

INSIGHT

The Boardroom Guide to Facilities Management



Why Facilities Management Has Become a Strategic Business Function

Facilities Management has evolved significantly. Historically, FM was often viewed primarily as an operational support service responsible for:

- buildings
- maintenance
- compliance
- and workplace operations

While these responsibilities remain critical, the role of Facilities Management now extends far beyond operational delivery alone. Modern FM increasingly influences:

- organisational resilience
- employee experience
- ESG performance
- workplace productivity
- operational continuity
- risk management
- and overall business performance

As organisations become more complex, the strategic importance of Facilities Management continues growing. Yet despite this evolution, many executive leadership teams still underestimate the true organisational impact of FM. The strongest organisations no longer see Facilities Management simply as a cost centre. They increasingly view it as strategic infrastructure, operational protection, and a major contributor to organisational effectiveness. This shift is reshaping how FM leadership operates at board level.

Facilities Management Supports Organisational Stability

Every organisation relies on operational stability. Without it:

- productivity declines
- risk increases
- employee confidence weakens
- and business continuity becomes vulnerable

Facilities Management often sits directly at the centre of this stability. FM teams oversee environments that support:

- people
- infrastructure
- operations
- technology
- safety
- and workplace functionality

When FM performs strongly, organisations often operate smoothly without disruption. When FM fails, operational impact becomes highly visible very quickly.

—
The best
candidates are
rarely
looking
—



FM Is Strategic Infrastructure

Facilities Management is increasingly part of an organisation's strategic infrastructure. Modern workplaces are no longer simply physical environments. They are operational ecosystems supporting:

- collaboration
- productivity
- wellbeing
- technology
- culture
- and organisational performance

FM therefore influences far more than building operations alone. It increasingly supports:

- how organisations function
- how employees perform
- and how businesses adapt during periods of change

This makes FM strategically important at executive level.

Operational Continuity Is a Board-Level Concern

Recent years have highlighted the importance of resilience and continuity planning. Economic uncertainty. Hybrid working. Supply chain disruption. Operational risk. Workplace transformation. Technology dependency. All have reinforced the importance of operational continuity. Facilities Management increasingly plays a major role in:

- business continuity planning
- crisis management
- resilience strategy
- and operational recovery capability

This places FM directly within board-level risk conversations.

FM Directly Influences Workplace Performance

The workplace environment significantly affects:

- productivity
- engagement
- collaboration
- wellbeing
- and employee experience

Poor workplace environments often create:

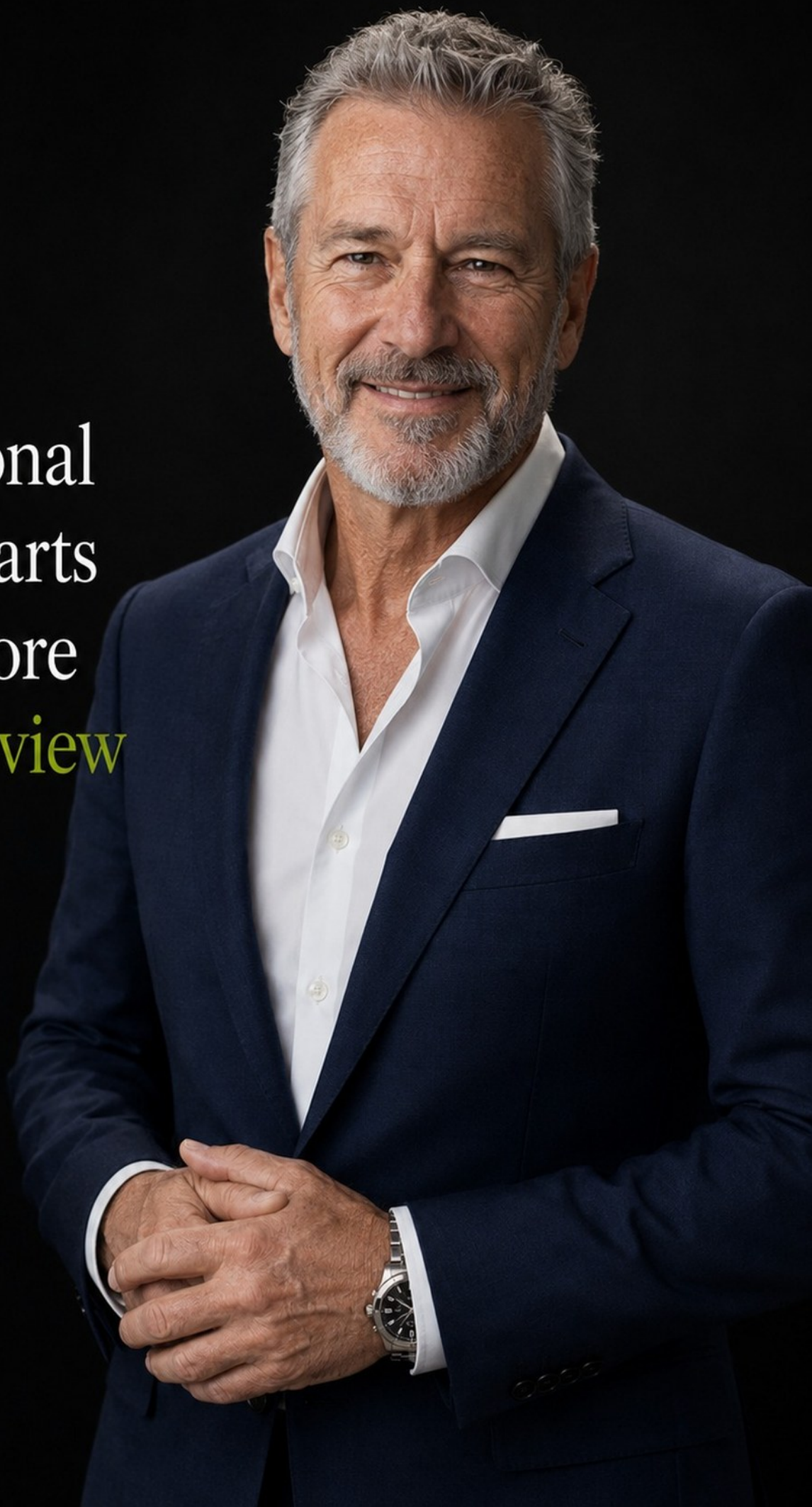
- frustration
- disengagement
- operational friction
- and reduced morale

