

Property Data Survey Programme:

General Q&A

Below are a series of general questions and answers that have been compiled to answer some key questions about the Property Data Survey Programme:

1. What is the Property Data Survey Programme (PDSP)?

Following the publication of the Review of Education Capital in July 2011, the Department for Education (DfE) agreed that work should start without delay to collect up-to-date information on the building condition of the education estate. The Property Data Survey Programme has been established to enable the collection of this condition data.

This national programme includes Property Data Surveys (PDS) across the educational estate of England, and the procurement of an Asset Management Software (AMS) system to capture and analyse the information obtained as part of the surveys.

Partnerships for Schools (PfS) has been asked by the DfE to lead on the delivery of the PDSP. Initially, this will be through the procurement of contractors to carry out property surveys in schools across the country and provide an IT system to collect the data.

2. Why is this programme being undertaken?

The Review of Education Capital considered how the DfE could achieve better value for money and improve efficiency in capital investment. Following initial consultation the DfE agreed that work should start immediately to collect information on the condition data of the education estate.

The data collected will be used to provide evidence of the current condition of schools, and to develop the future funding mechanism for maintenance allocations based on the findings. The DfE believes there should be flexibility in the method used to distribute the available funding locally, with partners working together strategically to agree priorities. The PDSP is integral in enabling partners to make these decisions.

3. What will the programme achieve?

The aim of this programme is to enable hard-pressed maintenance funding to be focused on the buildings with greatest need. The condition data produced via the PDSP will help to inform decisions about future maintenance allocations determined from 2014-15.

4. Who will deliver the programme?

PfS has been asked by the DfE to lead on the delivery of the PDSP. Initially, this will be through the procurement of contractors to carry out property surveys in schools across the country and provide an IT system to collect the data.

5. When will the programme begin and when is it expected to be complete?

The property surveys are expected to begin in late April 2012 and are due to be complete by late July 2013.

6. When are the first maintenance allocations expected to be based on the results from this programme?

The first maintenance allocations that could be determined using condition data produced via the PDSP are those for 2014-15.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are a series of frequently asked questions along with answers, which are broken down in to four areas – about the programme, Property Data Surveys, Asset Management Software and procurement.

About the programme

1. What is the purpose of the programme?

The Review of Education Capital considered how the DfE could achieve better value for money and improve efficiency in capital investment. Following initial consultation the DfE agreed that work should start immediately to collect information on the property data of the education estate.

The data collected will be used to provide evidence of the current condition of schools, and to develop the future funding mechanism for maintenance allocations based on the findings.

2. Why is a centralised programme being used to undertake this task?

To ensure that future funding is effectively targeted to meet the condition need of the entire schools estate, accurate, up-to-date and consistent data is required for all schools across the country.

A centralised programme will be better placed to obtain data that is less variable and do so in a way that reduces the burdens on local authorities and schools in gathering this data. The central Asset Management Software (AMS) system will enable local authorities and schools to have web access to the data, which in turn will assist them with prioritising capital investment.

3. The survey programme is been carried out on a very tight timescale, will surveys be carried out at weekends and during holidays?

It is not anticipated that surveys will be undertaken at weekends and during school holidays.

Property Data Surveys (PDS)

4. Some local authorities have recently invested in surveying all schools in their area, will this data be redundant now?

The PDS are not viewed as a direct replacement for local authority condition surveys. Where local authorities and schools have up-to-date condition data there will be an opportunity to submit this to PfS. This data will then be validated and imported into the central AMS.

This will minimise disruption to schools and local authorities. Condition surveys, that are either currently being procured or have recently been procured, will still provide valuable information to assist with developing local authorities' estates strategies.

5. Are schools able to request that certain parts of the schools not be surveyed whilst exams are taking place?

The property surveys will be carried out at a time that is convenient to schools to minimise disruption.

