Government
Project Delivery

Practitioner workbook

Benefits management in government

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This document is published by Government Project Delivery as the centre of the project delivery function and profession for the UK Government.

This *practitioner workbook* is part of the benefits management collection, which provides practical guidance, tools and other support for people working in project delivery in government,

The Teal Book is the core reference for how project delivery should be done in government. It supports and is aligned with the *Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery* which sets the expectations for the direction and management of portfolios, programmes and projects in government departments and arm's length bodies.

The suite of functional standards, and associated guidance, can be found at GOV.UK: government functional standards.

The content of this and other products *in The Teal Book* Collection should be read in conjunction with the government functional standards generally and with the *Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery* in particular. The meaning of words is as defined in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, except where defined in the common glossary.

Other publications in the collection are available on the Government Project Delivery website.

Contents

About this workbook

This workbook is for people who manage or support benefits management in government portfolios, programmes and projects. It's designed to help you:

- understand what benefits management is and its role in successful delivery
- apply the guidance from the Teal Book in your day-to-day work
- improve how you identify, value, plan, track and realise benefits

It's based on the principles in The Teal Book guidance on benefits management, which is part of the wider Green Book family. The Teal Book sets out how to manage benefits across the delivery lifecycle. This workbook helps you put that guidance into practice.

You don't need to read it all at once. You can dip into the sections that are most relevant to your role or stage of delivery.

Who this is for

This workbook is for anyone involved in benefits management, including:

- project, programme and portfolio delivery professionals
- senior responsible owners (SROs)
- benefits managers and analysts
- business case writers
- policy and strategy teams
- finance and commercial teams
- assurance reviewers

You don't need to be a benefits expert to use this. It's written in plain English and designed to help you take practical steps, whatever your level of experience.

How to use this workbook

Each section includes:

- a short explanation of the topic
- practical steps you can take

- tips and examples drawn from real projects
- links to tools, templates and further guidance

You can use this workbook to:

- support business case development
- improve your benefits planning and tracking
- prepare for assurance reviews
- build capability in your team

Part A: An overview of benefits management in government

Overview

Benefits are positive, measurable impacts of change seen by stakeholders. In government, the improvements delivered by a portfolio, programme or project are expressed in terms of benefits. Government policies aim to improve lives, through public services, economic growth, social change or international work. The overall impact of these changes is known as social or public value, as set out in the Green Book.

Most policies are delivered through portfolios, programmes and projects. Their success depends on identifying, planning and realising benefits.

Thinking about benefits should start with policy development and continue through delivery and evaluation. If a change has no clear benefits, it should not normally go ahead.

What benefits management does

Benefits management links objectives, outcomes and benefits. It helps:

- decide whether to invest public money
- plan, manage and track delivery
- evaluate success

It's essential for business cases, investment decisions and measuring long-term value.

Managing benefits in government can be complex. It needs clear ownership, good data and a system-wide view. It's not just about justifying investment — it's about making sure change delivers real, lasting value.

Managing benefits ensures that they are clearly identified, planned and realised throughout the work to deliver the changes and in operations. It plays a key role, therefore, in achieving government objectives and value from change.

Why benefits management matters

In government policies are designed to deliver change for the public good. These can impact:

- directly, for example through public services
- indirectly, through wider social, economic or environmental changes, or through international work which contributes to growth, stability and security

The impacts of such changes are understood in terms of their public value, or **social value**, as set out in the Green Book.

Most government policies and changes are delivered in practice through projects, programmes and/or portfolios. The measurable positive impacts they have are known as **benefits**. Benefits management is therefore a critical discipline for portfolios, programmes, and projects and is central to their success.

When to use benefits management in government

Thinking about benefits starts with policy and runs through planning, delivery and evaluation.

Benefits management links the objectives, outcomes and benefits to be delivered by a policy or change. It is central to decisions on whether to invest public funding and resources in change, and how best to do so. As such it plays a key role in investment planning and business case development.

Once investment decisions are taken, benefits management provides the framework for managing and tracking the realisation of benefits, reviewing delivery against the business case, and evaluating the success of the intervention against the agreed objectives.

Managing and realising benefits can be complex and challenging, but it need not be. What matters is to take a step-by-step approach and stay focused on the objectives of the change and how best to achieve them.

The sections in Part A explains more about how benefits management works in government. It covers four areas.

What is benefits management? (Section 1)

This section looks at how benefits and benefits management are defined and managed in government, the standards expected and what else to think about. It also looks at the differences between benefits management and evaluation, and how the two work together.

Who is involved in benefits management (Section 2)

This section looks at the different roles involved in benefits management, including the roles of governance and assurance.

Benefits management in portfolios, programmes and projects (Section 3)

This section looks at how benefits work in government portfolios, programmes and projects, and their respective life cycles. It also describes the role benefits play in business cases.

Some common challenges (Section 4)

This section sets out some common challenges in benefits management and suggests ways of tackling them.

Section 1: What is benefits management?

Benefits are the measurable improvements seen by stakeholders from a portfolio, programme or project.

Benefits management is about making sure that the value and positive impacts from the work are not just identified but actually delivered.

It means thinking carefully about what changes you want to see, planning how to achieve them, and then tracking progress to make sure those benefits are realised.

Benefits management is not a one-off task. It runs through the whole lifecycle, from the first idea to realising benefits in operations, and reviewing what has been achieved.

1.1 Why manage benefits?

Benefits management is about making sure public money is spent well. It links the practical things portfolios, programmes and projects deliver (outputs) to the positive changes people want to achieve (outcomes and objectives) by describing them in measurable terms.

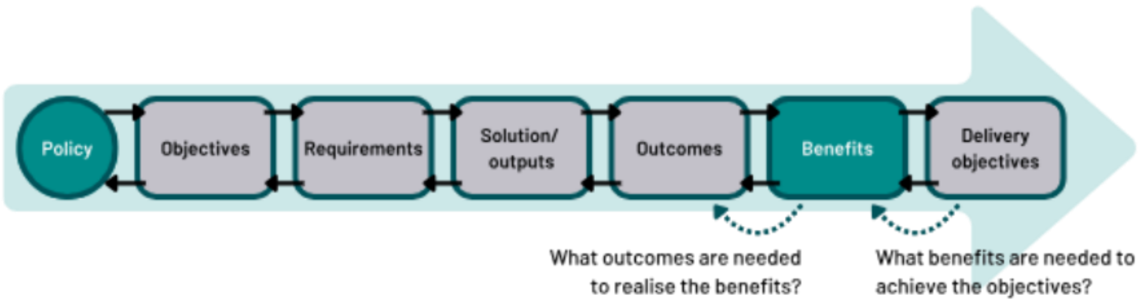

Figure 1.1 Mapping benefits to objectives and outcomes within the policy to delivery chain

These positive impacts can then be weighed against costs to decide if an investment of public funds is justified and to show what difference it makes.

Good benefits management:

- builds a clear case for investment
- guides decision-making at every stage
- tracks whether promised changes are actually happening
- supports accountability and transparency
- provides evidence for future spending decisions

In practical terms, benefits management gives you a consistent framework and proven tools for identifying and managing benefits throughout the delivery life cycle.

This helps you to:

- keep benefits aligned with planned outputs, outcomes and objectives
- describe benefits in clear and consistent terms, supporting prioritisation, business cases and investment appraisal
- maintain a consolidated register of benefits, with assigned owners, to support planning and realisation – right through transition into use
- recalibrate benefits if policy objectives, priorities or delivery plans change
- review progress on benefits realisation, linking this back to outputs, outcomes and objectives to support evaluation and learning

1.2 What is benefits management?

Benefits management is the process of making sure that the benefits expected from a change are achieved. It covers all the activities needed to identify, value, plan, realise and review those benefits in practice.

You can apply benefits management at any level — portfolio, programme, project or work package. It is most effective when used consistently across an organisation and built into governance and management frameworks.

To manage benefits well, you need a clear, systematic approach. This is usually set out in a benefits management framework (sometimes called a benefits management strategy). This should be part of your overall governance and management framework, and should link to business case development, reporting, assurance and evaluation.

What does benefits management involve?

Benefits management is not a single step, but a cycle of related activities.

