

Your complete guide to an office refurbishment



Let's get started

An office refurb isn't just a to-do list, it's a chance to reset, rethink, and create a space that works brilliantly for your team and your business. Done right, it can boost productivity, improve wellbeing, and make your workplace somewhere people are proud to be.

This guide is your map. Instead of one overwhelming project, you'll find clear, step-by-step stages you can work through at your own pace.

Moving to a new office?

Our [Office Relocation Guide](#) is the way forward. It covers everything from that first decision right through to moving day.

Your refurb checklist



1. Is staying the right decision?

2. Budget smart: Plan your spend

3. Explore cost-saving options (negotiating is your friend)

4. Assign an inhouse project leader (or volunteer someone!)

5. Define your office space needs (future-proofing is key)

6. Involve your team: What works, what doesn't, and what they want

7. Factor in sustainability and staff wellbeing

8. Your technical requirements

9. Research your office design & fit-out contractor

10. Arrange a site survey

11. Declutter and prepare your current space

12. Hire your office design & fit-out contractor

13. Plan your refurbishment phases to minimise disruption

14. Approve the office design and set a project timeline

15. Finalise and communicate the plan

16. Understand your on-site health & safety responsibilities

17. Label your furniture and equipment for a smooth transition

18. Know what to expect while works are underway

19. Final inspection and sign-off

20. Show off your new space!

01 | Is staying the right decision?

Let's do an honest check-up of your current office setup. **Ask yourself: is your workspace helping your business thrive, or is it holding you back?**

Staying put can save you time and hassle, but only if the space truly works for you.

Here's what to consider:

Your business goals:

Are you planning to grow over the next few years?

Will you need more space during your lease?

Are you consolidating teams and want to work smarter with less?

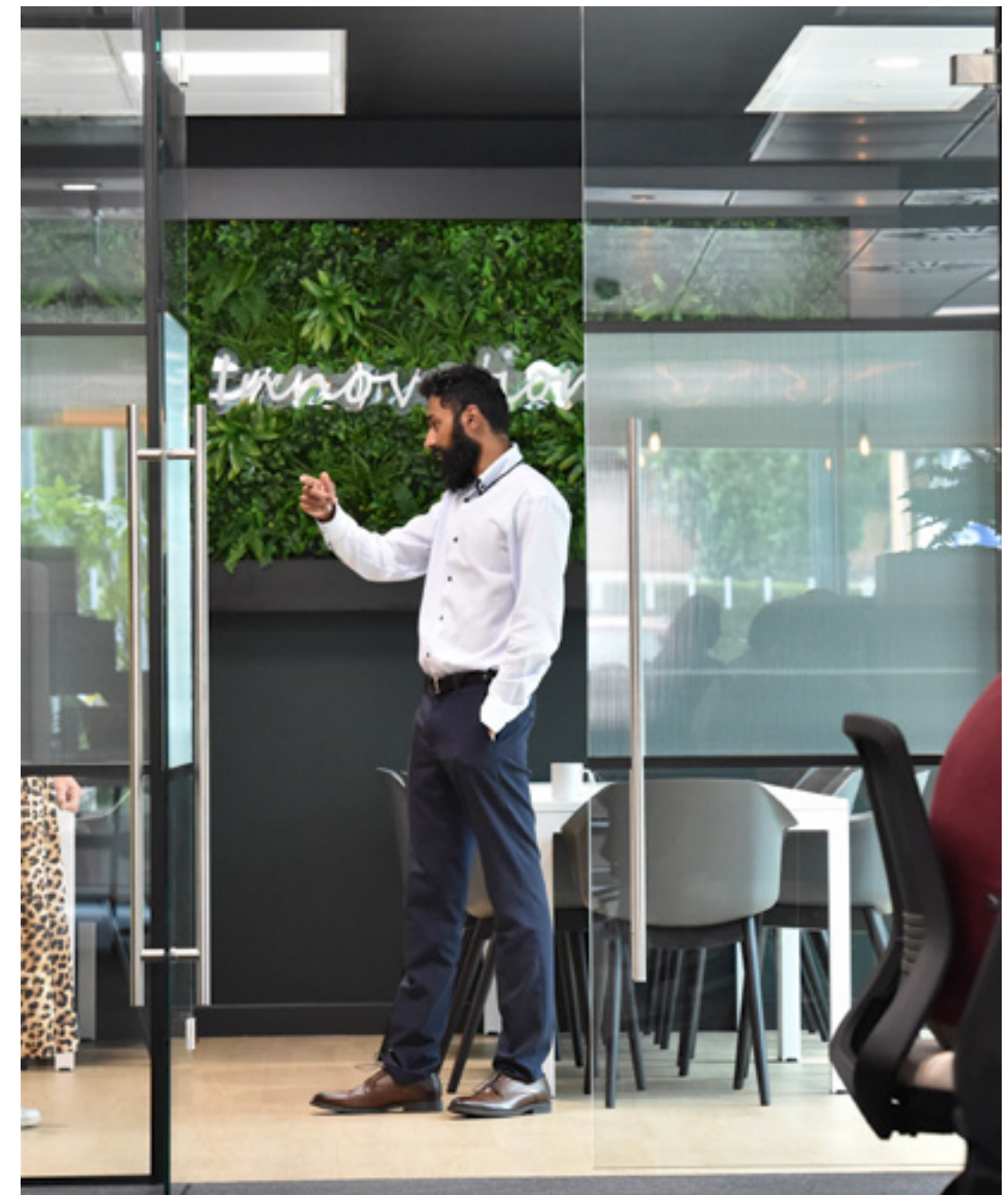
Location and facilities:

