



**FACILITIES Show**  
INSPIRING EXCELLENCE IN FM



# YOUR GUIDE TO FLEXIBLE WORKING

Advice from the experts



This Ebook is sponsored by Trimble

# Contents

Introduction .....	<b>03</b>
Chris Moriarty.....	<b>04</b>
Richard Hammond .....	<b>10</b>
Wendy Clark.....	<b>15</b>
Adrian Burden.....	<b>16</b>

# A word from Trimble

## Real Estate & Workplace Solutions



Trimble is delighted to sponsor this eBook titled 'Your Guide to Flexible Working'. As a world leader in technology solutions we have helped transform the way real estate and facility professionals manage buildings and the workplace.

Flexibility in when, how and where we work has been available to many people in the workforce for a number of years. What is new is the range of new technologies which enable the maximum flexibility to be able to have choices and not sacrifice connectivity, communication and collaboration wherever we chose to work. There has been a convergence of both software applications and hardware devices that is called the nexus of forces. These technological advances include mobile devices, cloud computing, big data/analytics, social media, the Internet of Things, mixed reality, artificial intelligence and advanced robotics. We are harnessing these technologies by creating a digital workplace which is aligned to the work of an individual and the places they choose to accomplish this work in this new era of flexibility and creativity. For those individuals who find themselves working in the built environment we have called these technologies the Building Digital Workplace.

The Building Digital Workplace (BDW) defines the right technologies for all of the stakeholders in this industry. Whether you are a facility manager, an interior designer, architect, contractor, investor, owner, real estate professional, engineer or play any other role in this area of business, technology tools must be chosen that make you the most effective, efficient and at the same time, allow you to be engaged in the work that you need to perform.

*There is a new blur between the digital and physical worlds we are working in today and we need these tools to operate in both successfully.*

Think of how your organisation can benefit from the BDW. By having the right technologies available, it can make a worker's day more productive as they move from one environment to another. Think of a sales person who needs a quiet space for an hour before a major presentation in north London, then a large unconventional space for his potential clients to relax in while they watch his tech trends video in the city, followed by a team meeting with his colleagues in an intimate location in Covent Garden. By having the right space scheduling tools, the sales person can easily set up all of these events with ease and customise what they need in each location. The space planner was able to allocate these disparate and flexible locations due to the accurate space database for all the real estate portfolio of the company. The planner and facility manager can get together now regularly to review the utilisation of all of these environments to enable the maximum optimisation of space, as well as providing the maximum flexibility for the end users.

**To learn more about Trimble's real estate & workplace management solutions and exciting innovations please visit us at [realestate.trimble.com](http://realestate.trimble.com)**

# Your guide to flexible working

Advances in technology along with the overhead costs of managing an office and the increasing importance of sustainable buildings has resulted into an increased shift towards flexible working. Therefore the team at Facilities Show have asked four experts (**Chris Moriarty**, Director, Leesman, **Richard Hammond**, Operations Service Manager, Surrey County Council, **Wendy Clark**, UK Property Manager, Volvo Group UK Ltd and **Adrian Burden**, Technical Director, KEY IQ Ltd, Wyche Innovation) what their take is on flexible working, challenges they faced and what's worked well for them.



**Chris**

**Director**  
Leesman



**Richard**

**Operations Service Manager**  
Surrey County Council



**Wendy**

**UK Property Manager**  
Volvo Group UK Ltd



**Adrian**

**Technical Director**  
KEY IQ Ltd,  
Wyche Innovation

# Chris Moriarty

Have you seen an increase in organisations moving to flexible working?



- I think it's important to really define what this term 'flexible working' is.
- There are so many ways of slicing it and terming it that it can be a bit confusing. Some organisations see it as a way of presenting their people with a rich amount of choice that they can use as they see fit; others see it as letting people work from home.
- In terms of getting flexible working right, we're not seeing it as often as we like. I think there's a desire, sometimes driven by cost, unfortunately, and the idea that if you've got low utilisation numbers then you can get rid of some desks and then create an open plan environment. The reality is though that if it has not been done right and it's probably having a real negative impact on the organisation and on workplace performance.

Do you expect to see more organisations moving to flexible working in the future?