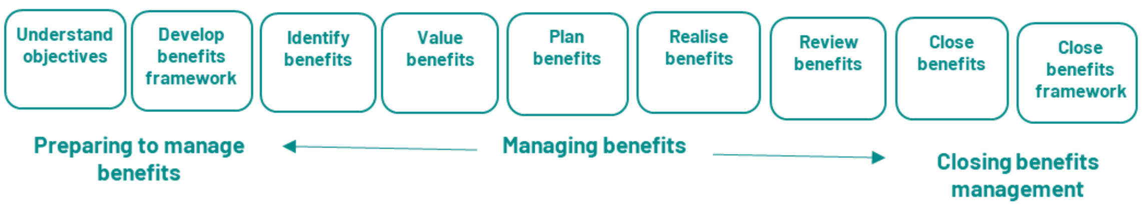

Figure 1.2 A simple view of benefits management activities

The main activities in benefits management include:

- using standardised **benefits mapping and analysis techniques** to identify, classify, value and appraise benefits
- recording of benefits in a **benefits register**, with more detailed **benefits profiles** where needed
- developing a **benefits realisation plan** to guide delivery and review of benefits throughout the life cycle
- **using tracking and reporting tools** to monitor benefits realisation, share progress and support evaluation

These steps follow on in sequence in projects, but may be repeated or refined in programmes, portfolios or in work using agile methods. Many people may be involved, depending on the type and complexity of the work. Roles and responsibilities are covered in Section 2.

Core benefits management practices are similar across portfolios, programmes and projects and should be applied consistently, tailored to the scale and complexity of the work. Some differences do exist, and these are discussed in Section 3.

1.3 What are the standards for benefits management in government?

Benefits management standards are set out in the Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery. This standard applies to portfolios, programmes and projects undertaken within or across government departments and their arm's length bodies.

The specific requirements for benefits management in the functional standard are below.

Requirements for benefits management in the functional standard

The relevant stakeholders' expectations regarding the benefits to be realised should be understood by the team developing the solution.

Benefits should be identified, analysed, defined, planned and tracked and included in the overall plan for the work. Forecasts of benefits should take into account negative impacts.

Benefits should be assessed for a number of options before a solution is chosen and included in a business case, in which potentially conflicting pressures, such as costs, benefits, schedule, quality, scope, performance, and risk are balanced. Options shall be assessed in accordance with the Government Functional Standard for Analysis.

Each discrete benefit should be assigned to an owner who has responsibility for forecasting and monitoring it.

Project delivery should be reassessed throughout the duration of the work as new benefits might emerge as the work progresses and expectations might change.

Benefits trigger points should be included in schedule plans. Once triggered, actual benefits realisation should be tracked against the plan.

There should be two-way traceability between benefits, outcome, solution, outputs, requirements and objectives.

The continuous improvement assessment framework explains how organisations can move from meeting the 'good' standard for benefits management to achieving 'better' and 'best' practice. The Teal Book also provides more detailed guidance to support these standards. Both are covered in relevant sections of this workbook.

1.4 What else is important in managing benefits?

Explain why benefits matter

Benefits management is sometimes seen as a specialist task, mainly used for preparing business cases or supporting delivery planning and control. These matter, but benefits management should be much more than that. It should act as a 'golden thread' running throughout the work, giving a clear line of sight from objectives to outcomes and their value to society. Building a shared understanding of the central role benefits play through the life cycle is key to realising them in practice.

Focus on social value

Government portfolios, programmes and projects exist to deliver value for the public, using funds entrusted by Parliament. Benefits management helps make sure that public investment delivers the greatest possible value to society. It is also central to evaluating public policy and to maintaining transparency and accountability.

Link benefits to objectives

Every benefit should connect clearly to the objectives for the work, and to the outputs and outcomes you plan to deliver. Sometimes unforeseen benefits appear, and these are important too, but your main focus should always be on delivering what government is trying to achieve.

Consider all types of benefit

Benefits can take many forms. Some, like improvements to security or quality of life, can be hard to measure but still matter. Quantify benefits wherever you can, but don't ignore those that are harder to measure — these qualitative benefits are also important to capture and track. The Green Book explains how to consider different types of benefit in a business case. This includes positive impacts, which are treated as social benefits, and negative impacts, which are treated as social costs. Section 8 of this workbook has more ideas for managing different types of benefit within a business case.

Plan for benefits over time

Not all benefits appear at the end of a project, and they don't always stay the same once realised. Some benefits are time-limited, some are continuous, and some may grow or shrink due to external factors. The type and quantum of benefits might be influenced by the delivery plan. Benefits can be realised during delivery, at completion, or over a long period afterwards. Understanding when and how benefits are realised is key to planning and managing their delivery.

Connect benefits to policy evaluation

Benefits provide important evidence for assessing the impact of government policies and interventions, and for learning lessons for the future. Make sure this is recognised from the start and built into the approach to reporting and evaluation.

1.5 How does benefits management link to evaluation?

Benefits management and evaluation are closely linked. Both focus on understanding the impact of a portfolio, programme or project, and on showing whether planned outcomes and objectives have been achieved. But they are distinct disciplines, each with its own approach and purpose.

Benefits management is a core project delivery practice, usually led by project practitioners. It involves:

- identifying and valuing specific benefits to support investment decisions
- planning, managing and tracking the realisation of those benefits throughout the project delivery life cycle

Evaluation is a core practice in policy and analysis, usually led by economists and/or other analysts. It involves:

- assessing whether an intervention will work, or has worked as intended
- analysing how and why results occurred, and what wider impacts were achieved.

Evaluation often considers a broader set of outcomes than benefits alone. For more information, see The Magenta Book.

How are benefits management and evaluation different?

Benefits management can show what changes have occurred as a result of an intervention. Evaluation, on the other hand, can determine whether those changes were directly caused by the intervention. This often involves comparing people or groups who received the intervention with similar groups who did not, to provide a counterfactual view and measure the true causal impact.

How do they work together?

Benefits management and evaluation support each other.

Evaluation design and planning help to define success and suggest how best to measure and value benefits. Benefits data provides important evidence for evaluation.

To get the best from both and avoid duplication, for example in data collection, benefits and evaluation teams should work together throughout the life cycle, from design and planning to delivery and review.

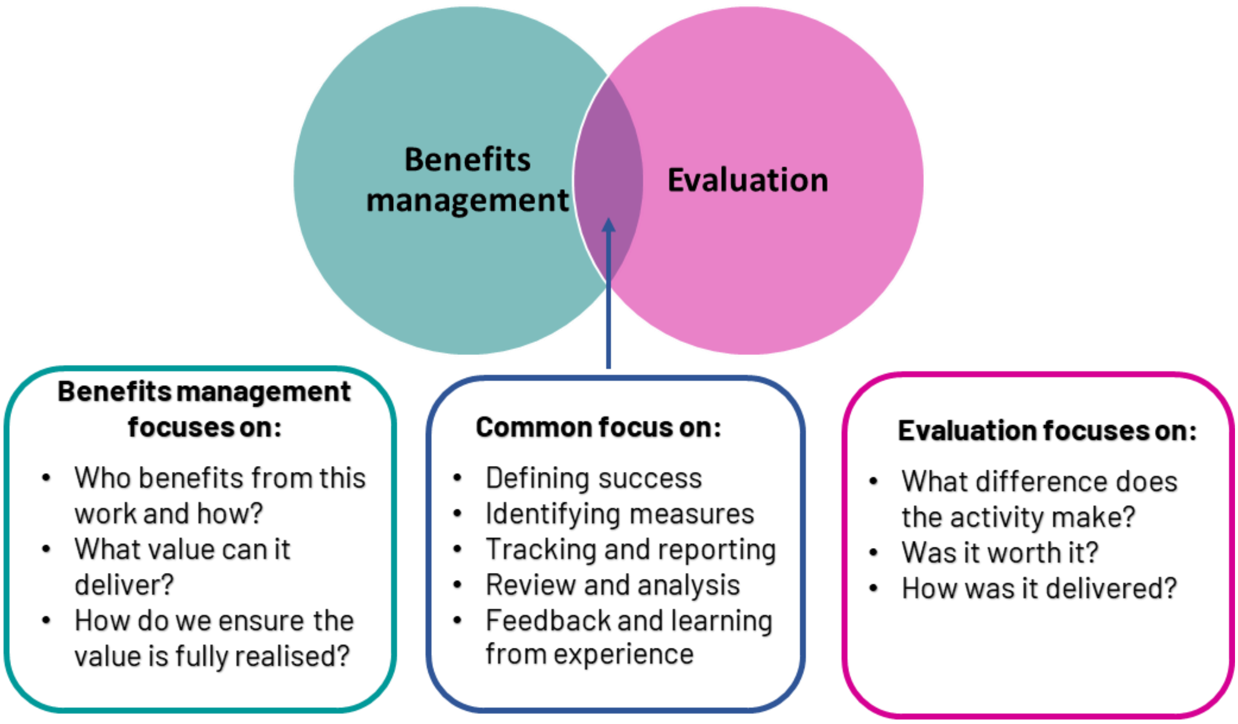

Figure 1.3 Benefits management and evaluation

Section 2: Who manages benefits?