Are your staff's commutes manageable?

Is the area attractive to potential new hires?

Is there enough parking?

Does your office have the right mix of space: meeting rooms, breakout zones, accessibility features?



Future planning

If your lease renewal is coming up, don't just focus on today. Think three to five years ahead. A little extra space now could save you a costly and stressful move later on.



Considering a fresh start?

Sometimes the best move is to actually move. There's no point spending money trying to make a space work if it simply can't meet your needs.

If a new location feels like the right answer, don't go it alone. Download our [Step-by-Step Office Relocation Guide](#) for everything you need to plan your move with confidence.

Need help?

Not sure if your existing space can work for the future? We're here to help you reimagine it. [Book a free site visit](#) with us, and we'll advise whether your space can deliver what you need, all within your budget. **Call 01522 688 771**

02 | Budget smart: Plan your spend

Getting the budget right early means fewer surprises later. Think of it as your roadmap, it helps you steer the project confidently without losing control.

What might it cost?

To give you a rough idea, here's a ballpark range based on office size, but remember, final costs depend heavily on the specification and quality of products and finishes you choose:

-  **Small offices (up to 2,000 sq ft): £25,000 – £75,000**
-  **Medium offices (2,000 to 10,000 sq ft): £75,000 – £375,000**
-  **Large offices (10,000 sq ft+): £375,000+**

These figures cover a broad spectrum from modest refreshes to full refurbishments with bespoke design and high-end finishes.



Set your budget

The obvious cost will be your design and fit-out partner. Some companies, like APSS, include the majority of costs in their quotes, such as:

- Design and planning fees
- Furniture and fixtures
- Construction and refurbishment works
- IT infrastructure and cabling upgrades
- Security systems
- Planning permissions and building regulations
- Professional fees (legal, surveys, project management)

You also want to factor in:

Insurances

Temporary storage (if needed during phased works)

Marketing or PR if you're announcing a new-look office

Contingency fund (10–15% of total costs)

Other project-specific costs.

03 | Explore cost saving options

(Negotiating is your friend)

Office moves can be expensive, but the good news is there are ways to ease the pain of the purse strings. Speak to your landlords about potential contributions and have a chat with your accountant to explore grants or finance options for payments.

Consider:

Speak to Your Future Landlords

They might be willing to contribute, especially if your upgrades add value to the building — think air conditioning, lighting, or shared facilities.

Accountants

Speak with your accountant, you never know what money saving ideas they will have:

Tax breaks

Grants and low-interest loans available

Capital allowances

Sustainability allowances



Have you considered leasing?

You can choose to pay for your office refurb by lease, spreading the cost over a period of time. This gives you a lot of flexibility and means you don't have to unload a big chunk of cash upfront. Get in touch with us for more info.

Stay organised:

Keep a simple spreadsheet or budgeting tool to track costs as you go. It helps spot overspending early and keeps everyone on the same page.

Remember, the cheapest option isn't always the best. Focus on value, balancing quality, cost, and long-term benefits.



Need help with your design and fit-out budget?

APSS can walk you through your options, helping you create a workspace that suits your business (and your wallet).

Give us a shout on **01522 688 771** and let's chat!

04 | Assign internal Project Leader

(or volunteer someone!)

A photograph of a modern interior space. In the foreground, a white, curved table is partially visible. Behind it, an orange leather chair with a high back is positioned. To the right of the chair, a large, dark grey, rounded planter holds a lush green plant. In the background, a window with dark curtains is visible, letting in bright light. The overall atmosphere is clean and contemporary.

Time to build your internal dream team. You'll need someone within your business to keep everything on track from start to finish, a go-to person who truly understands your company and has the enthusiasm (and patience!) to create a workspace that works for you. Bonus points if they're good with numbers and can keep the budget from drifting off course.

Key Roles:

A team of two or three people works best to avoid a stalemate. Here are the key roles (one person can wear multiple hats if needed):

-  **Project Lead:** The single point of contact who owns the process and drives progress.
-  **Finance Rep:** Keeps budgets on track, spots surprises early, and helps steer spending away from shiny distractions.
-  **Facilities/IT Lead:** Offers practical insights on space and technology needs.
-  **Brand/Marketing Lead:** Ensures the new office reflects your company’s identity and culture.

