospital have secured a significant payment during the financial year.
- **Anderston Police Office, Glasgow** – the successful sale of the former police station marked the culmination of a protracted and difficult disposal process which will provide a mixed-use development of around 60 apartments and a substantial capital receipt to Police Scotland.
- **NHS National Disposal Programme Refresh** – agreement reached with NHS Scotland Health Directorate to progress the updated NHS National Asset Disposals programme and direction sent to NHS Boards requiring them to work with SFT Real Estate.

Additional areas of related activity

- **Scottish Prison Service Engagement** – further progress made with Scottish Prison Service supporting development of a disposal strategy for the current Barlinnie Prison
- **Yorkhill, Glasgow** – Work progressed during the year to consider the methodical and approach to developing a disposal strategy for this large and complex asset.
- Engagement progressed with public sector partners on the hand back of projects developed in the first wave of PFI/PPP - significant involvement with NHS GGC on the Larkfield Unit, Greenock, the Langlands Unit, QEUH and NHS Highland at New Craigs, Inverness.
- **SFC/Colleges** – initial work/discussions progressed with Dundee and Angus College to consider potential to relocate from existing campuses, plus early discussion with Ayr College.
- **NHS Commercial Structures work** – work was undertaken partly with CBRE to identify examples of projects in other areas of the country (including NHS Trusts in England) where good practice could be demonstrated with supporting case studies to demonstrate where vacant assets can leverage or cross fund service outcomes.

Activity 39
Provide Real Estate support to facilitate and implement projects and initiatives in collaboration with public and private sector stakeholders.

Key milestones and achievements in year

- **Winchburgh Short Life Working Group (SLWG)** – work completed with follow on work on Stalled Sites through involvement in the Housing Investment Taskforce and further engagement with the Place Infrastructure & Planning Advisory Group (PIPAG) on stalled sites/viability work..
- **Blindwells, East Lothian** - SFT supported East Lothian Council and the developers at Blindwells to develop a phase 2 strategic outline business case and consider the infrastructure needs and funding approach for the strategic development. SFT has been key to helping the Council resource and advance the project – ensuring continued buy in from the developers.
- **Town Centre Living SLWG/Town Centres** – work with Scottish Towns Partnerships and other stakeholders on Funding and Finance SLWG was completed and was well received by SG/wider audience, follow on work progressed on potential for Pan Local Authority approach to Town Centre Living.

Additional areas of related activity

- Engagement took place with small number of local authorities/parties on potential Town Centre opportunities that could be progressed with further support/funding including Paisley, Dalkeith, Glenrothes and Kirkaldy.

Workstream	Asset Strategy & Workplace
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Activity 40

Promote a strategic approach to asset planning across the public sector. This will reflect key themes within the Asset Strategy guidance and ensure alignment with the Single Scottish Estate programme as appropriate. SFT's collective expertise across complementary workstreams will be leveraged to maximise the value of this work

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Decarbonisation of the public sector estate: we continued our collaborative work with the Net Zero Buildings (NZB) team regarding decarbonisation of the public sector estate. This included input to baselining work around the size and structure of the public sector estate, potential contractual structures for future decarbonisation and input into guidance on Climate Change Duties in the Built Estate. We delivered a joint presentation with NZB to the Sustainable Scotland Network Local Authority forum on 'Estate Strategy led approach to decarbonisation'.
- Colleges Infrastructure Strategy (CIS): we provided on-going support to Scottish Funding Council's CIS programme. This includes membership of the Infrastructure Delivery Group, guidance on the progression of Work Package 2 (Estate Baselining), participated in workshops on the development of a SCIM process and provided constructive feedback on business case templates. We liaised closely with the Innovative Finance team on a paper on potential funding and financing levers for investment in the college estate. These activities have fed into the Stage One Colleges Infrastructure Investment Plan (CIIP) to be published during 2025
- Shared property services: completed an initial report into the opportunity for shared property services across local authorities. This included research into a range of shared service models in place across the UK and engagement with Scottish Heads of Property Services (SHoPS) to understand the challenges and appetite for sharing property services. A second phase is being progressed with a sub group of eleven Scottish local authorities to explore potential service models in more detail.
- Place: in collaboration with PHEI, we worked with City of Edinburgh Council/NHS Lothian and South Lanarkshire Council on developing strategic, outcome focussed processes to align service needs and asset priorities and bring about a more strategic approach to asset decision making, in line with the Asset Strategy Guidance. The outputs include the development of strategic briefs that has helped the partners arrive at a shared understanding of the processes, data, relationships and governance required to embed place-based approach in asset decision making.

Additional areas of related activity

- Asset Strategies: over the course of the year we worked closely with SG Infrastructure Division to develop a programme of work for long term evidence based and robust Asset Strategies across SG portfolios. These seek to embed the 'investment hierarchy' and support improved visibility of long term infrastructure needs and prioritisation of investment. Scoping work commenced for the programme which will be progressed during 2025/26.

