



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

## Brief

In response to evolving operational requirements and a changing estate portfolio, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) commissioned Litmus FM to undertake a comprehensive benchmarking exercise. The primary objective was to assess value for money across existing facilities management (FM) services and to evaluate the viability of a Greenfield approach to support future service optimisation.

This work formed part of a wider strategic initiative by Defra's Central Real Estate and Facilities Management team to ensure service delivery remained aligned with best practice, contractual obligations, and internal stakeholder expectations. The scope of services reviewed included FM Management and Administration, Internal and External Maintenance, Cleaning, Mailroom, Security, Reception, Waste Management, and Horticultural Services.

## Approach

Litmus FM applied a structured, multi-phase methodology combining both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Requests for information were initially issued across all sites, covering:

- Financial data
- Local Operating Procedures
- Contract and service specifications

Sample site visits were then undertaken to assess service delivery and compliance with contractual requirements. During these visits, consultants met with key stakeholders and end users to capture operational insights and validate the supporting data.

This was followed by a desk-based analysis using Litmus FM's proprietary benchmarking database, drawing on current financial metrics and recognised industry benchmarks to ensure a robust and objective assessment.

## Outcomes

Litmus FM developed a 'should-be cost' model to support Defra's market tendering process. The model provided a realistic and evidence-based cost baseline, enabling Defra to assess supplier proposals against clear and defensible expectations.

●●● *The Litmus FM benchmarking exercise at Defra exemplifies how data-led consultancy can drive meaningful transformation in facilities management. By combining stakeholder engagement, rigorous analysis, and strategic modelling, Litmus FM enabled Defra to make informed decisions that balance cost efficiency, service quality, and long-term value.* ●●●

*James Wood, Project Manager, Defra*

The benchmarking exercise delivered transparent visibility of current FM service performance and established a data-driven foundation for future procurement decisions. It also created a framework for ongoing improvement through informed and collaborative supplier engagement.

This work further reinforced Litmus FM's role as a strategic partner, delivering actionable insight and operational clarity within complex public sector environments.



For more information about the services that LitmusFM provide, please get in touch:

Email us at [hello@litmusFM.co.uk](mailto:hello@litmusFM.co.uk)  
Visit us at [www.litmusfm.co.uk](http://www.litmusfm.co.uk)