- I think so, just from the point of view of where technology is going in enabling people to work more flexibly, but what we're finding is that it's not enough to just give people the ability to work at home or in the office and think that you're being flexible. The highest performance workplaces we see are the ones where you've got a whole range of choices in terms of the types of environment provided in the office, such as informal space, formal space, relaxing areas, concentration areas, quiet areas, collaborative areas and so on. I think more organisations will want to go towards a flexible environment just because of what they're reading in the press and that technology is freeing them up. You're much better off NOT doing that – if you're going to provide a sub-standard open plan environment, because that's WORST then providing cubicles for everyone to sit in.

## Do you know of any examples where flexible working has worked really well?

- It's difficult for us many of our clients want to keep their data and case studies to confidential.
- However, our Leesman+ standard, awarded for to high performance workplaces, point us towards the guys getting it right and our highest scorer in that sense was the ISS head office in Copenhagen. And they, like many of the organisations that receive this award, particularly our top ten locations, all have flexible, non-allocated environments. So they are doing something right. There's also Sheffield Hallam University – they've just achieved a Leesman+ award.
- So there are a number of organisations getting it right from global brands to learning institutions and they are embracing flexible environments – so they have the ability to move around the business and work from wherever the right environment is AND they have a high level of choice, so it's not just a desk or a meeting room, there's a whole range of things.

## What types of organisation/workspace are suited to flexible working?

- There's not really a particular organisation, but it has to be down to the sort of activities your people are doing. So if you've got people in your organisation who need to spread large sheets of paper, for whatever reason, then actually asking them to move around the building and work wherever they want is not really feasible, you're going to provide them with an area to allow them to do something that is part of their role.

*So it's not necessarily a TYPE of organisation that its best suited , there are elements that any organisation can do but it's got to start with the people that work there and understanding what they do as part of their daily routine and then building an environment around that.*

- This is part of the problem, instead of starting at this point people are diving in straight into building flexible environments but not really understanding what it is their people do. The whole idea is not about going from inflexible to flexible it's just about presenting the right level of choice and the right variety for people, so they can select the area that's best suited for the task in hand – and that might be same desk every day.



## What is the biggest challenge when changing/creating a flexible working environment?

Normally there are 3 aspects:

### **01. DESIGN**

The design of the workplace itself – so the variety bit.

### **02. TECHNOLOGY**

I've seen workplaces where they've built a range of different areas but the Wi-Fi can't support it, so people are congregated around pockets of Wi-Fi, or they haven't got laptops so they can't work flexibly. So technology challenge needs to be overcome.

### **03. CULTURE**

And this is the one that people overlook the most. If there's a culture where you're not considered to be working hard if you're not sitting at the desk people expect you to sit at, people aren't going to move around. And if there isn't a culture where it's ok to go sit in a café and work, then you're not going to get people making the most of the flexibility. You could have the most amazing technology and workplace design but if people aren't empowered to use it then you're not going to get any success at all.



One of the biggest challenges FMs tell us they face with implementing flexible working is the cultural shift and communicating changes to the business. Do you have any advice to help with that?

• You've got to get the basics right, people aren't going to use space that isn't suited to what they do. You need to understand the activities people undertake, but there's some really easy things for people to do. On some of our projects I know the design team have done lunch and learn sessions where they've put on demos on different types of space to help people understand the sort of things you can do there. But it has to absolutely come from the top – it needs to be an entire top down shift as well as a bottom up driven thing – your senior leaders have bought into the idea of flexible working so everyone feels they can do it too.

• I was at a global car manufacturer recently and they've gone to that environment and their UK CEO sits out on an open plan environment.

*It's that sort of stuff that can really make a difference, and it's not just going to be something that's a one off project and programme, it's an ongoing management process.*

• There's a lot of talk about activity based working, there are elements of work place design, but it's actually a management concept not a workplace design concept. There's a whole range of things that come into it not just the physical environment itself. FMs need to connect with their colleagues in the business to pull all that together, because in isolation they're not going to succeed.



## From your research, what are the main reasons people love flexible working?

• We don't measure if they like flexible working but we do look at the impact that different work settings can have, particularly on two of our main KPIs; productivity and pride.