Your In-House Fit-Out Team

Click on the boxes below to add in the names and details of the team you will have:

Role	Name	Contact	Info	Notes
Project Lead				
Finance Rep				
Facilities/IT Lead				
Brand /Marketing Lead				

05 | Define your space needs

Space requirements

Use our [Workplace Audit Checklist](#) to identify where your current space works and where it falls short, guiding you to focus on the essentials your new office needs to deliver.

Think about how your team works and what your office must include. Start with the basics, such as desk space and meeting rooms, and then consider the extras that will make your office work better for your business.

Consider:

Think about your company culture and how your office reflects it. Do you need a vibrant, collaborative atmosphere or quiet zones for focused work? Understanding this will influence the design and how your team uses the space.



Key Areas to Consider:

Furniture & Layout:

- Will you need more desks or fewer?
- Is there existing furniture you want to keep?
- Is hotdesking part of your plan?
- Would you benefit from informal seating, quiet areas, or more collaboration zones?

Tech & Connectivity:

- How does your team work? On-site, hybrid, or remote?
- Are there any current Wi-Fi or technology pain points?
- Do you need improved video conferencing facilities?
- Would additional screens, AV equipment, or docking stations help?

A booklet titled 'workplace audit checklist' with the apss.co.uk logo is shown next to a smartphone displaying the same checklist. The booklet features a photo of a modern office interior.

Downloadable Content

Workplace Audit Checklist: Identify what your office needs now and what to prepare for the future.

Call **01522 688 771**

Requirements Notes

Use this space to jot down your known priorities for your new office.

Furniture / Layout:	
Tech / Connectivity:	
Facilities / Functionality	

06 | Involve your team

Let's face it, everyone has an opinion on how the office should look (whether they've been asked for one or not), so early consultation is useful. Maybe send out a quick questionnaire to gather feedback on what's working and what's not in your current office. You can also ask them what they'd love to see if you were to switch things up.

Make it multiple-choice if you've already got ideas in mind. If there's a strong response to one option, you'll know it's worth including in your brief when you start chatting to design and fit-out contractors.

Getting your team involved early doesn't just give you better insight, it gets everyone behind the vision from the very start. If you're not ready to share your plans just yet, just say you're simply gathering feedback for now.

At APSS, we specialise in space planning to create a workplace that enhances efficiency, supports growth, and maximises available space.

Call 01522 688 771

Ways to gather insight – consult staff

- Walk the space with fresh eyes, noting what’s well-used – or what’s just gathering dust.
 - Run a quick survey or feedback session with your team.
- Use a multiple-choice questionnaire if you already have some rough ideas.
 - Ask department heads what they need more (or less) of.

Think about:	Staff Feedback Notes:	Check
What part of the office does your team love?		
What would they like to change?		
If you could add anything practical, what would it be?		
How do they prefer to work? (At a desk? In a meeting room? At home?)		
What do they need more / less of?		
Which locations would they love/hate?		
What kind of collaboration space would they like?		
Which teams do they communicate with the most?		

Once you’re deeper into the process, it’s best to keep the finer details to a smaller group. The more people you involve, the longer it’ll take to get decisions made, and trust us, no one wants the project dragging on. Choose your decision-makers wisely, and keep the team small.

07 | Sustainability & staff wellbeing

Sustainability

A sustainable office isn't just good for the planet, it's good for business too. You'll lower running costs, create a healthier workspace, and show you care about the bigger picture.

Environmental Considerations

Small choices in design can make a big difference. Durable, low-VOC finishes and eco-friendly furniture help improve air quality. Maximising natural light, and choosing energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling, keeps your carbon footprint (and your bills) in check. Planning for recycling, waste reduction, and re-using existing furniture can also reduce environmental impact without sacrificing style.

APSS can help you explore practical, greener alternatives that fit your budget and still deliver the look and performance you need.

Call 01522 688 771



News & Insights

The Benefits of Biophilic Design in the Workplace



Staff Wellbeing

Looking after your people is just as important as looking after the planet. A workspace designed with wellbeing in mind pays you back in higher productivity, fewer sick days, and better staff retention.



News & Insights

Improving Employee Well-being and Workplace Satisfaction



What do you want to include?