6. When will we know when our school/s will be surveyed and how much notice will we be given?

The property surveys are scheduled to commence in April 2012 and are due to be complete by late July 2013. Surveyors are due to be appointed in the first quarter of 2012 and it is envisaged that survey programme dates for each school will be in place by March 2012. Schools will be notified around three weeks in advance of the survey to arrange access and other logistics.

7. Who will be responsible for contacting individual schools to agree a date and time for the surveys to take place?

The appointed surveyors will be responsible for contacting schools to agree a date and time.

8. Which areas of the school will be inspected?

Property Data Surveys will inspect the same elements and sub-elements as carried out in previous asset management planning submissions to the DfE.

9. Will the survey identify any Health and Safety issues?

If a surveyor identifies any Health and Safety issues that need attention, these will be brought to the attention of the school before leaving the site. Confirmation of this will be sent to the effected school via email shortly after the visit.

10. What information will the school need to provide in preparation for the survey?

Schools will not need to provide anything in preparation for the survey if they do not wish to. A short information note will be produced that will be sent to all schools prior to the survey that will set out the details of the survey. Some schools may wish to provide the surveyor with information prior to, or on the day of, the survey that can be taken into account.

11. The school bursar/buildings manager/caretaker has considerable knowledge of the condition of the school estate. How will this knowledge be used to best effect?

As set out above, schools will be able to provide any information about the school that will assist in gathering data as part of the survey. In addition, there may also be the opportunity for the appointed surveyors to meet with a nominated individual from the school to capture additional information during the survey.

12. What happens if a school or local authority disagrees with the findings of the survey?

Schools will be asked to comment on the survey and discuss with PfS any aspects of the survey that they disagree with, these concerns will then be reviewed by PfS and the appointed surveyor. Surveys may then be amended if necessary.

13. How will PfS ensure consistency and high quality when procuring a survey programme of 23,000 schools?

A robust Quality Assurance Process will be in place to help ensure that all surveys are carried out to a consistently high standard across the entire programme. The Quality Assurance Process will be supported by a performance management framework, where the performance of each surveyor is measured on an ongoing basis. A Continuous Improvement Group will be established, which will meet on a regular basis to share best practice and lessons learnt.

ITEMS ADDED 14/11/11

14. Is the validation of existing data part of the bid?

Yes.

15. Will prior information, for example existing drawing records, DWG files, and so on, be made available to the surveying teams before they go to the sites?

Yes, as part of the exercise of engagement that has been undertaken with local authorities PfS has tried to source as much information as it possibly can, and is working to clarify the arrangements going forward. Although there may be certain circumstances where it is not possible to get this information and in those cases this would have to be a part of the surveys. PfS will try to ensure, and this is why the development testing period has been extended, that all the records are in place before the start of the surveys.

16. Where there are no drawings available, do you wish surveyors to prepare CAD drawings?

No, PfS is not looking for CAD drawings. There will be situations where that data won't be available from local authorities, so there will be instances where surveyors will be expected to create some very basic block plans.

17. Will there be any further information supplied in the ITT with regards to the size of the premises, so that surveyors can assess the resources and time required for each of the surveys?

The cost model is currently being worked on, and is at an advanced stage. It will give indicative size bands for each category of school. This information will be clear and explicit in the specification.

18. Will there be any minimum standards in terms of the qualifications and experience of the people that will actually be going out to the schools to undertake the surveys?

The PQQ documentation sets out the evaluation criteria, and includes a specific question on the quality of personnel and that will be robustly evaluated during the evaluation process.

19. Will temporary classrooms be treated separately?

No, information will be captured on all buildings on all school sites.

20. Are you looking for the successful bidders for the PDS and AMS to work together on the software, or will the software be developed in isolation of the surveyors?

In terms of the software, an off-the-shelf package is expected.. Although PfS has listened to the feedback received from the market and has extended the development stage to ensure that the software that is procured is in line with the specific requirements, and that the surveyors are fully aware of those issues.