• **As part of our research we've looked at 4 different types of work settings:**

- > Private or shared enclosed offices
- > Cubicles/designated desks in an open plan environment
- > Flexible environments where employees aren't satisfied with the level of choice
- > Flexible environments where employees are satisfied with the level of choice

• If you look at a private shared office, **66%** of employees agree that the workplace environment enables them to work productively. **53%** of them are proud of their workspace (both above average).

• If you go then look at those in a cubicle or at a designated desk in an open plan environment, productivity agreement drops to **52%** and pride agreement to **45%**; both below average.

• Then we look at those that are in non-allocated, flexible environments but who aren't satisfied with the level of choice provided. Productivity agreement of **30%**, pride agreement of **37%**.

• It suggests that the buzz around flexible working is misplaced. Keep people in private offices.

• That is, however, until you look at our final group; those in flexible environments who are satisfied with the level of choice. **74%** agree that it enables them to be productive and a huge **85%** of them agree that they are proud of that space.

*Ultimately it allows people to do their job better.*

• So if you're asking me why is it that people like flexible working? Sure, there's are element where there are added benefits like being able to balance work and life, having the ability to go where you need to go but ultimately it allows people to do their job better. What they're able to start doing is pick the right environment for the task in hand. The flipside is if you allow them to move around but don't give them that choice all they become is more frustrated because that they can't find anywhere to do the work they need to do.

## What is the first step you need to take when considering flexible working?

• **I think there's probably two parallel elements:**

• On one hand there's that appetite to change, if you haven't got that appetite to change then you need to do some work to move that along, I think organisations need to be ready for it, it's not just a case of a change in policy and desk allocation and slightly new furniture. IT needs to be on-board, HR needs to be on-board, senior leaders need to be driving it so I would say first things first is that internal corralling, getting people of the same mind.

• And then as far as we're concerned, and the way our survey is designed, understand what it is that your people do, how many activities do they do as part of their core work. 46% of our database select more than 10 activities; so you can start to see that providing a desk and a meeting room and maybe one other type of area isn't enough for 10 activities.

• *So, it's really important to understand what your people are doing but also start bringing in all the different facets that lead into workplace.*

## What trends are you seeing in workplace effectiveness?

• My view of it is we're starting to see people move towards using their space more efficiently, so I think that's been driven by cost, utilisation numbers, technology – allowing people to work from home and so on.

• What people aren't understanding is how they can make that space more effective. I think the worry at the moment is that cost is driving a lot of these decisions as opposed to value which is an age old thing in FM I guess; the cost vs value equation. But at the minute I think we're still seeing cost coming up on top and we're hoping our tool helps people see the value.

# Richard Hammond

## Do you have flexible working at Surrey County Council?



- Yes we do. Flexible working is not only about workspace or staff hours; it is a combination of both. It is about creating an environment and conditions where ideas thrive and staff can be creative. Flexible working is about seeking a balance between customer and staff needs where opportunities are created to allow varied work patterns, hours at different locations with exciting workspace. Flexible working focuses on measuring performance through productivity rather than being seen in the team base or office at a desk every day. This is achieved by having a clear plan and setting tangible objectives

## When and why did you move into flexible working?

- We've had flexible working for some time now. We've got a flexible working policy which is part of the Smart Working Framework Policy. Flexible working balances the requirements of our service, the team, employees and the task by using technology, space and time efficiently. Surrey County Council has created workspaces and staff working conditions that focuses on productivity.
- Flexible working is about you and your team thinking how best to use your work hours, work spaces and methods including the use of technology, so that together you can:
  - > best connect with service users, customers, colleagues and partners
  - > be more flexible and customer-focused about the hours and places you work
  - > ensure responsibility to customers is your first consideration
  - > communicate and work together more efficiently
  - > be responsible about how resources are use
  - > promote individual learning and development
  - > create a good work life balance and improve individual well being

## What do you like most about it?

- What is good about flexible working is people don't need to be in the office physically, as long as they can log onto our network they can work from anywhere. It gives flexibility and if someone is working from a different location within the county they can log onto our network and hold their meetings or carry out their work effectively. Over the years we have, and seek to create environments where our staff have the opportunity to respond to customer needs. A study by Stanford University showed a marked rise in the productivity of staff working offsite, with a 13% performance increase in those working from home and a drop in job attrition of 50%. Staff took less time on their breaks, were sick less often, and answered 4% more calls per minute than their office-based colleagues.