Natural light and fresh air: Boosts mood, reduces fatigue

Biophilic design: Adding plants and natural materials connects your team to nature, improving creativity and reducing stress

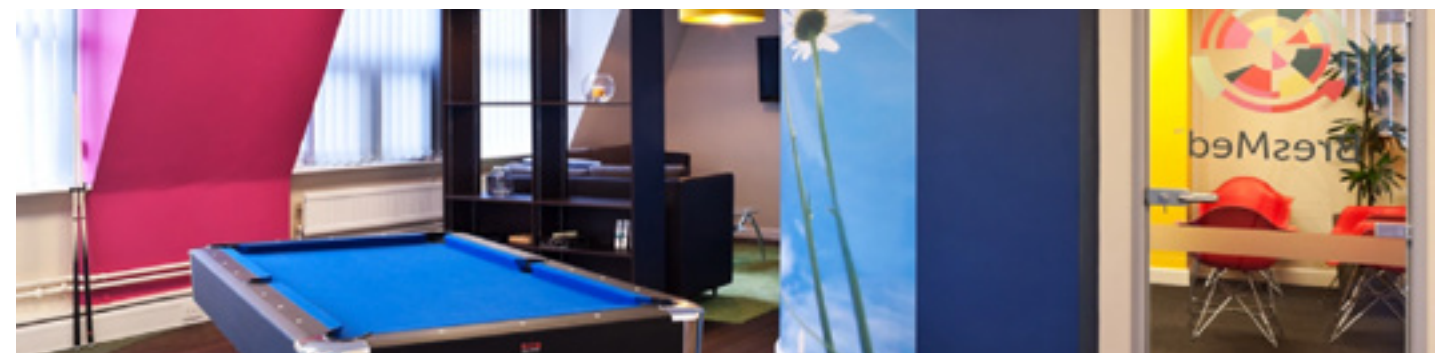
Wellness rooms: Quiet, dedicated spaces for relaxation, mindfulness, or short breaks help staff recharge

Comfort zones: Adjustable desks, ergonomic chairs, and varied seating support different working styles

Noise management: Soundproofing or quiet areas help maintain focus

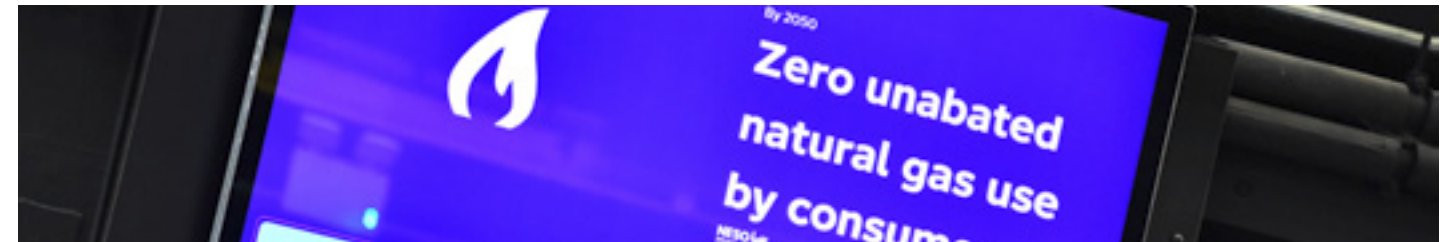
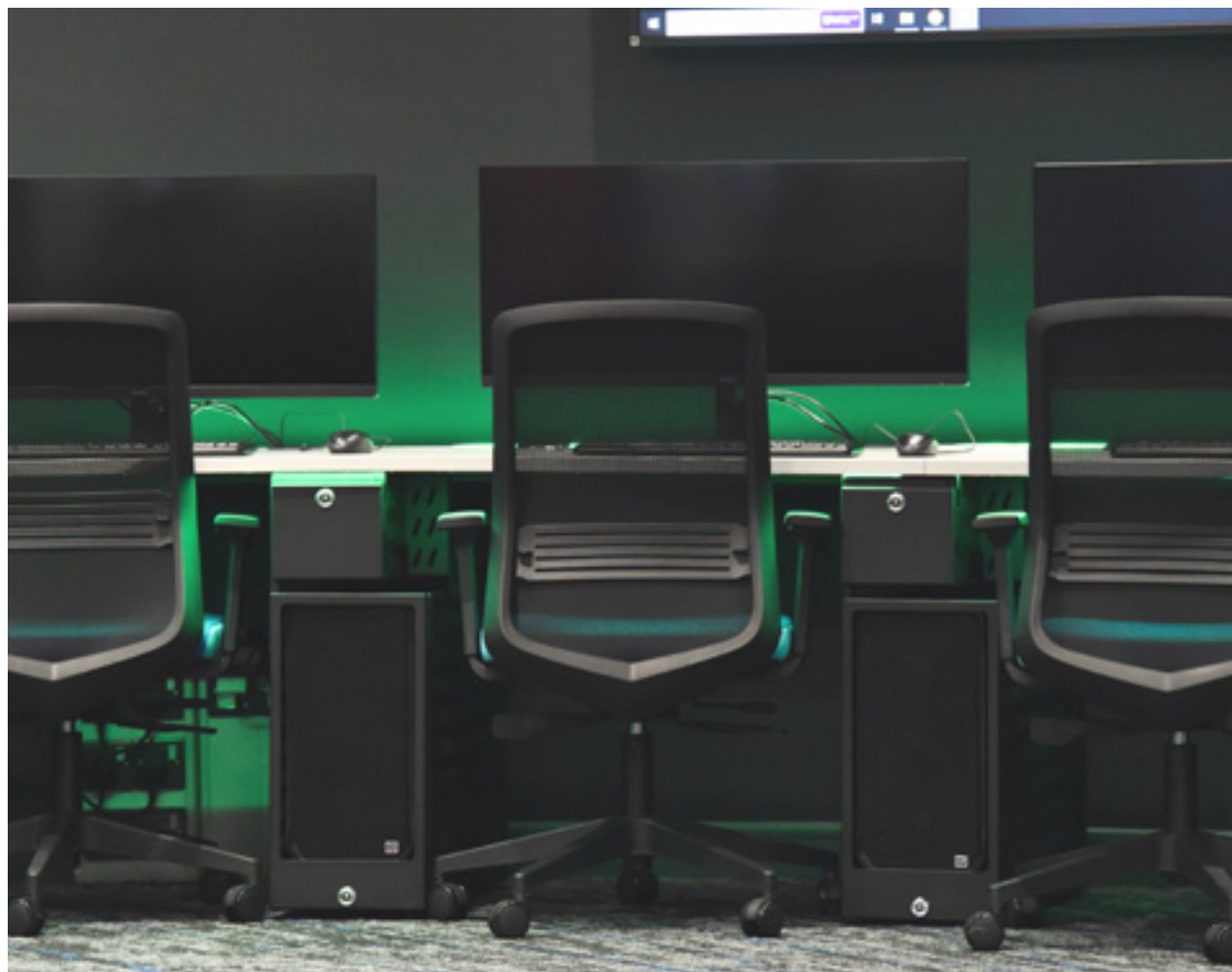
Healthy amenities: Hydration points, healthy snacks, gyms and clean breakout areas encourage good habits