Being clear on accountabilities and responsibilities is one of the fundamental principles of project delivery, set out in the Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery.

This is especially important for benefits management, because benefits activities often cross team and organisational boundaries, can change over time and often continue after the work has ended and ownership has transferred to operational teams.

Everyone working in project delivery should understand the importance of benefits and how they are managed as part of planning, control, solution delivery and realisation.

However, there should be clear accountability for benefits management and realisation at every stage of the life cycle.

This section provides an overview of how accountability and responsibility work in benefits management, and the typical roles associated with specific activities. Roles and responsibilities can vary depending on the nature, scale and complexity of the work, and can change as the work progresses. For this reason, you'll find more detail on roles and responsibilities linked to particular activities in the relevant sections.

Accountability and responsibility for benefits management should be considered when setting up the work and set out clearly in the benefits management framework. For more on this, see Section 6.

The Project Delivery Capability Framework sets out the competencies and responsibilities for individual project delivery roles. The Aqua Book and the Magenta Book provide guidance on roles in analysis and evaluation. The Analysis Career Framework explains the different types of analysts and their roles.

2.1 Roles and responsibilities in benefits management

2.1.1 The accounting officer

Project delivery in government takes place within the UK's system of parliamentary accountability, as set out in Section 4.4.2 of The Teal Book. This means that:

- **the minister in charge of a government department** is responsible and answerable to Parliament for the use of departmental powers and for the actions and decisions of the department, including those of its arm's-length bodies

- **the departmental accounting officer** is personally responsible and accountable to Parliament for the organisation and management of the department, including its use of public money and stewardship of its assets, as set out in Managing Public Money

- **additional accounting officers**, additional accounting officers, appointed in departments or arm's-length bodies, are also accountable to Parliament within the terms of their appointment, under the overall accountability of the principal accounting officer

Making sure public money is used properly, and that portfolios, programmes and projects deliver what they set out to achieve, is a key duty for government departments and their accounting officers. This duty applies no matter who delivers the work, whether it is done by the department itself, by an arm's-length body, or by a delivery partner. Although day-to-day responsibility can be delegated, the accounting officer always remains ultimately accountable.

2.1.2 The sponsoring body

The sponsoring body is the higher-level authority for a portfolio, programme or project. It provides oversight, sets direction, and is accountable to a defined authority, usually the departmental accounting officer, and through them to ministers and Parliament.

Sometimes, work is delivered directly by a government department. In other cases, the department (as sponsoring body) commissions another organisation to deliver outputs or even take responsibility for achieving outcomes. This delivery organisation could be an arm's-length body, another public sector body (such as a local authority), or a private company contracted to deliver on behalf of government.

In these cases, the sponsoring body is the organisation that:

- secures the funding
- owns the business case (usually through the senior responsible owner)
- sets out the requirements for the delivery organisation

The sponsoring body is also responsible for making sure benefits are realised, with accountability passing up through the relevant accounting officer.

Setting clear accountabilities

To ensure a robust focus on benefits management, accountabilities and responsibilities for this must be clearly defined in the benefits management framework and agreed as part of commissioning or contracting for the work.

The senior responsible owner may be employed by the sponsoring body or by an arm's-length body or other public sector body, but never by a contracted delivery partner.

The sponsoring body should always retain responsibility for overseeing and scrutinising benefits management. It is up to the sponsoring body to set clear standards for benefits management. This could be done in a framework agreement, contract or delivery specification.

Practical questions, such as how benefits realisation will be managed, documented and reported, should be discussed openly between the sponsoring body, senior responsible owner and client organisation. These should be documented in the benefits management framework.

2.1.3 Portfolio directors and senior responsible owners

The portfolio director, in a portfolio, or senior responsible owner, in a programme or project, is accountable for delivering the agreed outcomes and realising the expected benefits in line with the objectives for the work. This role usually includes owning the benefits management framework and overseeing benefits realisation throughout the life cycle. They should also ensure that someone in the sponsoring body remains accountable for benefits realisation in operations after closure of the work.

If the portfolio director or senior responsible officer sits within a client organisation (see Section 2.3), their responsibilities may need to be adapted to fit the context. Any changes should be clearly documented in the benefits management framework.

2.1.4 Portfolio, programme and project managers

The portfolio, programme or project manager, as appropriate, is accountable for developing and managing the benefits management framework. This includes setting up the processes, tools and techniques needed, and overseeing the activities required to identify, plan and realise benefits.

In smaller pieces of work, they may carry out benefits management activities directly, rather than delegating them to others.

2.1.5 Benefits managers

Depending on the scale and complexity of the work, there could be a dedicated benefits manager and/or one or more designated team members responsible for benefits management activities. These roles act on behalf of the portfolio, programme or project manager.

For large work packages, a work package manager can undertake benefits management activities for their own work area.

2.1.6 Benefits owners

Once a benefit is identified, it is assigned a benefit owner. This is a named individual with the position, authority or technical expertise to take on this responsibility. The benefit owner works with the benefits manager to:

- confirm and value the benefit
- agree the benefit assumptions included in the business case

- take responsibility for realising and reporting on the benefit at the agreed point
- agree benefit closure, where appropriate

Benefit owners are often product owners or senior operational managers in the part of the organisation where the benefit will be realised. If a permanent benefit owner cannot be identified, for example because organisational arrangements are not yet in place, an interim owner can be agreed and ownership transferred when possible.

To keep benefits management effective, avoid allocating too many benefits to one owner.

2.1.7 Beneficiaries

Stakeholders who receive and are impacted by the benefits realised are known as beneficiaries. They play a key role in identifying both the potential and actual impact of individual benefits, as well as any unexpected impacts that arise. Typically, beneficiaries contribute to benefits management with or through the relevant benefits owner.

2.1.8 Analysts

Business analysts conduct research into stakeholder needs, the consequences of change, and the potential benefits of different options. They assess factors such as time, cost and risk and play a key role in identifying and valuing benefits for the business case. Their work provides evidence to support decisions about which options to shortlist and which solution to select.

Where necessary, specialist analysts like economists, statisticians, and social or operational researchers, should also be involved. In large-scale and complex work, economists or other specialists often lead work to identify and value benefits, and play a key role in developing the case for investment.

Evaluation specialists are often responsible for designing and conducting evaluation activities, so involving them in benefits identification and planning from the start is important to ensure alignment between benefits management and evaluation.

2.1.9 Business case managers

The business case manager is responsible for developing the business case. This includes making sure that benefits are identified, valued and appraised accurately. Their work supports decisions on which options to shortlist and which solution to select, and provides a clear basis for managing and realising benefits.

2.1.10 Finance managers

Finance managers can play a key role in benefits management, particularly in identifying public sector financial impacts and efficiency savings for inclusion in the business case, and then helping track and realise them.

2.1.11 Business change managers

Business change managers can support benefits managers and owners by helping to define benefits, assess progress towards realisation and look for ways to optimise their impact and value to beneficiaries.

2.2 Governance in benefits management

Governance sets direction and creates the structure for accountability and decision-making, making sure work aligns with strategic goals and stays on track to deliver them. Benefits management is central to governance because it provides the link between policy, objectives, outcomes and benefits, and shows how these are delivered and realised.

Effective benefits management enables realistic, evidence-based investment decisions and supports delivery. It is a core part of planning and control and sits within the governance and management framework for the portfolio, programme or project.

The scale and complexity of the work determine the governance and management arrangements needed, as explained in Chapter 4 of the Teal Book.

Because benefits management provides a clear line of sight from objectives to outcomes and public value, governance should focus on:

- putting in place arrangements for benefits identification, management and evaluation, with input from stakeholders and specialist analysts as needed
- ensuring benefits are identified, valued realistically and represented accurately in investment planning and business cases, so that investment decisions are well-founded
- making sure planning covers all benefits management requirements, including the costs and resources needed to manage and realise benefits
- establishing monitoring and reporting arrangements that give an accurate picture of progress on benefits realisation against the baseline business case, and contribute to evaluation

In a portfolio, governance focuses on making sure benefits plans are realistic and consistent across the portfolio, that robust management practices are in place at programme and project level, and that progress on benefits realisation is tracked against the portfolio plan.

In programmes and projects, governance should ensure that an effective benefits management framework is in place, and that benefits are properly identified, valued and presented realistically in the business case. This approach supports investment decisions that align with government objectives and are based on social value. It also keeps benefits management in view throughout delivery, realisation and evaluation.

See Chapter 4 of the Teal Book for more information on governance and management.

2.3 Assurance in benefits management

Assurance gives senior leaders and stakeholders confidence that work is under control and can deliver policy, strategy and objectives safely and successfully. Benefits management is central to this because it links policy, objectives, outcomes and benefits, and shows how they will be delivered and realised.

