

Benefits of Government Soft Landings

- The staged review process ensures that end users are engaged, facilitating a building that is constructed to meet their needs
- Pre-Handover checks and familiarisation period ensures that a smooth handover takes place
- The initial, fully integrated aftercare transition provides permanent, on-site support to deal with initial aftercare issues
- The extended aftercare review period provides end users and FM teams with the optimum solution for their building systems

Introduction to Government Soft Landings

Soft Landings require clients to appoint designers and constructors to stay involved with their new building beyond practical completion, into the critical initial period of occupation. This will assist building managers to fine-tune the systems during the first months of operation, ensuring the occupiers understand how to control and get the best from their new building. This is followed by a longer, less intensive period of aftercare lasting for up to three years, monitoring energy usage and occupant satisfaction, and checking systems that might need seasonal fine-tuning.

This extended duty of care requires Soft Landings to be considered from project inception, being embedded in all client requirements and design deliberations. It must also be adopted by the contractor to ensure good intentions are not unnecessarily sacrificed for cost or time reasons.

Detailed Description

Soft Landings provide a step-by-step process for clients and project teams to deliver a better-performing product. The Soft Landings culture can be applied to projects of all sizes, ensuring outcomes match the client's intentions.

Stage 1: Inception and briefing

The time for constructive dialogue between the client, the designers and the potential constructors about intentions, performance requirements and stakeholder expectations. Embedding specific Soft Landings activities in the client's requirements and tender documentation, and setting aside budget for aftercare and post-occupancy evaluation. Effort should be made to get key specialist advice earlier than would be the norm - controls specialists, commissioning engineers, facilities managers; key subcontractors - catering, ICT, lighting, and controls integrators; nomination of Soft Landings Champions to drive the process forward; and reviewing past experience to inform design.

Stage 2: Design development and review

Brings the entire project team together to review insights from comparable projects and detail how the building will work from the point of view of the manager and individual user. Agreeing the energy strategy – and the metering and monitoring strategy – and the approach to commissioning, and ensuring they are regular items for discussion and covered in relevant tenders. Review the proposed systems for usability and maintainability, and reality-check as systems turn into actual installed products.

Agree Key Milestones dates:

- Producing a Soft Landings/Testing & Commissioning programme
 - User group meeting
 - Witnessing/Demonstrations
 - Pre-Handover Meeting
 - Keys
 - O&M meetings – monthly to begin with, but could quickly become quarterly. Ensure that the energy monitoring is set up and working well. Conduct systematic post-occupancy evaluation no sooner than 12 months post-handover, repeated at 12 month intervals and culminating in a final project review at month 36.

Source: BSRIA (<https://www.bsria.co.uk/services/design/soft-landings/>)