Wellbeing isn't just a "nice to have", it's a solid investment in your business. A healthier team will stay longer, work better, and help your company thrive. Happy employees are your greatest asset.



08 | Your tech requirements

Future-proofing is key. Even if your needs feel covered now, think about how your business might change over the next five years. Will you have more people? More tech? More reliance on video calls? Planning for growth now will save time, disruption, and expense later.



What to review

Power & data points: Do you have enough, and are they in the right places?

Network capacity: Can your Wi-Fi and cabling handle increased demand?

Server & comms rooms: Do they need upgrading, relocating, or expanding?

Meeting room tech: TVs, projectors, AV equipment, and video conferencing facilities

Workstation setups: Docking stations, extra screens, or hotdesking connections

Shared equipment: Printers, photocopiers, conference phones, and the cabling to support them

A little thought here means a lot less frustration later. Your design and refurbishment partner will make sure your technical requirements are built into the plan from day one so every socket, screen, and cable is exactly where you need it.

Consider:

Office tech works best when it's invisible. Well-planned cabling, integrated AV, and the right number of power points mean your space stays clutter-free, efficient, and ready for the future.

09

Choosing your office design
& refurb partner

Research office design & fit-out companies

Finding the right office fit-out company is key to ensuring your new space works for you, not just in theory, but in reality. Start researching options early by looking at portfolios, reading reviews, and even reaching out to past clients for recommendations. Look for a company that provides a comprehensive service, including design, fit-out, project management, and ongoing support.

Consider the following:

Does the company offer space planning?

Will they provide 2D/3D designs, walkthroughs, or VR previews?

Can they work within your budget and timeline?

What parts of the project will they manage, and what will fall to you?

How often will they update you on progress?

Get in touch:

APSS has been designing and fitting out offices since 1997.

Find out how we can help.

10 | Arrange a site survey

This is the first step in turning refurbishment ideas into a space that truly works for your business. This first meeting with your potential design and fit-out contractor is about building a relationship.

Here are some questions to expect on the day, hopefully you will already have many of the answers thanks to the research you've already done.

About your building

Do you have any existing plans of the building you can share?

Has it had an asbestos survey?

What is your current fire strategy?

Where are the existing services?

What condition is the AC in – has it been serviced recently?

What you want

What would your team like to include (if you have asked them)?

Reception requirements?

Number of individual offices required?

New furniture or reuse existing?

How many staff use the canteen / kitchen at any one time?

Canteen / breakout requirements – fridge, microwave, dishwasher etc

What storage requirements do you have?

About your business

What future plans for your business will impact facilities required?

How many staff do you want to cater for? (including growth)

How do your teams work together? Do some need to be closer together than others?

How many meeting rooms do you need and how many people do they need to accommodate?

Do you require an element of hybrid working hotdesking?

Do you entertain customers here?