If benefits are not identified or managed well, this puts government objectives and policy at risk. Because of this, benefits — and how they are managed — are a key risk area. Assurance helps make sure benefits are properly identified, considered in decision-making, and can be realised.

2.3.1 Assurance in government

Assurance in government follows the sponsoring body's risk assurance framework, as set out in the Orange Book. The Teal Book (Section 4.6.5.3) sets out four defined levels:

- **first line**: management controls and self-assurance within the project, programme or portfolio team. This gives assurance to the senior responsible owner or portfolio director directly accountable for the work.
- **second line**: oversight and challenge from portfolio or organisational teams. This gives assurance to the accounting officer.
- **third line**: independent assurance by a body outside the organisation, such as the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA).
- **fourth line**: external assurance by an organisation such as the National Audit Office, acting for Parliament. This provides an independent opinion on how well the organisation or system is governed and how risks are managed and controlled.

Each level of assurance adds a different perspective. Together, they help make sure risks are managed and benefits can be achieved in line with objectives.

2.3.2 Assuring benefits management

2.3.2.1 Assurance in a portfolio

Assurance in a portfolio should give confidence to the portfolio director and sponsoring body that benefits are being managed properly across the portfolio. This means:

- a robust benefits management framework is in place and working across the portfolio
- portfolio benefits planning and prioritisation is realistic and evidence-based
- portfolio benefits can be, or are being, realised as planned

During the work, first line assurance of benefits management should run alongside the work, with scrutiny within the team or by the programme or project board, as appropriate.

Second line assurance plays a key part in assuring benefits in a portfolio. This focuses on benefits management in the programmes and projects in the portfolio, to ensure the right practices are in place and working well. Second line review can include:

- reviewing benefits management in individual programmes and projects, for example as part of a stage gate review
- carrying out cross-cutting thematic reviews to assess benefits practices across several programmes or projects

Portfolio level benefits management can also be assured through third line review. This is usually carried out by an external body, such as the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA) or another audit or regulatory body. Third line assurance may include:

- a NISTA portfolio assurance review
- a stage gate review, such as a gate 5 (operations review and benefits realisation), for portfolios delivering a specific set of benefits and outcomes
- an assessment or audit of benefits and outcomes delivered through grants or funds

Fourth line assurance, for example carried out by the National Audit Office, can look at benefits as part of value for money, lessons learned or good practice reviews. Such reviews are usually across one or more large portfolios, for example in health, transport or defence, or across the government major projects portfolio.

2.3.2.2 Assurance in a programme or project

Assurance of benefits management at programme or project level should give confidence to the senior responsible owner and stakeholders that benefits are being managed properly. This means:

- a robust benefits management framework, tailored to the needs of the programme or project, is in place and working
- benefits identification, appraisal and planning is realistic
- benefits can be, or are being, realised as planned

During the work, first line assurance of benefits management should run alongside the work, with scrutiny within the team or by the programme or project board, as appropriate.

Second line assurance of benefits management usually forms part of a wider review, for example a stage gate review. Sometimes a focused review is needed, for example where specific issues have been identified.

Once delivery is complete, assurance focuses on benefits realisation. This is typically done through a gate 5 review.

2.3.2.3 Gate 5 reviews

Gate 5 reviews look at operations and benefits realisation. They play an important role in assuring benefits realisation after delivery and provide vital evidence for evaluation.

Gate 5 reviews are mandatory for all work in the government major projects portfolio but are good practice for all programmes or projects. They can also be used to assess benefits realisation in portfolios. They confirm that:

- benefits set out in the business case are being achieved
- the solution is operating as intended
- the planned outcomes are being achieved

Gate 5 reviews can be:

- one-off, to check that outputs and benefits have been delivered
- repeated, with reviews on transition to operations, 6 to 12 months after transition, and/or before the end of a service contract

2.3.3 Assuring delegated delivery

When delivery is delegated to a client organisation or contracted delivery partner, the sponsoring body should consider carefully how to assure benefits management.

If the client organisation is only responsible for outputs, the sponsoring body should be responsible for assuring benefits management. This is to make sure there is a continuing focus on outcomes and benefits, not just on outputs delivered by the client organisation.

If delivery is delegated to a contracted delivery partner, the sponsoring body should always hold responsibility for assuring benefits management and realisation.

For more information on benefits assurance, see Section 11: Reviewing benefits and the Infrastructure and Projects Authority: assurance review toolkit.

Section 3: Benefits management in portfolios, programmes and projects

The Teal Book highlights the close relationships between portfolios, programmes and projects in government. This makes it important to use consistent benefits management practices across an organisation. These practices should be tailored to fit the level, nature and complexity of the work.

At the same time, there are important differences in how portfolios, programmes and projects are managed. These differences affect how benefits management should be approached.

Portfolios typically operate on a cyclical basis. They bring together multiple programmes, projects, and/or other related work, which can join or leave the portfolio at different times. This means a portfolio often supports a number of objectives and usually evolves over time.

Programmes and projects are time-limited. They have an agreed start and end point, and their life cycle is split into phases to meet a specific policy objective, problem or opportunity. Once plans are developed and a business case is approved, delivery follows those approvals. Programmes can also evolve over time, but within a more defined structure than portfolios.

This section explains what to consider when managing benefits at each level, and how to tailor benefits management practices to different life cycles.

For more information on management structures and life cycles, see The Teal Book:

- Chapter 3: Portfolios, programmes and projects
- Chapter 12: Managing a portfolio
- Chapter 14: Programme and project life cycles

3.1 Benefits management in portfolios

Portfolio management helps senior managers and their organisations make informed decisions on:

- where and when to invest in new work to meet the portfolio's objectives
- whether existing work is still viable or appropriate
- how to optimise delivery, use resources efficiently and realise benefits effectively
- how to address any shortfalls, for example by investing in further work

Portfolio management works on a cyclical basis. The process moves through evolving cycles of portfolio definition and portfolio delivery. Benefits management is a core part of both phases, with defined practices that are repeated regularly as the portfolio evolves. These are shown in Figure 3.1.

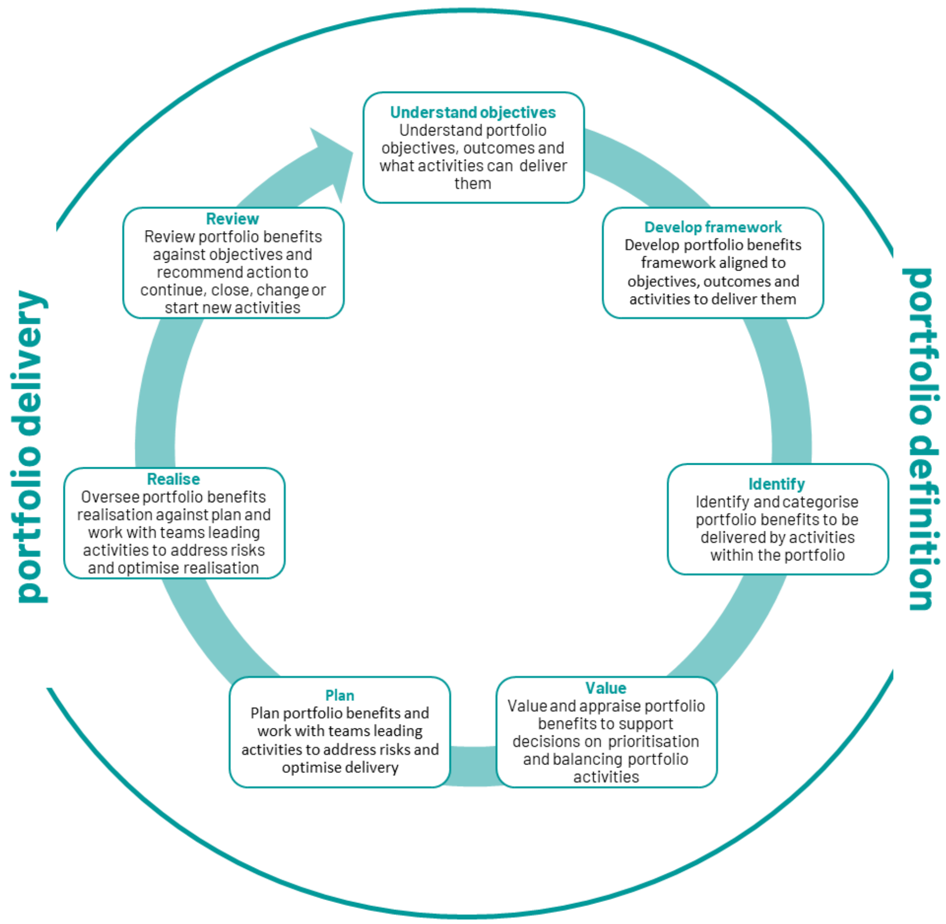

Figure 3.1 Overview of benefits management in a portfolio

Benefits management practices in portfolios are similar to those used in programmes and projects. However, in portfolios the focus is more strategic, aligning benefits with wider organisational objectives.