Strong workplace environments improve:

- focus
- energy
- collaboration
- and organisational connection

Facilities Management increasingly shapes these outcomes directly. The workplace itself has become a performance driver.

Exceptional
hiring starts
long before
the interview
process
begins



Workplace Experience Is Becoming Strategically Important

Hybrid working permanently changed employee expectations. Employees increasingly assess:

- workplace quality
- flexibility
- amenities
- comfort
- and environmental experience

The office is no longer simply somewhere employees attend automatically. Modern workplaces increasingly need to:

- attract people
- support collaboration
- reinforce culture
- and provide meaningful experiences

Facilities Management now plays a central role in delivering this.

ESG Is Increasingly Linked to FM Strategy

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) priorities are becoming central to corporate strategy. Facilities Management heavily influences ESG performance through:

- energy management
- sustainability initiatives
- environmental efficiency
- workplace wellbeing
- and operational governance

Modern FM leaders increasingly contribute directly to:

- carbon reduction
- sustainability reporting
- energy optimisation
- and responsible workplace operations

This makes FM increasingly relevant at executive and investor level.

FM Protects Organisational Risk

Facilities Management plays a major role in operational risk mitigation. This includes:

- health and safety
- compliance
- critical infrastructure
- workplace security
- operational resilience
- and supplier management

Strong FM leadership reduces organisational exposure to:

- disruption
- reputational damage
- compliance failures
- and operational instability

Weak FM leadership increases these risks significantly. Risk management is therefore a major strategic value of FM.

—
Clarity on
day one saves
months
later
—



The Future Workplace Requires Strategic FM Leadership

Modern workplaces are evolving rapidly. This includes:

- hybrid working models
- smart buildings
- experience-led workplaces
- hospitality-driven environments
- and technology-enabled operations

Facilities Management increasingly helps organisations navigate these changes. The modern FM leader must now combine:

- operational expertise
- strategic thinking
- communication capability
- and transformation leadership

The profession is becoming increasingly sophisticated.

FM Is Becoming More Data-Driven

Technology is transforming Facilities Management rapidly. Smart buildings, workplace analytics, AI and automation now allow FM teams to:

- monitor operational performance
- improve efficiency
- optimise energy use
- and make more informed decisions

This is moving FM from reactive operations toward predictive operational intelligence. Modern FM leadership increasingly requires:

- commercial awareness
- technological understanding
- and data-driven decision-making capability

Facilities
leadership
is a board
decision



Leadership Visibility Matters

The strongest organisations increasingly ensure FM leadership has visibility internally. This matters because FM influences:

- operational continuity
- employee experience
- workplace transformation
- and organisational resilience

Where FM leadership lacks visibility:

- strategic opportunities are often missed
- workplace investment becomes fragmented
- and operational risk can increase

Strong executive organisations increasingly integrate FM leadership into broader business conversations.

FM Influences Organisational Culture

The workplace directly affects how organisations feel emotionally. Facilities Management influences:

- atmosphere
- comfort
- collaboration
- wellbeing
- and daily employee experience

This means FM increasingly shapes:

- culture
- engagement
- and organisational identity

Modern workplaces communicate organisational values constantly. The physical environment itself has become part of company culture.

Hire for the
next five years,
**not the next
five weeks**



Cost Control Alone Is No Longer Enough

Historically, FM was often evaluated primarily through:

- budgets
- savings
- and operational efficiency

Cost control remains important. But modern FM value is broader. Strong Facilities Management now contributes to:

- retention
- engagement
- resilience
- ESG
- operational performance
- and organisational stability

The boardroom conversation around FM is evolving accordingly.

FM Increasingly Supports Talent Retention

Employees increasingly want to work in:

- high-quality environments
- flexible workplaces
- and organisations that invest in employee experience

Facilities Management now contributes directly to:

- attraction
- retention
- and employer brand perception

The quality of workplace experience increasingly influences whether people stay long-term. This moves FM beyond operations into workforce strategy.