Other

Do you have a date when work needs to be completed by?

Do you have a rough budget?

What are your thoughts on the existing layout?

What challenges are you facing in your workspace currently?

11 | Declutter & prepare

Time for a big clear-out

You might be amazed at what's hiding in the back of cupboards, filing cabinets full of paperwork from decades ago, a box of mystery cables, or that questionable office chair nobody dares to sit on. Now is the perfect time to go through and dispose of anything you no longer need.

What needs sorting?

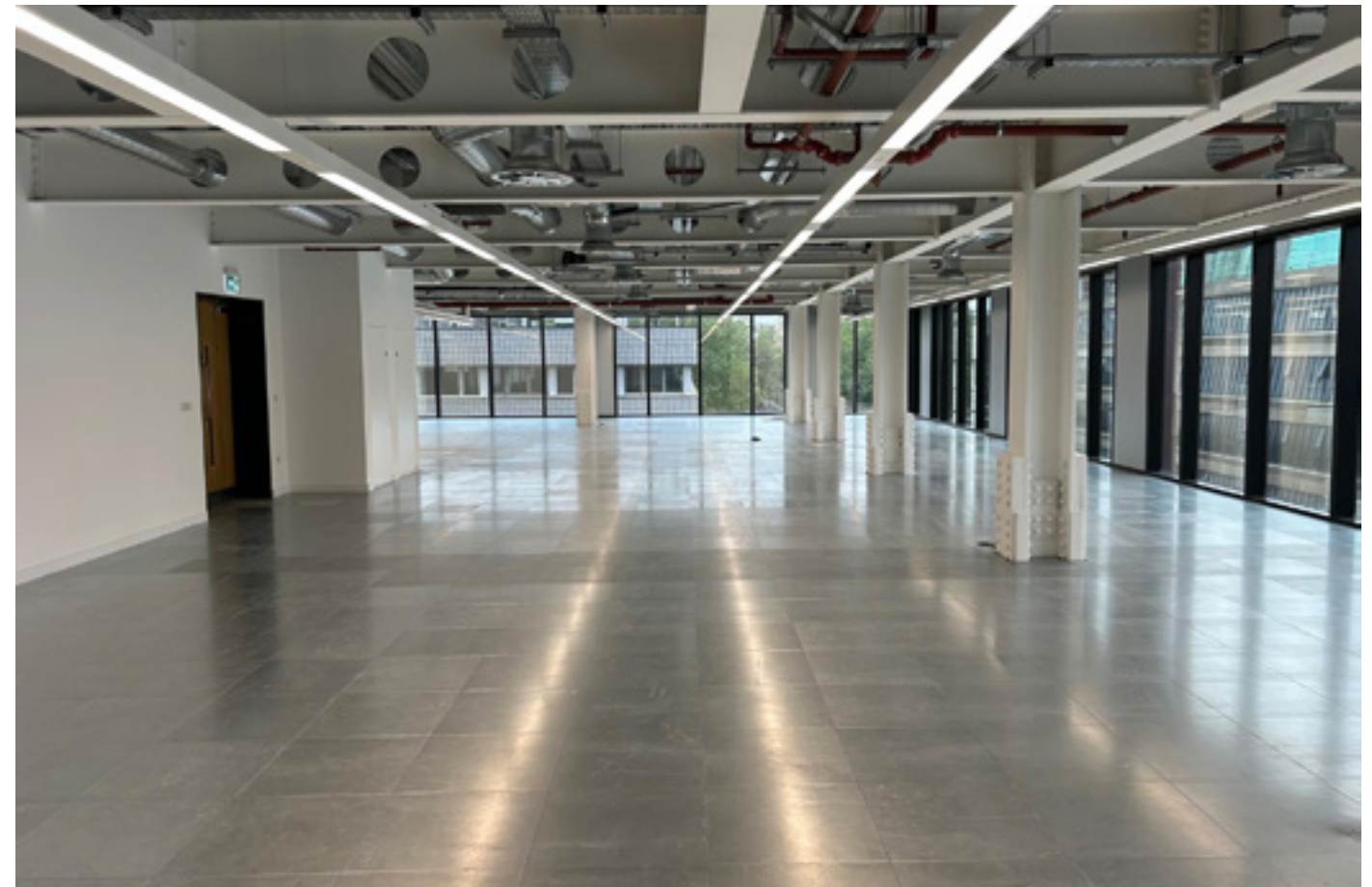
Documents – shred or archive outdated files

Equipment & tech – upgrade or recycle old devices

Signage & branding – is it still relevant?

Furniture – highlight what needs replacing

If new furniture is needed, keep in mind that delivery lead times range from one week to two months, so ordering early is essential to avoid delays.



Need new office furniture?

APSS can help you select the best furniture to complement your new office design. **Call 01522 688 771.**

12 | Appoint your office design & refurb partner

Designs in hand, it's time to appoint your design and fit-out partner, the team who will turn ideas on paper into a workspace that truly works for your people.