3.1.1 Key considerations for benefits management in portfolios

Benefits management in portfolios places particular importance on several key areas.

A clear line of sight

Portfolio management focuses on portfolio-wide objectives and outcomes. These can be set at portfolio level or can support wider government and organisation objectives.

Work to achieve these objectives and outcomes is then delivered through programmes, projects, and related work within the portfolio.

To manage benefits effectively at portfolio level, it is essential to establish and maintain a clear line of sight between portfolio objectives, portfolio benefits, and the contributions of individual programmes and projects. This clarity is particularly important as the portfolio evolves, helping to maintain a coherent picture, avoid double-counting, and identify any gaps or shortfalls.

Consistent standards and practices

Effective portfolio benefits management requires a defined set of standards and practices for identifying, valuing, planning, realising and reviewing benefits across the portfolio.

As in programmes and projects, these are set out in a **benefits management framework**. At portfolio level, it is important to establish this framework early on and to sustain it as the portfolio changes over time. This not only supports benefits management at portfolio level but also provides a consistent approach for benefits management within the programmes and projects in the portfolio

Expertise in modelling and analysing data

Understanding which benefits come from different parts of the portfolio is critical for defining the portfolio and supporting decisions on priorities and investment. This expertise is also important during delivery, as it informs where to invest resources and support to maximise benefits realisation and the overall value delivered by the portfolio.

The effectiveness of this work depends on the accuracy and reliability of benefits identification, profiling, modelling, and the analysis of benefits realisation data. As a result, benefits data standards, modelling and analysis, using risk-based estimation techniques, are a particular focus for portfolios when managing benefits.

3.1.2 Benefits in portfolio investment appraisal

Benefits play a central role in defining portfolios and in deciding how to prioritise investment and resources. Portfolio investment appraisal is a cyclical process, usually linked to government spending reviews and departmental business planning cycles.

Unlike programmes and projects, portfolio investment proposals do not usually follow the five-case model set out in the Green Book. Instead, they are usually presented as a portfolio investment bid or plan, with requirements set by the commissioning authority. These proposals typically combine:

- an overall strategic narrative
- a high-level summary of proposed investment, linked to quantified social costs and benefits
- analysis to show the expected value of the proposed investment to society

After investment decisions are made, the responsibility for planning, realising, and closing specific benefits is passed to the relevant senior responsible owner and their programme or project team.

During portfolio delivery, benefits management focuses on monitoring overall benefit realisation at portfolio level. This relies on data provided by programme and project teams. Portfolio-level intervention is usually only needed if there are significant shortfalls or concerns that affect the whole portfolio.

The review of benefits marks the end of one cycle of benefits management and feeds into the next. Outcomes from the review help reassess objectives and outcomes for the following cycle. The benefits management framework should also be updated to support the new portfolio cycle, with the previous version closed and stored. The framework is finally closed when the portfolio itself closes.

More on the application of individual benefits management practices in portfolios is included in the practice sections in Part B and Part C.

3.2 Benefits management in programmes and projects

Programme and project management provides a structured approach to define and deliver outcomes and benefits linked to one or more objectives. These objectives are agreed for the work but should support wider objectives at portfolio, organisation and government level.

Programmes and projects always have a defined start and end point. Their life cycle is broken into phases, structured to suit the needs of the work.

Benefits management in programmes, projects, or other related work follows a defined sequence of activities. These activities are aligned to the chosen life cycle for managing the work, as shown in Figure 3.2 below.

The sequence is similar to the approach used in portfolios, but in programmes and projects the activities are usually carried out in order. Some activities may be repeated, especially in programmes where individual projects are managed in an iterative way.

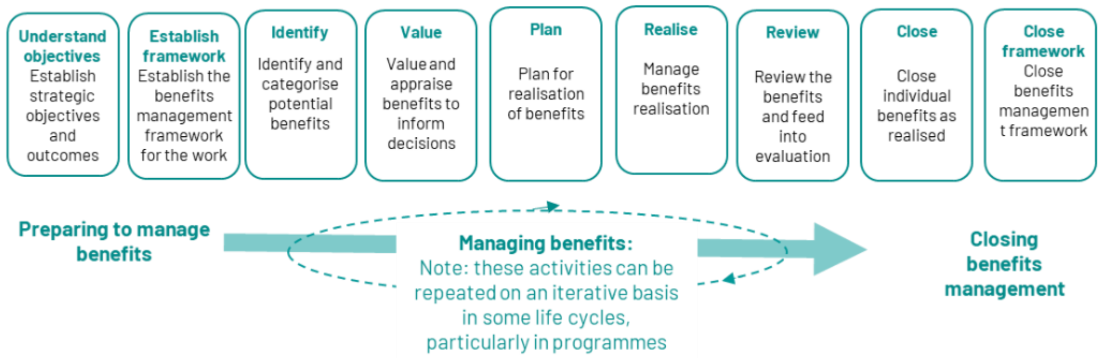

Figure 3.2 Overview of benefits management in programmes and projects

Benefits management in projects and programmes is always progressive. Even if some activities are repeated or refined during delivery, the overall process is designed to realise cumulative benefits that support the objectives and outcomes agreed at the start.

This progressive approach means benefits management often continues beyond the formal closure of the project or programme. After delivery, benefits management activities often carry on during operations, to make sure benefits are actually realised. The benefits management framework is only closed when all intended benefits have been achieved, or when an agreed end point is reached.

3.2.1 Key considerations for benefits management in programmes and projects

Benefits management in programmes and projects involves several key areas of focus.

Business case development

The Green Book places strong emphasis on benefits as part of the five-case model for business cases in government. Benefits support the strategic case for change and are central when assessing options and selecting a preferred solution. All expected benefits should be documented clearly in the business case that is submitted for investment approval.

Driving and controlling delivery

Once the business case is approved, the assumptions about benefits for the chosen solution are baselined. These assumptions become key factors in planning and managing the work. They are used to track progress during delivery and to check whether the solution is working as intended once it is in place.

Reviewing outcomes

Benefits management also involves reviewing whether benefits are being realised. This provides evidence for evaluating whether policy objectives and outcomes have been achieved, and for learning lessons for the future.

Figure 3.3 shows benefits management activities in relation to different parts of the standard project reference life cycle, and how they link to the project business case.