21. Who will be responsible for uploading the data to the AMS, and what format will the data need to be in?

The surveying organisations will be expected to upload the data, and the software is expected to be designed so that it can accept the data in a wide variety of formats.

22. Are you expecting surveyors to collect energy consumption data whilst on site?

This information should be available within the Display Energy Certificates in the majority of cases, and this will simply be a case of recording those numbers.

23. Will an information document be provided to each school outlining what they should expect prior to the site visits, so that the possibility of on-site delays can be reduced?

PfS wants to work with surveyors to set out all of that detail, and at the point when they are appointed PfS expects to work with them to tackle issues such as these.

24. Do you envisage that the surveyors will incur any cost in using the software?

No, there will be no licence issues for surveyors to price for or to pay for.

25. In the PQQ documentation it asks for an Experian Commercial Delphi report. Does that suggest that turnover is a key criterion that will be evaluated? And if so, what would that be?

If companies are able to, it is preferred that they provide an Experian Commercial Delphi report for ease of evaluation, however companies can explain reasons for not doing so.

26. A lot of local authorities do their own surveys and have their own staff. Is there any potential for TUPE transfers as part of this programme?

Legal advice has been sought from the DfE and externally with regards to this. As these are very different surveys to the ones carried out by local authorities it is considered that TUPE does not apply.

27. Does the figure of 23,000 schools include Academies?

Yes.

28. Will work on these surveys prevent any organisation from carrying out work on schools in the future?

No.

ITEMS ADDED 12/12/11

29. Who is responsible to conduct Condition Data Survey at VA schools?

Through the PDSP we are procuring contractors to carry out property surveys in schools across the country, this will include VA schools. The Property Data Surveys are not viewed as a direct replacement for local authority condition surveys.

30. Are VA Schools part of the Condition Survey?

Yes VA schools are part of the Property Data Survey Programme

Asset Management Software (AMS)

31. What is the required format of the existing condition data that can be uploaded for validation?

It is proposed that any standard common format for data transfer will be acceptable, for example MS Excel. Additional details regarding this will be communicated as soon as a software provider is appointed.

32. Are there any likely risks in setting up a centralised database?

With all programmes there is an element of risk. However, this programme has been developed using a high standard risk management procedure where identified risks have been mitigated as part of an ongoing risk management strategy.

33. Will all schools and local authorities have access to the property data?

All schools and local authorities will have access to their own data.

Procurement

34. Will there be a Bidders' Day?

A Bidders' Day will be held on 26 October in Westminster. IT companies, and building and quantity surveyors are invited to one of two sessions outlining the procurement details of the PDS and AMS. [More information regarding the Bidders' Day is available on the PfS website here.](#)

35. What are the arrangements and timescales for the procurement for the PDS?

The contract notice was issued published on 17 October 2011. The contract award is due early in 2012, with the start of the survey programme expected in April 2012.

36. What are the arrangements and timescales for the procurement for the AMS?

The contract notice was published on 17 October 2011. The contract award is due early in 2012, to enable the system to be established in time to support the survey programme which is expected to commence in April 2012.

37. Where do I obtain further information regarding the procurement timescales?

[All procurement information can be found on the PfS website here.](#)

38. Can the procurement process be cancelled or postponed once started?

The DfE, as the Contracting Authority, can withdraw from the OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) process at any stage prior to the issuing of the Contract.

39. Why was a Prior Information Notice (PIN) notice issued during the consultation phase?

A PIN notice was published to seek the views and input from the market to inform and finalise the survey programme and procurement strategy. This was used to assist the DfE and PfS in developing its proposed programme to collect and capture building condition data for the educational estate.

We hope that the above information is useful and offers you sufficient additional information regarding the programme. This document will be updated to reflect PDSP queries on a regular basis.

Should you require any further assistance please email:

PDSP@partnershipsfor schools.org.uk