Activity 41
Provide strategic support to Scottish Government’s Workplace Division and Property & Construction Division with a focus on the Single Scottish Estate programme

Key milestones and achievements in year

In 2024/25 we provided support to Scottish Government Workplace Division (WD) and Property & Construction Division (PCD). This included:

- Estate Strategy: the draft Estate Strategy which we helped develop was endorsed by the SG Executive Team in Investment Mode (ETIM) in June 2024. The strategy is now being progressed for publication by SG.
- Asset Plan: we continued to support the development of the Asset Plan for the SG ‘core’ estate. This included embedding the Space Model and Building Recommendation Methodology tools that will support future accommodation planning and individual building assessment respectively. This helped inform a prioritised Delivery Programme for the core estate. Working with the Infrastructure Technology team an interactive dashboard has been created for the Asset Plan.
- Edinburgh office estate: whilst the initial focus was to support SG with estate planning across the core estate, we were asked to take forward the Edinburgh Location Based Review (LBR) as part of the Single Scottish Estate programme. This involved extensive engagement across the public sector to understand current and future plans for office property. A draft report was completed and provided to SG with a series of recommendations and next steps. The finalised Edinburgh LBR report will be used as template for future reviews.
- Marine Directorate: completed a strategic review of future space requirements across the Marine Laboratory site and other Marine locations in Aberdeen, providing short, medium and high-level long-term options.
- Glasgow office project: the Full Business Case, with a preferred option for a new build ‘Hub’ was endorsed by ETIM in June 2024. Following extensive engagement with Scottish Ministers over the summer months, a decision was made not proceed with the new build option reflecting current financial constraints. An alternative strategy focused on using existing buildings is now being progressed.
- Single Scottish Estate programme – LBR toolkit: this forms part of the Edinburgh LBR.

Additional areas of related activity

- Marine Lab operating model: as a precursor to a Strategic Outline Case (SOC), we worked with Science, Evidence, Data and Digital (SEDD), the main occupier of Marlab, to establish a clear understanding of their future operating model to help inform the case for change. We will continue to support this activity in 2025/26.
- St Andrew’s House: provided input to potential funding models and to a revised scope of service for a refresh of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the refurbishment of St Andrew’s House.

Activity 42

Promote collaboration and sharing space across Local Authorities and the Emergency Services to enable a more effective, efficient, and greener public sector estate

Key milestones and achievements in year

Emergency Services

- We led the Police, Fire and Ambulance Co-location Programme chairing the three regional groups and helping them identify and consider potential co-locations (including a batch of ten rural SFRS stations SAS would like to share). We updated the Senior Responsible Officer (at Scottish Fire & Rescue Service) and the tri-partite oversight group (Joint Assets Sharing Group).
- We supported SFRS undertake a review of its office estate through a grant award and writing the brief and then working with the successful consultant on shaping useful recommendations for SFRS to take forward.
- We worked with hub North to support the development of the Community Resilience Hubs Programme for SFRS. This culminated in submission of the Outline Business Case to Scottish Government in June 2024. Support has continued including progressing the pilot on Skye.
- We also worked with Real Estate to support SAS with relocation options for its west of Scotland training facility.

Shared Workspace

- We supported COSLA, SOLACE, and Police Scotland develop good practice principles around sharing assets. This culminated in ‘Principles to adopt when Local Authorities and Police Scotland share assets’ being approved by the partners in November 2024.
- This approach was then broadened out to cover the rest of the public sector in Scotland through ‘Asset Sharing Principles: Principles to adopt when public organisations share assets’ co-produced with Scottish Government and published in February 2025. [Asset Sharing Principles - 13 January 2025](#)
- We engaged across the public sector including presenting on asset sharing at Scottish Heads of Property Services (SHoPS, a local authority senior estates group) and Hub meetings.
- We supported Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) work on sharing assets including with the Highland Council and NHS Highland in Skye, City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian in Edinburgh, and Dundee City Council and NHS Tayside in Dundee.
- We also supported and provided challenge on asset sharing on topics such as regulation and cost apportionment with East Renfrewshire, East Ayrshire, Moray, Shetland Islands, East Lothian, Angus, West Lothian, Renfrewshire, North and South Lanarkshire, and Scottish Borders Councils.

Additional areas of related activity

- An SFT activity map was produced for the South East of Scotland area with SFT’s Data Lab & Insights team. This initiative has now been widened to cover the whole of Scotland.