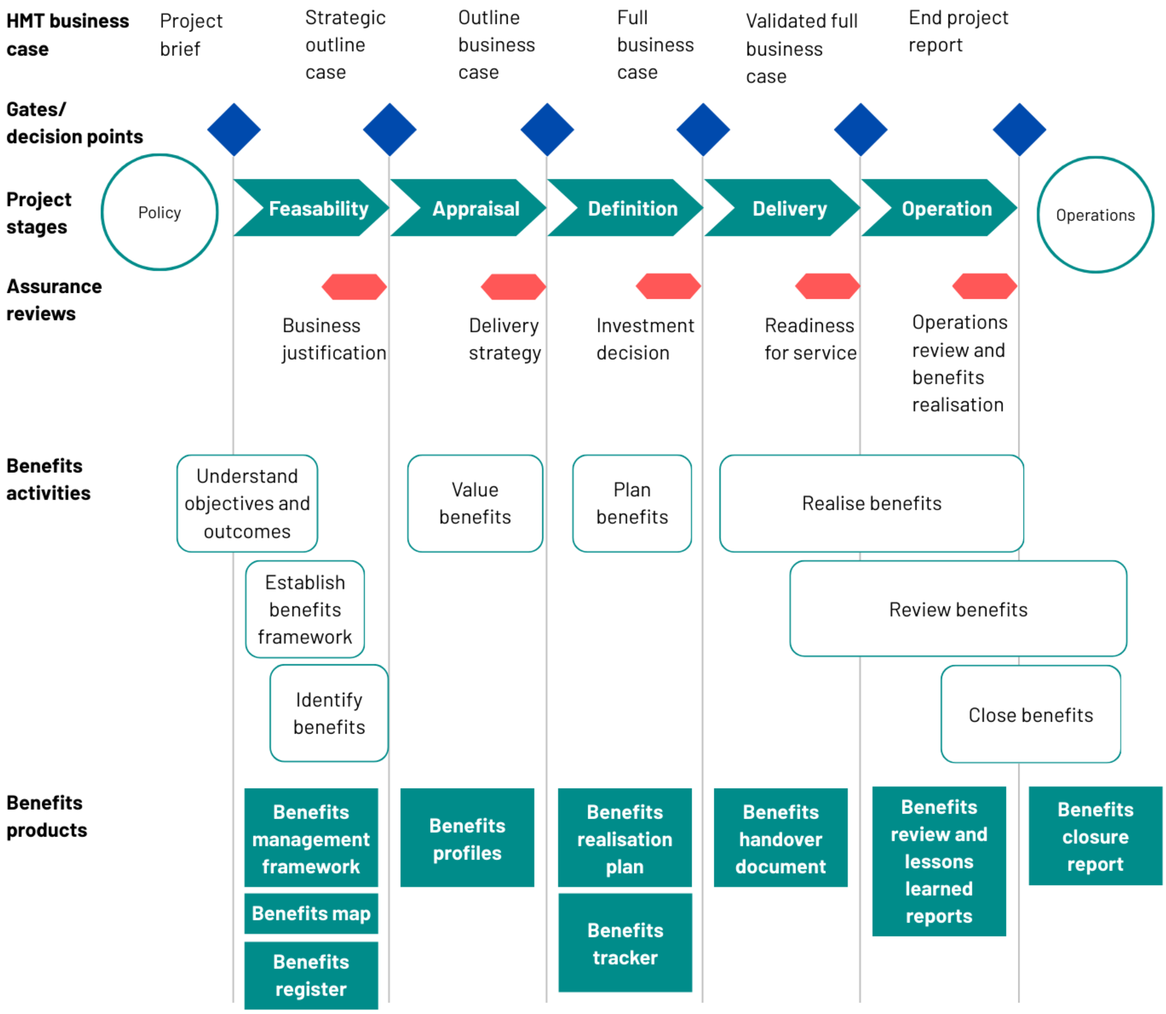

Figure 3.3 Benefits management activities mapped to the reference life cycle in the Project Delivery Functional Standard

More on the application of individual benefits management practices in programmes and projects is considered in the practice sections in Part B and Part C.

3.2.2 Benefits in programme / project investment appraisal

Benefits management in programmes and projects follow the life cycle chosen to manage the work. The life cycle also shapes the choice of business case (for example, whether to use a programme business case, a project business case, or a combination of both).

Regardless of the life cycle or business case approach, the core requirements remain the same. Benefits should be identified, classified and valued as part of investment appraisal. How these requirements apply may differ slightly depending on the approach.

For programmes, a single programme business case is developed and approved. This business case is then revisited and updated at the end of each tranche of the programme, before seeking approval to start the next tranche. At each stage:

- benefits are an essential part of the case for change in the strategic case, feeding into the critical success factors used to longlist options
- benefits are then valued and appraised in detail when assessing shortlisted options and selecting the preferred solution

After each tranche, benefits assumptions are updated alongside progress on benefits realisation.

For projects, the business case is developed and approved in stages: starting with a strategic outline case, then an outline business case, and finally a full business case. At each stage:

- benefits are included as part of the strategic case for change and are used to define critical success factors for longlisting options
- benefits are then valued and appraised in detail during shortlisting and selection of the preferred solution in the outline business case
- benefits are then reconfirmed or updated as necessary in the full business case

Other aspects of benefits management are included elsewhere in the business case. Information is updated and added as more is known and the business case progresses.

Table 3.1 shows what information should be included in different parts of the business case.

Table 3.1 Setting out benefits in the business case

Case	What to include on benefits
Strategic case Asks: what are the reasons for change?	• Describe the drivers, objectives and outcomes for the work, and the theory of change behind them • Show how objectives and outcomes link to benefits • Explain who benefits and who else is impacted, positively or negatively

Economic case Asks: what is the net value of the change to society?	• Set out the different types of benefit, timescales and how they are to be valued • Forecast and value quantifiable benefits so their social value can be calculated and different options compared* • Assess qualitative benefits using multi-criteria decision analysis to feed into option comparison* • Identify risks, assumptions and unknowns that could affect benefits and model possible impacts on value*
Commercial case Asks: can a suitable commercial deal be struck?	• Explain how the commercial approach should deliver outputs, benefits and social value • Link project outputs to benefits realisation as part of the commercial approach* • Set out how benefits and social value are to be assessed in procurement and contract management* • Outline options for variation in scope and their impact on benefits realisation *
Financial case Asks: is the change affordable in terms of public finances?	• Include costs of benefits realisation in cost estimates • Include direct cash-releasing benefits and any negative impacts in cost analysis * • Include direct cashable benefits in any payback and cashflow analysis *
Management case Asks: can the proposal be managed and delivered successfully?	• Outline the approach to benefits management and governance and link to the benefits management framework • Set out arrangements for benefits ownership, realisation and reporting, including after handover to operations* • Explain plans for reviewing benefits realisation and how this contributes to evaluation *

Elements marked with * are not included in the strategic outline case or initial programme case but are added in later versions of the business case

Section 4: Common challenges in benefits management

The principles of benefits management are straightforward, but there can be practical challenges. Good intentions at the start can be lost as work gets busy. Sometimes, benefits management isn't well understood, or people see it as a low priority or too difficult.

It's important to be clear about what benefits management is for, and who should be involved. Addressing challenges as they come up helps prevent benefits management from being neglected or deprioritised.

4.1 The benefits picture is very complex

Some of the biggest challenges in benefits management come from the scale and complexity of the work, which can make it difficult to get a clear picture of what is being achieved.

In a smaller projects, objectives and outcomes are usually clear, the beneficiaries known, and the benefits of the change easier to identify, such as a new facility or improved service.

In large-scale, complex programmes, delivered over many years, things are less clear cut. Policy objectives may change, there can be many potential beneficiaries, and benefits and impacts can cut across each other.

Recent reports from the National Audit Office explore these challenges. They point to the importance of:

- a clear vision
- strong governance
- effective decision-making
- robust evaluation, working alongside benefits management, to demonstrate value in large and complex projects.

It's important to recognise and manage a complex benefits picture from the outset:

- seek help from analysts with expertise in benefits and evaluation
- create a benefits management framework and evaluation plan that work together, and keep a clear focus on them both as the work progresses
- make sure you have the resources needed to manage benefits properly

Alongside these broad issues, watch out for some other challenges and common pitfalls that can arise in large and small projects alike.

4.2 Being too optimistic about benefits

Project and programme teams are often optimistic about the benefits their work will deliver, particularly in making a case for investment. However, optimism can lead to over-promising, which creates problems later if those benefits can't be delivered.

Business cases need to present a realistic assessment of both costs and benefits to support good investment decisions. Overstating benefits causes big problems for delivery and can lead to disappointment and criticism when expectations are not met.

There are effective ways to counter optimism bias. Simply being aware of the tendency to be optimistic and having assumptions independently checked can help. Adjusting benefit estimates to account for bias using sensitivity analysis, basing forecasts on evidence, and expressing costs, benefits and timescales as ranges rather than single numbers can all help manage expectations and support more accurate forecasting.

4.3 Benefits are hard to measure

Some benefits are difficult to measure with certainty, and some may be hard to measure at all. It is important to capture significant benefits as fully as possible, even if they can't be monetised or quantified precisely. In many cases, qualitative benefits can be just as important as quantitative ones.

Start with the benefits management framework for your organisational portfolio or programme. Others may have already developed ways to measure similar benefits. A consistent approach makes it easier to compare and prioritise benefits, even if the measures are not perfect. Section 8 provides more help on prioritising benefits.

The Green Book provides detailed guidance on assessing different types of economic benefit, including those related to the environment, sustainability, health and wellbeing. Some organisations are skilled at measuring these benefits, often with the help of expert analysts.

Seek help from economists and evaluation specialists in your organisation, as they can connect with colleagues across government who may have encountered similar challenges.

Where possible, use existing data from management information systems. If data is unavailable and new metrics are needed, keep these in step with the importance of the benefit. This helps avoid unnecessary effort and cost in data collection and evaluation later.

When quantitative measures are not practical or would be disproportionate, consider using proxy measures or qualitative assessments. These approaches can help build a more complete picture of the benefits and provide valuable evidence for wider evaluation, even if they can't be included in economic investment appraisal.

4.4 Benefits management isn't understood or taken seriously

Benefits management is gradually becoming more established across government, but its importance is not always fully recognised. People can assume that, once a business case is approved, benefits management is finished or will simply happen as part of delivery.

This becomes a real problem if senior leaders or benefits owners do not value benefits management or fail to ensure it gets enough attention. Benefits management needs time and resources. There's no quick fix, but there are things that can help.

Introducing the right tools, training, and support helps everyone understand their role in embedding benefits management, including senior leaders and benefits owners who may be new to it. Resources such as the quick guide to benefits management can be a useful starting point for further discussion.