A strong partner has already shown through concept designs that they understand your goals and flagged potential challenges before they become headaches. They'll have suggested solutions you might never have imagined, bridging the gap between creative vision and day-to-day practicality - all while keeping disruption to your team to an absolute minimum.



Choosing the right fit-out company:

Do past projects match the type of work you need?

Have they provided transparent pricing and realistic timelines?

What's its credit rating and insurance coverage like?

What's its health and safety track record?

Does it have a service guarantee?

Does it have the right industry accreditations?

Does it handle repairs, asbestos removal, or external alterations if needed?

Does it offer furniture and bespoke joinery (e.g., storage, reception desks)?

Does it have positive client feedback and verifiable references?

How will they keep you updated on progress?

Need a fit-out team that ticks all the boxes?

APSS can help design and build your ideal office while keeping your budget in check.

13 | To phase or not to phase

Phasing could be your secret weapon. Breaking the work into smart, manageable stages keeps your team productive, safe, and happy while the refurbishment rolls out. Think of it as choreographing a performance: each step is planned, timed, and coordinated so the show goes on, uninterrupted.

Pros

- Minimal disruption to business operations
- No need to fully relocate staff
- Flexibility to adjust plans as the project progresses
- Easier on cash flow if budgets are staged

Cons

- Project can take slightly longer overall
- Some areas may feel “under construction” at times
- Requires clear communication to avoid confusion
- Can be more costly if you have a strict budget





How Contractors Keep Business Flowing:



Schedule noisy or dusty tasks when fewer people are around



Use temporary partitions to keep work areas functional



Time IT moves or upgrades to slot neatly into the plan

Phasing isn't just practical, it's about keeping momentum, confidence, and sanity intact. You don't need to pack up and leave; your office can transform around your team while the work ticks along.

Unsure how this would work?

APSS can create a plan that keeps your office running smoothly while giving your space the fresh new look it deserves.

14

Agree the office design & set a project timeline

Your designs are finalised, the detailed quote is in hand, and you can see exactly what your budget delivers. Now it's time to give the green light and set a clear project schedule. This is where your vision starts to become reality, and your fit-out partner ensures everything aligns perfectly with your business needs.

A strong contractor will be upfront about timescales and material lead times, helping you balance ambition with practicality. Rushing can compromise quality, so a realistic plan is key. Most refurbishments on-site typically run:

-  **Small office (up to 5,000 sq ft):** 4 – 6 weeks
-  **Medium office (5,000–10,000 sq ft):** 6 – 8 weeks
-  **Large office (10,000+ sq ft):** 8 – 14 weeks

It's also the moment to factor in contingency. Hidden structural quirks, delayed deliveries, or unexpected snags can happen, having some wiggle room keeps stress levels low and confidence high.

Have you covered everything?

Before signing off, double-check your plan covers all your essential spaces and features:

Desk space for your team	Collaboration zones
Meeting rooms	Private offices
Reception area	Toilet facilities
Kitchen & break spaces	Storage & warehouse areas
Office furniture	

Want a refurbishment schedule that's realistic and stress-free? Our team can plan every step so you know exactly what to expect, no surprises, just a smooth transformation. **Call 01522 688 771.**

15 | Communicating the plan

With your project start date set, it's time to get everyone on the same page. Your team needs to know what's happening, when, and how it might affect their day-to-day. Which areas will be off-limits? Which spaces remain active? What can they expect from the refurbishment crew?

Keep everyone informed on:

Which areas of the office will be out of action and when

Any changes to desk locations or team seating

Health & safety guidance (fire exits, restricted areas, PPE if needed)

IT or equipment moves (and how they'll be supported)

Expected noise, dust, or delivery schedules

Key project milestones — so they can share in the excitement

Top Tip:

The more your team understands the “why” behind the refurb, the more they'll buy into the changes. Sharing visuals of the new design or hosting Q&A sessions keeps everyone engaged and positive about what's coming.