Strategic FM Reduces Organisational Friction

Strong FM operations reduce:

- disruption
- inefficiency
- workplace frustration
- and operational complexity

This allows organisations to:

- focus more effectively
- operate more smoothly
- and perform more consistently

In many organisations, the best FM environments are often the least noticeable operationally. Because everything works properly.

Experience
is the quiet
advantage



FM Leadership Requires Commercial Understanding

Modern FM leaders increasingly need:

- commercial awareness
- strategic communication skills
- and executive credibility

The strongest FM leaders understand:

- organisational priorities
- financial pressures
- stakeholder expectations
- and business risk

Facilities Management is becoming increasingly integrated into wider business strategy.

The Future FM Function Will Become Even More Strategic

Over the coming years, Facilities Management will likely become even more important. Organisations will continue facing:

- workplace transformation
- operational complexity
- ESG pressure
- technology integration
- and employee experience expectations

FM will increasingly help organisations:

- adapt
- stabilise
- and perform effectively during change

This evolution will continue elevating the strategic importance of the profession.

Strong FM Leadership Creates Competitive Advantage

The strongest organisations increasingly recognise that workplace quality and operational stability create meaningful competitive advantages. Strong FM leadership improves:

- resilience
- engagement
- continuity
- culture
- and organisational performance

As a result, Facilities Management is increasingly becoming a board-level strategic function rather than simply an operational service line.

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**Fit matters
more than
speed**
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Conclusion

Facilities Management has evolved far beyond traditional operational oversight. Modern FM now influences:

- resilience
- workplace performance
- employee experience
- ESG
- operational continuity
- organisational culture
- and business stability

The strongest organisations increasingly recognise FM as:

- strategic infrastructure
- operational protection
- and a major contributor to long-term organisational performance

As workplaces continue evolving, the importance of strong FM leadership will only increase. Because ultimately, Facilities Management is no longer simply about buildings. It is about creating environments where organisations can perform, adapt and thrive.

About Maxwell Stephens

Maxwell Stephens is a specialist Facilities Management recruitment consultancy supporting organisations across the UK. We recruit FM professionals across:

- Facilities Management
- Estates
- Workplace Management
- Property Operations
- Building Services
- and FM Executive Leadership

Our approach combines deep sector understanding with long-term relationship-led recruitment. For more information visit www.maxwellstephens.com or call 0207 118 4848.

What the Data Says

What boards need to know: FM's economic scale, board-level cyber accountability, the cost of workplace harm and buildings' rising share of emissions.

- The UK workplace and facilities management sector is worth £102bn and 1.2 million jobs to the UK economy.
Source: [IWFM, Market Outlook 2025](#)
- Just 27% of UK businesses have board members taking explicit responsibility for cyber security.
Source: [GOV.UK \(DSIT / Home Office\), Cyber security breaches survey 2025](#)
- Workplace injuries and ill health from current working conditions cost Great Britain an estimated £22.9 billion in 2023/24.
Source: [Health and Safety Executive, Key figures for Great Britain 2024 to 2025, 2026](#)
- By the mid-2030s, buildings are predicted to become the UK's highest-emitting sector in the Government's trajectory.
Source: [UK Green Building Council, CCC Progress Report 2026: Buildings are now the UK's biggest climate test](#)
- 16% of the FM vacancies Maxwell Stephens advertised from 2023 to 2026 were Head of or Director-level leadership roles.
Source: [Maxwell Stephens analysis of 497 advertised vacancies, May 2023 – September 2026](#)

Sources were checked in September 2026. Select a source to open the original research. Maxwell Stephens figures are drawn from our own published vacancies and placement records.

See It in Practice

Group Property Director Recruitment for Rank Group plc

Rank Group plc appointed Maxwell Stephens to recruit a Group Property Director to lead its portfolio of venues and corporate offices across the UK and Spain. We searched for leaders with the commercial perspective to influence property strategy at Group level, assessing experience of acquisitions and disposals, major developments, FM, financial control and senior stakeholder engagement, alongside the ability to combine strategic thinking with practical delivery.

It shows property and FM leadership operating at Group level, where estate decisions shape business strategy.

[Read the full case study at maxwellstephens.com/case-studies/rank-group-plc](https://maxwellstephens.com/case-studies/rank-group-plc)

Related Reading

- **Measuring the ROI of Facilities Management**
maxwellstephens.com/blog/roi-in-fm-measuring-the-value-of-facilities-services
- **The Home Office's New FM Model: Outsource Capability Now, Build Resilience for the Future**
maxwellstephens.com/blog/peter-forshaw-reflects-on-the-home-offices-bold-fm-shift
- **Using Balanced Scorecards to Manage Facilities Management Suppliers**
maxwellstephens.com/blog/scorecards-to-manage-suppliers

Talk to Maxwell Stephens

Planning an FM, estates or workplace appointment? [Contact us](#) for a confidential conversation, or [browse more case studies](#).



A FINE POSITION TO BE IN



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Recruitment

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