A clear benefits management framework, with benefits aligned to objectives and clear accountabilities (as set out in Section 2), reinforces the importance of benefits management and realisation to the organisation.

Consider developing an engagement plan for individual benefits, focusing on the required outcome and points of resistance. Early adopters and benefits champions among the senior team can help make the case to others across the organisation.

Don't assume senior managers will automatically support benefits management, or that benefits owners will take on their responsibilities just because it's expected. Showing how benefits management supports evaluation and delivery of objectives, outcomes, and social value is much more likely to persuade people to take it seriously. Engagement involves appealing to both the heart and the head, even with experienced leaders.

4.5 Changes needed to realise benefits aren't identified or managed

Realising benefits successfully depends on people adopting and embedding new organisational capabilities. This often means new ways of working and changes in behaviour. It's important to identify the necessary business and behavioural changes early, and to develop effective strategies to achieve them.

Benefits planning helps people think through what needs to happen for benefits to be realised. Involving business change managers early, when developing the business case and planning, helps make sure practical requirements are identified, planned for, and included in funding estimates.

4.6 Benefits realisation after delivery isn't properly planned

Benefits can be realised throughout the life cycle and can continue to be realised for years after closure. This makes it particularly important to plan properly for benefits realisation, so that it's clear when and where benefits are likely to be realised.

Proper planning means ensuring that, at completion, the benefits management framework, register and realisation plan are baselined and then handed over to an agreed senior business owner in the sponsoring body responsible for overseeing benefits realisation in operations. This could be the portfolio director, or a policy or operations director, for example.

Benefits realisation and tracking should be included in delivery partner and/or operator contracts and should be monitored as part of performance.

Handover to operations should include:

- the benefits management framework, benefits register and benefit profiles
- the ongoing plan for realising and reviewing benefits in operations with agreed timescales, roles and responsibilities
- agreed measurement, reporting and review mechanisms
- budget for handover procedures and/or identified operational funding to support continued benefits realisation and review to the agreed end point

Involving the portfolio or programme office, evaluation and operations teams in benefits management from the start helps ensure buy-in, clarity and the wider organisational understanding needed for successful benefits realisation in operations.

4.7 Benefits are realised but at too high a cost

Sometimes, a portfolio, programme or project achieves its intended benefits, but the cost of doing so is too high. This can be because of optimism bias about costs or timescales, unrealistic assumptions in the business case, weak benefits ownership, or an unwillingness to stop work because of previous investment ('sunk cost'), even though it is no longer delivering value.

To prevent this, it's important to ensure that decision-making is benefits-led, supported by:

- rigorous forecasting
- strong risk management
- clear governance and accountability

If work is not delivering the expected benefit or value and continues to incur costs, the senior responsible owner or operational leader accountable should look at whether the position can be improved. If not, they should consider stopping the work.

4.8 Where to find help

Where these, or other challenges arise, always seek help, for example through:

- your organisation's central portfolio office or centre of expertise for project delivery, who may have a benefits lead or subject matter expert
- members of the analysis profession, for example economists, operational analyst teams or evaluation specialists in the organisation
- the Evaluation Task Force based in the Cabinet Office
- the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority or other parts of HM Treasury
- colleagues in other organisations or one of the cross-government communities of practice and special interest groups on benefits management

Part B: Preparing to manage benefits

Overview

Preparing to manage benefits makes sure the right conditions are in place from the start, so decisions, governance and delivery all support the intended objectives and outcomes.

There are two important activities when preparing to manage benefits, as shown in Figure B.1.

Understanding objectives (Section 5)

Start by understanding what the work is trying to achieve, and any theory of change assumptions that support it. This helps shape the kind of benefits expected and how benefits planning and management should be framed.

Developing a benefits management framework (Section 6)

Then establish a benefits management framework describing how benefits will be managed through the life cycle. The framework should be tailored to the nature, scale and complexity of the work. It should support the achievement of the intended outcomes and objectives.

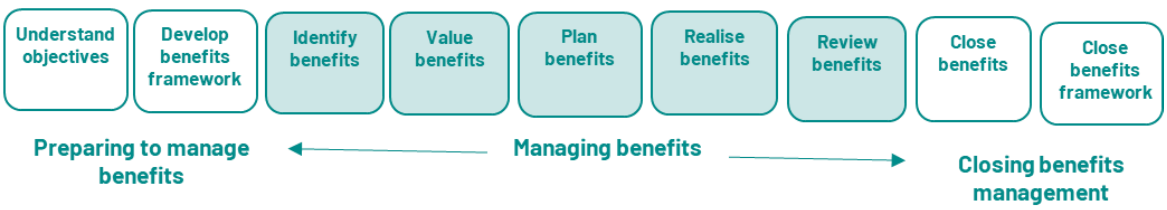

Figure B.1 Overview of activities in preparing to manage benefits

It can be tempting to skip or defer preparing for benefits management, but these activities are essential to setting the work up for success.

You may also need to revisit them later. For example:

- programme or project objectives, outcomes and expected benefits might need to change if no viable solution is found
- portfolios may need to review them as part of cyclical planning
- the benefits management framework may need updating as the work evolves

Section 5: Understanding objectives

5.1 Purpose of understanding objectives

Getting a clear understanding of the objectives and outcomes is the starting point for benefits management. It helps shape what benefits are expected and how they'll be managed.

5.2 Key points

What to consider

- Are the objectives and outcomes clear?
- Are the drivers for the change clear?
- Is there a supporting theory of change?
- What will success look and feel like?
- Who will benefit from the change and why?

What to do

- Establish the objectives and outcomes for the work, and the drivers and theory of change underpinning them
- Map drivers, objectives and outcomes, and start to identify potential benefits

Key products

- Logic map of drivers, objectives, outcomes and potential benefits

5.3 Why is it important to understand objectives?

Understanding the objectives of a change, and the outcomes it aims to deliver, is the first step in identifying who could benefit and how.

This helps you:

- understand what's important for successful delivery of the change and why
- consider possible outputs and their impacts

- explore who might benefit and who else might be impacted
- make informed decisions about how to develop and deliver the change

A clear line of sight between objectives, outcomes, outputs and benefits helps you stay focused on what matters and increases the chances of successful delivery.

5.4 What is involved in understanding objectives?

All change should have an objective and an outcome. The objective is the reason for making the change. The outcome is the real world result you want to achieve.

These should be identified before, or as part of, the work to set up a portfolio, programme or project. They form the foundation for planning and delivery.

To understand objectives, you also need to understand the drivers for change. These are the existing problems or opportunities driving the need or wish to intervene.

In government the drivers, objectives and outcomes are usually identified during policy development and described within a theory of change. This explains:

- how the intervention is expected to work
- the assumptions behind it
- the evidence supporting those assumptions
- the wider context that may affect delivery

See the Magenta Book for more on theory of change.

If a proposal has been developed using a theory of change, this forms the starting point for understanding the objectives and outcomes. It also helps explain what is expected to lead to those changes, and how this links to outputs and benefits.

The main product from this early work is usually a simple logic map showing the relationship between objectives, outcomes and benefits. More on this is in section 5.6.3.

5.5 Who is involved in understanding objectives?

In a portfolio, the **portfolio director** is responsible for making sure the objectives and outcomes are clearly defined and that there's enough information to proceed.

In a programme or project, this responsibility sits with the **senior responsible owner**.

If the objectives or outcomes are unclear, it's their job to:

- seek clarification from the sponsoring body or lead stakeholders

- agree how and when more clarity can be achieved

The **portfolio, programme or project manager** is responsible for documenting the objectives, outcomes, and any supporting assumptions and/or theory of change. They would also work on a theory of change if one has not been provided, or if it needs updating.

If appointed, these responsibilities are fulfilled by the **benefits manager**.

Policy professionals and others who helped develop the policy should also be involved.

This might include the analysts involved in developing the theory of change and its supporting evidence. Their involvement helps to ensure that objectives, outcomes and assumptions are fully understood.

5.6 Key activities in understanding objectives

5.6.1 Overview

The key activities are designed to help you explore the reasons for change, what it aims to achieve and what successful delivery might look like in practice.

Simple logic mapping helps you understand how objectives link to outcomes and to potential benefits and outputs. This helps shape the benefits management framework (see Section 6). It also provides the foundation for later work to identify benefits with stakeholders and develop a detailed benefits map (Section 7).

5.6.2 Establishing objectives, drivers and outcomes

5.6.2.1 Clarifying objectives

All proposals for change should have objectives. These should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-limited (SMART). They should also be observable, so they can be monitored and evaluated.

Objectives are normally agreed in policy development and should be set out in the portfolio, programme or project brief at initiation. If specific objectives for the work have not been agreed, the portfolio director or senior responsible owner should clarify them as soon as possible with the relevant stakeholders and update the brief accordingly.