16 | Understanding your responsibilities

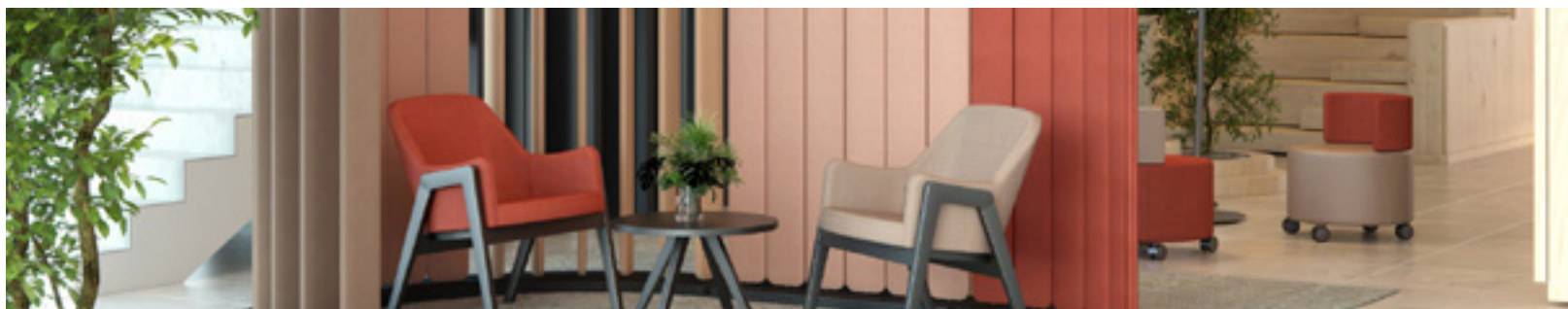
While your office design and fit-out company will oversee most aspects of health and safety on-site, there are still key responsibilities that fall on you. Ensuring compliance and clear project oversight is crucial at this stage.

Your Key Responsibilities:

Officially appoint a **principal designer** and **contractor** in writing

Assign a **project lead** within your business with decision-making authority within your business

Maintain **employer's insurance** until the project is complete



Unsure about your legal responsibilities?

APSS can guide you through every step, so you stay compliant without adding stress to a project.

News & Insights

Office Refurbishment: Legal & Safety Responsibilities Made Easy



17 | Label everything

Before work begins on-site, you may need to move out of certain areas and clear your furniture so the refurbishment can get started.

Label your furniture, equipment, and any personal items clearly so everyone knows what's what and where it's going. Staff can be surprisingly attached to their specific chair or desk setup! Proper tagging ensures a smooth, stress-free move.

Top Tip:

Use colour-coded labels or numbered tags linked to a floor plan or inventory list. This makes unpacking and setting up your refreshed space quicker and smoother, and your team will thank you for it!



Have you covered everything?

Before signing off, double-check your plan covers all your essential spaces and features:

Desks & Pedestals

Desk Chairs

Racking & Storage Units

Meeting Tables & Chairs

Soft Furnishings (Sofas, Coffee Tables, etc.)

Document Boxes & Desk Organisers

Kitchen Equipment

18 | What to expect while works are underway

Once work begins, your office will feel a little different for a while. Here's what to keep in mind:



The Reality:

- 🔊 Expect noise — drilling, deliveries, and the movement of materials.
- 🚫 Some areas will be temporarily off-limits.
- 👷 You'll see more contractors, vehicles, and equipment on site than usual.

What Your Contractor Should Do:

- Provide you with a risk assessment method statement
- Keep the site safe, secure, and tidy.
- Work within agreed hours to minimise disruption.
- Provide clear updates so you always know what's happening next.

What You Can Do:

- Communicate with your team so they know what to expect.
- Have a contingency plan for critical meetings or key dates.
- Stay flexible — change is perfectly normal in any project.

19 | Final inspection & sign off

The big moment has arrived, your office is ready, and it's time to see it all come together. Walking through the space with your fit-out team is exciting. This is when your vision becomes reality.

Check every detail against your agreed plans – finishes, fixtures, and fittings should all be exactly as promised. Spot any last-minute tweaks or snagging issues so they can be quickly resolved.

When everything meets your expectations, you give the official sign-off. This is your green light: your refreshed office is ready for your team to move back in and start making the space their own again.



Final Checkpoints

Before signing off, double-check everything:

Everything is completed as planned

There are no last-minute snags or missing items

Any required changes are flagged immediately

Documents to get from your fit-out partner:

Operations and Maintenance Pack

Practical Completion Certificate

Building Control Certificate

You can be confident and excited about your new office, a fresh, functional workspace designed for your team's success.

20 | Show off your new look!

Congratulations! It's finished!

Your office refurb is complete, and the space looks fantastic! It's time to share your new look with the world!

Showcasing your refreshed workspace can boost morale, attract new clients, and highlight your company's commitment to a great work environment.

Consider hosting a launch event or open day so staff, partners, and clients can explore the new space. It's a perfect opportunity to reinforce your company culture and generate excitement about the future.

Ways to Celebrate and Share

Share across social media with photos & videos

Share in a newsletter to your customers

Organise an office launch party or coffee morning

Invite local press or industry influencers for a tour

Send a press release to highlight your investment and the reasons behind it

Showing off your new office isn't just about vanity, it's a smart move that signals growth, care, and innovation to everyone connected to your business.

Don't forget to tag your trusted design and fit-out contractor too, so they can help you share your good news!

The journey begins...

If you have any questions about our products or services then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Want to arrange a visit to our Lincoln, UK offices to get some inspiration? We will be happy to guide you around. Or you can take a virtual tour.



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