## What don't you like about it?

- It can be difficult to monitor staff and project progress – as people have the opportunity of working from different locations it can sometimes be difficult to monitor activities. However flexible working is all based on trust between the employer and employee. Having parameters that you agreed and both stick to it. Hot desking, people working from home, working part-time, shared jobs etc. all contribute to flexible working. The advantages of flexible working out weight the negatives.

*It's difficult because people were so used to having a fixed desk; it was difficult that they didn't have a desk anymore, so they had to clear everything at the end of the day off the desk they were working on.*

## What have been your biggest challenges implementing it?

- Keeping the right balance – managing cultural shift within a team that is used to having its own space. Tailoring residents needs to staff commitment. Trying to accommodate every staff request. Having achieved the process of creating an open space office it is then about deciding who is entitled to a fixed desk. It can also create disconnection within a team, as you may not see colleagues for days if not weeks, and that is one of the biggest challenges for me.
- My current office base has only few allocated desks and more hot desks in a ratio of about 1 to 3. The hot desk is available to mobile staffs that aren't based here every day

## How has the business reacted to this cultural shift?

- It has been overall positive when it comes to hot desking, and some people
- have found the transition of having their own office to not having personal
- desk very challenging. Experience breeds positivity, so organisations
- battling negative cultures should try out flexible working in a controlled
- way, monitor the effects and, if positive, roll these programmes out more
- carefully.

## How are people using the workplace now, compared to before?

- It very important that we consider this on two fronts. There has been a
- massive surge of providing open and creative work spaces where staff and
- customers are able to operate effectively. Within the local government we
- have seen the use of spaces in more productive ways. In my current office
- we have three separate services operation from a single location. With
- the abolition of permanent retirement age, people can continue working
- until an age where. This is the first time we will have all generations in
- the workplace, people aren't just retiring because they come to a certain
- age, and so how to accommodate these staff going forward in a changing
- environment is key.
- If someone has worked full-time up to 55 or 68 and wants to take flexible
- retirement by working part time, how do you accommodate such an
- individual? You have to take into account their experience and contribution
- to the organisation. I'm currently dealing with a situation where two long
- serving staff members have requested for flexible retirement, one having
- worked for us for about 30 years and the other for about 18 years and both
- want to work part-time. It gives me the opportunity to create a shared part-
- time role. Going forward this is something that organisations, especially
- the private sector, must start to explore and take advantage of. With the
- increased use of technology people don't need to be in the physical space
- to do their jobs provided they are given the right tools.

One of the biggest challenges FMs tell us they face with implementing flexible working is the cultural shift and communicating changes to the business. Do you have any advice to help with that?

• Change is always difficult; people will automatically love or hate it. The way change is communicated within organisations is important. The benefits of the change must be communicated effectively and clearly backed with data where possible and show people how it will look like when it is fully implemented.

*When people don't have their own desks it can be a challenge but you can sell it in a very constructive way. In the current working environment not all jobs will fit into the five days a week, eight hours a day model.*

How did you determine whether flexible working was right for your organisation?

• Our objective as an organisation is to provide services where our users and residents can access services effectively. It's with this objective in mind that we set to provide flexible working. The process involved a lot of consultation and research. I think it's mainly by looking at the business needs – what do you need to set in place to meet customer needs and satisfy them, while looking after your staff to look after customers. Different businesses require different work space and work conditions. So we looked at the staff needs and customer needs and decided this worked pretty well.

“ *We can't ignore flexible working, with the cultural shift it is something quite big but the most important thing is assessing staff and customer needs.* ”

## What advice would you give other FMs who are looking to replicate what you have achieved?

- I would say flexible working is a positive thing. It is about saying goodbye to 9 to 5 and fixed desk work activities and embracing creative workspaces and variable working hours. A study from Citrix and Centre for Economics and Business Research finds increased use of flexible working allowances could save UK workers £7.1 billion in reduced commuting costs and over half a billion hours spent travelling. Employers need to create workspaces and conditions where ideas will vegetate and employees have trust and freedom to perform the best. Flexible working cultures also have the potential to encourage the economically inactive or unemployed individuals to return to work, potentially boosting GDP by up to 4.7%
- We can't ignore flexible working, it is something quite big but the most importantly effective flexible working is achieved by assessing staff and customer needs.
- > 68% of those currently unemployed, retired, carers, disabled, long-term sick or a full-time house-husband/wife would be inclined to start working if given the opportunity to work flexibly
- > Should this economically inactive part of the UK population re-enter the workforce due to a change in working culture, this could boost the UK's GVA[v] by up to £78.5bn (adding 4.7% to the total UK GDP)