Activity 43

The New Frontiers for Smarter Working (NFSW) programme will continue with its guidance and co-ordination role of engagement across the wider public sector

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Five knowledge shares successfully delivered in year with a greater focus on engaging inspirational speakers this year. Sessions featured HMRC, Andy Lake (Flexibility UK), Jenny Mitchell (Workplace Scotland), Dr Matteo Zallio and Austrian Government plus others and regularly attract 40+ delegates.
- The 2024 Smarter Working Forum (05/24) successfully delivered & attracted 97 delegates. Speakers were carefully curated to support understanding of how things are evolving and included a session from 4 Day Week International, delivered from California.
- Update sessions with industry specialists in Natwest, BT & Four Day Week International complete. Additional connections made with the PuRE-net Working Table (06/24), Gemma Dale at Liverpool John Moore’s University (07/24) and via collation of positive hybrid stories, generational studies, anchor activity research and presence studies with data shared as appropriate.
- Additional milestone updates:
 - Creative Scotland – support for their relocation project included a leadership session, interim support plus scoping and playback workshops. All complete (12/24).
 - Perth & Kinross Council – ongoing but activities to date complete (02/25)
 - Orkney Council test plans submitted and no further action requested
 - Government Property Agency – presentation on Baseline Report delivered plus ad hoc input
 - Toolkits to support the change process completed including updated workshop packs, the ‘7 step’ change methodology, Purposeful Presence Toolkit and Team Agreement template complete. All for use as required
- Case studies: written case study developed to showcase Scottish Qualifications Authority who have used hybrid working to change to the way they use their Glasgow office resulting in reduced event costs. NHS Ayrshire & Arran case study developed. Data collated and analysed for 39 organisations to capture the changes since the 2024 baseline report was published.
- The New Frontiers for Smarter Working Report based on the survey outcomes is in development and clearly sets out the current trends, approaches and position for 2025/26. Due to be published early 2025/26. [new-frontiers-for-smarter-working-2025-update](#)

Additional areas of related activity

- Fife College: leadership workshop session complete (01/25) and draft vision developed. Session with principal and training session for inhouse change support completed (02/25)
- Highland Council, NHS Ayrshire & Arran, SQA and various others: support and assistance provided as required.
- PuRE-net: session successfully delivered at working table in Amsterdam.
- Baseline report: presented at eight different events (including Once for Scotland) during 2024/25.
- Midlothian Council LT session discussions and planning complete. Session scheduled for (03/25). This will continue into 2025/26
- Discussions underway with Scottish Government to support both the Hybrid Working Policy and Change Management Activities for Ayr and Perth. This will continue into 2025/26

Workstream	Infrastructure Strategy
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Activity: 44
Support the establishment of a systematic evidence-based approach to national infrastructure investment decision-making

Key milestones and achievements in year

- The first draft of the Needs Assessment which will be completed over the remainder of 2025 was developed for March 2025.
- The governance for finalising the Needs Assessment was agreed. Additionally, a strategic infrastructure investment framework was developed with the Infrastructure Division. This demonstrates the interconnection of activities to improve decision-making, as identified within the IIP.

Additional areas of related activity

Support to identifying how best to focus and align Place, Infrastructure & Planning Advisory Group (PIPAG) and Infrastructure Investment Plan developments was agreed, covered under activity 45.

Activity: 45

Continue our collaborative study on the role of infrastructure to achieve inclusive growth outcomes

Key milestones and achievements in year

- Year 2-ongoing data was collated by advisors for the inclusive growth pilot projects which are continuing with the action research.
- Project leads were engaged with and the involvement by all but one project was secured; with one project having been previously removed due to the project being discontinued.
- SFT sponsors of projects involved in the activity were also engaged with and supported the ongoing activities. This should continue in the coming year, to maximise general capacity building objectives.

Additional areas of related activity

Glasgow City Region and Capital Investment Health Impact (CHIA) colleagues were engaged with, exploring potential ongoing collaboration around shared goals. Input included supporting the development of the CHIA toolkit which is now published - [CHIA - Capital Investment Health Impact Assessment - CHIA](#) and is being shared amongst SFT colleagues, to maximise resource use. This collaboration will continue into 2025/6, with potential for data sharing to maximise the strength of the inclusive growth action research outputs.

Activity: 46

Support effective cross-sectoral collaboration, to facilitate improved outcomes and drive integrated planning, place and infrastructure policy delivery

Key milestones and achievements in year

- PIPAG support throughout the year included achieving shared learning through case study development and dissemination; as well as related Short Life Working group activities.
- Collaboration with Digital colleagues have seen the development of a survey for Orkney Ferries activities; and clear next steps for Scotrail activities, and a clear line of sight from objectives of these activities to a monitoring and evaluation framework, including an action plan. This places both projects in a strong position for the coming year.
- The 2023/24 Corporate outcome work was completed promptly, with comprehensive knowledge transfer to SFT staff.
- Corporate Impacts review activities were developed and are clearly defined for the coming shadowing activities. This work and next steps ensures alignment with the new corporate plan, as well as providing an opportunity to test the rigour and use of data collated. There was full engagement across SFT with a number of workshops and meetings.

Additional areas of related activity

- PIPAG Annual Report was driven by SFT with a positive output.
- A workshop on monitoring and evaluation was developed with PHEI colleagues, delivered to interested SFT colleagues. This covered principles and good practice, providing resources for ongoing skill development.