



Refurbishment Checklist

Planning and implementing an office refurbishment or relocation, even on a small scale, can be a daunting task for any company. As well as getting 'the look' you require considerations ranging from DDA compliance to building regulations can be a minefield for the inexperienced.

To help you, we've put together a checklist of 'things to consider' when planning an office refurbishment or relocation.

Workplace analysis – At the very beginning of the project we think it is vital that a workplace analysis should take place; this normally entails spending time with you and your employees, understanding how your business operates, evaluating strengths and weaknesses and how these impact on the working environment. From this information we will be able to establish where improvements can be made and outline the main objectives for the refurbishment.

How much space do I need? – According to the Health & Safety Executive, each workstation must be at least 11 cubic metres in size; this is the minimum, however this may be insufficient if most of the space is taken up with furniture. Equally, understanding how your business operates helps to determine how much space is actually required.

When looking at space requirements you also need to take into account your storage needs, what are you currently storing and how? Another consideration is the anticipated future growth of your business; do you expect to add any staff in the next couple of years? If yes, will there be sufficient space?

Building Regulations – Some refurbishment projects require Building Regulation Approval. This should not be confused with planning permission.

Building regulations cover:

- Structure
- Fire safety
- Site preparation and resistance to moisture
- Toxic substances
- Resistance to the passage of sound
- Ventilation
- Sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency
- Drainage and waste disposal
- Combustion appliances and fuel storage systems
- Protection from falling, collision and impact
- Conservation of fuel and power
- Access to and use of buildings
- Glazing – safety in relation to impact, opening and cleaning
- Electrical safety



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Health & Safety – This must be treated with the utmost importance. All refurbishment projects must comply with all relevant HSE and CDM regulations.

DDA regulations – The Disability Discrimination Act should be considered when refurbishing a workplace. Provisions should be no less available for disabled people than for able-bodied people.

Heating & Ventilation – Office temperature is an important consideration of any office refurbishment, too hot and you could have people falling asleep, too cold and it can make it hard to focus. The HSE say that the temperature should be at least 16 degrees centigrade in an office where people work sitting down. Any heating and/or air conditioning systems installed need to be energy efficient, correctly positioned, easy to use and maintained on a regular basis. Equally, workplaces need to be adequately ventilated. Fresh air should be drawn from a source outside the workplace. Windows or other openings may provide sufficient ventilation but, where necessary, mechanical ventilation systems should be provided.

Furniture – According to HSE, workstations should be organised so that employees do not strain their backs necks or wrists. Furniture needs to be comfortable and with the majority of employees spending a large part of their working time in front of a computer, the importance of good seating and desking has never been more vital for personal health.

Storage – This is always a key issue when refurbishing an office, that's why we would always strongly recommend a storage audit. The amount and type of storage in an office needs to be carefully considered to maximise space.

Lighting – Good office lighting is important, more so for staff who use computers for most of their working day. Workplace Health & Safety Regulations state that every office should have suitable and sufficient lighting, and that it should as far as possible be by natural light. Natural light helps to motivate people and if utilised fully can reduce the need to spend money on artificial light.

Equipment – In most offices there is a vast amount of electrical equipment; computers, telephones, printers etc... No-one wants to walk into an office and see masses of trailing cables, that's why we always strongly recommend cable management systems, essential in making your workspace safer and tidier.

Noise – It's hard to concentrate in a noisy environment, acoustic screens, glazed partitions, noise dampening carpets and blinds can be introduced, not only to protect employees hearing but also to provide privacy for meetings and HR issues.



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Power & Data – In today's business environment, communications and data are vital, from the phone systems to the computer network system, few businesses can survive without effective data communications, that's why they must play a significant part in any office environment. You will need to ensure that all work is carried out to BS7671 and by NICEIC certified installers.

Flooring – When it comes to choosing the right flooring for your workplace, the look of the floor, although important, should not be the main consideration. Flooring needs to be practical, hard wearing and safe.

Toilets and Washrooms – Toilet refurbishments are becoming more and more popular, not only because employees expect a certain standard of hygiene, but also legislation requires employers to provide staff with sufficient washing and toilet facilities. In short they must:

- Be separate for men and women, unless they are in a lockable room intended for the use of one person at a time.
- Be clean, adequately ventilated and well lit.
- Be provided with suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences.

Employers also need to ensure toilet facilities provided for disabled people are adequately designed to allow unrestricted access, including wheelchair users.

Legislation also stipulates how many WCs employers are required to provide depending on the number of staff employed. (see attached spreadsheet)

Workplace legislation is ever changing; at Whitespace we will guide you through every step, making sure you have done what is necessary for you, your space and your employees.



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Male	No. of males	WCs (no urinals provided)		Female	No. of females	WCs
	1 to 5	1			1 to 5	1
	6 to 25	2			6 to 25	2
	26 to 50	3			26 to 50	3
	51 to 75	4			51 to 75	4
	76 to 100	5			76 to 100	5
	For over 100 persons (or part thereof)	One for every additional 50 persons			For over 100 persons (or part thereof)	One for every additional 50 persons
	No. of males	WCs (urinals provided)				
	1 to 15	1				
	16 to 45	2				
	46 to 75	3				
	76 to 100	4				
	For over 100 persons (or part thereof)	One for every additional 50 persons (one in four of which may be a urinal)				
	No. of males	Urinals				
	1 to 30	1				
	31 to 60	2				
	61 to 90	3				
	91 to 100	4				
	For over 100 persons (or part thereof)	One for every additional 50 persons				