# Wendy Clark



The Volvo Group are moving towards some big changes from their current way of working. The group are traditionalists and love to have their status offices with their teams sitting outside. However we are seeing an increase of staff rarely sitting at their allocated desk during the working day.

*Conducting desk usage in some of the big sales and back office areas we are seeing 45% utilisation with meeting room usage increasing, especially small rooms for individual use.*

I have had the privilege to be included as part of the Volvo Future Workplace project where we have produced a complete workbook describing how we want to design, develop and use our workspace going forward. It has been agreed that it is important that we keep the Volvo heritage in mind when creating a new workspace. We have developed 13 'Task' areas split into 4 types of space, silent, semi-silent, collaborative and common with the look and feel of all the areas identified within each description.

One of my roles within the group is as Service Specialist in Workplace Efficiency for Western Europe, my project role will be as advisor to any new projects that will incorporate the Future Workplace way of working. Unfortunately WED has not been identified yet as one of the first to use this new concept so I am looking forward to when this will happen. There are several buildings that are currently undergoing this transformation around the globe and we are all waiting with baited breath to see how it is going to be accepted by the Volvo Group staff.

# Adrian Burden

## What is Wyche Innovation Centre and why did you create it?



- The Wyche Innovation Centre is a business centre designed to facilitate and promote entrepreneurship and the successful growth of SMEs. It is unusually situated in a rural setting in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the western slopes of the Malvern Hills. The town of Great Malvern has a heritage of business and technology innovation, but there was a real shortage of start up space for small but growing businesses. We wanted a place to base our own growing technology consulting business, and so we thought it would be good to be part of a buzzing community which we set out to create. When we first acquired the property, numerous people told us we were unwise because we were in a deep recession and the commercial rental market was poor. But our limited research indicated there was an appetite for affordable desk space for micro companies. Today the Wyche Innovation Centre is home to over 50 organisations; some in furnished offices, some at hot desks and others using the Centre for meetings and as a business address. Although we have generally had some capacity in our hot-desk zone, our office units have always been occupied.

## How do your virtual offices work?

- The virtual offices are essentially an address service so that small businesses can benefit from a prestigious address without compromising the privacy of their own home. However, we can also handle courier deliveries and mail forwarding, as well as telephone answering services and office admin services such as filing, bookkeeping or general administration. Because we also have an on-site cafe and boardroom, virtual office users can benefit from using the address as a meeting location should clients need to visit. However, by being virtual the costs remain affordable and services can be paid for as needed. This arrangement suits entrepreneurs working from home or travelling extensively on business.

## What technology is required for hot-desking?

- Our hot-desk facility provides flexible desk space for business users to work from on an occasional or permanent basis. It also provides a valuable pipeline for our office units. We use the RFID locking system to provide access to the facility, enabling us to issue key cards easily for new or temporary users. A key requirement is high speed Internet access which we offer via Wifi or through Internet cables at each desk. The bandwidth is likely to be better than most users can obtain from home, so they can work easily with large files and email attachments. We also offer shared multi-function printer and selected a model that supports user accounts so that we can charge back for printing.

## What are the challenges of managing a hot-desk office?

- Hot-deskers tend to be more transitory either because they like to try it out, have a temporary issue at home (school holidays, broadband outage or house redecoration) or are between jobs and testing the water at being an entrepreneur. This means we need to cost effectively manage the induction of new users and be prepared for a higher rate of turnover compared to the offices. As such, the challenge is to make the process as efficient as possible and ensure the users benefit from even a short period of use. We also have to think creatively about marketing the hot desk facility, as keeping a good level of occupancy can be a challenge if companies grow and move on. For example, we have recently signed up with NearDesk that helps market the facility nationwide, and we try to make people aware of the hot-desks when they attend business events at the Centre.