It’s important to understand where the work supports higher-level objectives, for example at programme, portfolio, organisation or government level. But these should not be confused with the specific objectives for the work.

It’s also best to avoid the term ‘strategic objective’ which can be confusing: be clear about the type of objective and who set it.

5.6.2.2 Clarifying drivers and outcomes

Once objectives are clear, the next step is to understand the drivers for the change and the outcomes expected. These may be covered in the initial brief and/or the theory of change, but they may need to be established from scratch,

It's essential at this point to test understanding with key stakeholders, both to get a full picture and hear their different perspectives.

Some of these discussions may happen in individual meetings, particularly with senior officials or ministers. Where possible, though, it helps to bring stakeholders together in a workshop to build a shared understanding.

Some key questions to explore in discussions are below.

Policy concept

What will change as a result of this work? What outcomes are expected? Is this based on evidence or assumptions?

Understanding the evidence base helps show if outcomes are realistic or if more work on this is needed

Drivers for change

What are the specific drivers for the change? Have they all been identified?

If not, tools like PESTLE analysis can help explore political, environmental, social, technological, legal and economic factors. These often point to the types of benefits that might result from the change.

Expected contribution of the work

Is the work expected to deliver the full outcome, or contribute to it alongside other activity?

This helps to understand expectations on the scope of the work and the impact needed

Priority of objectives and outcomes

Are some objectives or outcomes more important than others?

This is especially important at portfolio and programme level, or in complex projects with multiple aims.

What is success?

Is there an agreed view on what a successful outcome would be? How far are assumptions backed by supporting evidence?

A clear understanding of success helps determine the critical success factors used later in appraising longlisted options.

5.6.3 Mapping drivers, objectives and outcomes to potential benefits

Once a shared understanding has been reached, it should be documented. This is usually done by creating a logic map that shows the relationships between the drivers for change, objectives and outcomes expected. A simple logic map template is in the benefits management collection.

Mapping of this kind is sometimes completed during policy development and included in the brief. If it has not been done, or if new information has emerged through stakeholder discussions (see 5.6.2), it should be completed at this stage, and the brief updated.

At this stage, a simple left to right logic map is usually enough, showing the link between the policy drivers, objectives and desired outcomes. Sometimes, possible outputs can also be included but normally these are added later once the solution is more clearly defined.

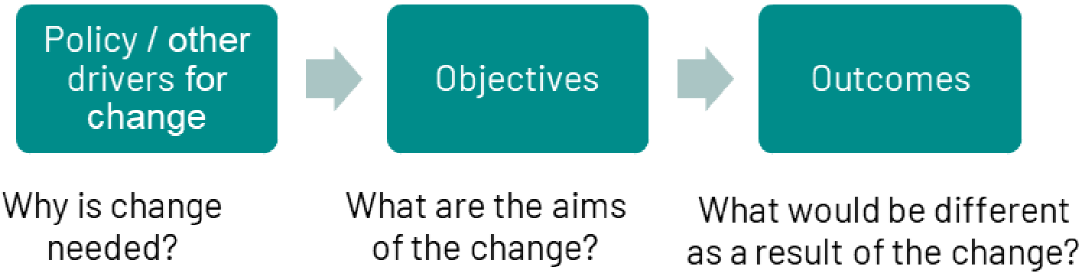

Figure 5.1 Mapping drivers, objectives and outcomes

This map helps begin the process of exploring the positive impacts the work could have. It supports early thinking about the types of benefits that might result, and who could benefit from them. This information can also be added to the logic map, as shown in Figure 5.2.

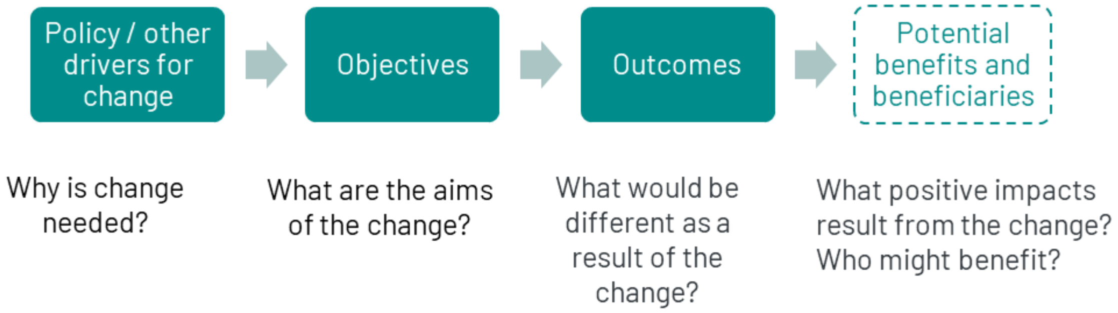

Figure 5.2 Mapping drivers, objectives and outcomes to potential benefits

This early mapping is the first step in benefits mapping and at this stage is high level. The work is used in developing the benefits management framework (see Section 6).

The map is then developed and refined as planning progresses and benefits are identified through work with stakeholders (see Section 7).

Section 6: Developing a benefits management framework

6.1 Purpose of a benefits management framework

The purpose of developing and maintaining a benefits management framework is to set out how benefits will be governed and managed throughout the life cycle to achieve the objectives and outcomes.

6.2 Key points

What to consider

What is the context for benefits management here?

How is it shaped by:

- the nature, scale and complexity of the work?
- the objectives and outcomes for the work?
- relevant organisational frameworks, tools and templates?

Key activities

- Identify organisational frameworks and tools
- Agree the approach to benefits management
- Agree roles and responsibilities
- Draft the benefits management framework
- Secure approval and baseline the framework
- Review and update framework at agreed intervals or as needed
- Close the framework

Key products

- Benefits management framework
- List of roles and responsibilities for benefits management

6.3 Why is a benefits management framework important?

Managing benefits well requires a systematic approach, consistent processes and clear accountability. This is established and maintained through the benefits management framework.. Sometimes this is called a benefits management strategy or approach, but these do not always cover the same ground.

Work to develop the framework means that the approach is thought through and agreed as part of setting up the work.

It also makes sure benefits management is aligned with any wider frameworks for managing benefits at programme, portfolio or organisation level. This means that benefits can be traced across levels of delivery, showing how individual projects and programmes contribute to broader programme, portfolio and organisation objectives.

Once in place, the benefits management framework supports consistent planning, delivery and control. It helps manage benefits realisation and review, including after transition to operations, and supports evaluation throughout.

Ultimately, a clear and well-aligned framework provides a practical guide for everyone involved. It shows what needs to be done, who is accountable, and why benefits management matters.

6.4 What is involved in developing a benefits management framework?

Work to develop a benefits management framework rarely starts from scratch, particularly if the work is part of a programme or portfolio where practices are already defined. Even so, you'll need to make sure that the framework meets the needs of the work and discuss arrangements as part of developing the framework.

A benefits management framework should include:

- clear roles for accountability, responsibility, ownership and approval of benefits
- arrangements for identifying, assessing, planning, managing, monitoring, reporting, reviewing and evaluating benefits
- how benefits are to be identified, classified and, wherever possible, measured or quantified
- the data needed to manage and track benefits, including how it will be collected, recorded, stored, and any tools or software used

The framework should reflect the requirements of the Green Book on business case development and investment appraisal. This includes how benefits are identified, classifiedand valued. It should also follow the guidance in the Magenta Book on evaluation.

Once developed, the framework should be reviewed by the accountable officer, typically the portfolio director or senior responsible owner and approved through the agreed governance process.

After approval, ensure there is a clear record of changes to ensure traceability. See Chapter 23 of The Teal Book on traceability management.

The framework should be maintained and kept under review throughout the life of the work. This includes responding to feedback from its use and adapting to any changes in context or scope. For portfolios, this also includes preparing for the next planning cycle.

6.5 Who is involved in developing a benefits management framework?

The **portfolio director**, in a portfolio, or the **senior responsible owner**, in a programme or project, owns the benefits management framework. They should be involved in developing it and approve the final version before it becomes part of the governance and management framework for the work.

They should also approve any later changes to the framework, and its closure.

The **portfolio, programme or project manager**, as appropriate, is accountable for developing and managing the benefits management framework. They may lead this work or delegate it to

- a dedicated **benefits manager**, if one is in place
- another team member responsible for benefits management

Other members of the team often help develop the framework and review it to ensure it meets the needs of the work. Specialist input may also be needed, for instance from economists or other specialist analysts on the approach to modelling and evaluation.

6.6 Key activities in developing a benefits management framework

6.6.1 Overview

Developing a benefits management framework means setting out what and who is involved in benefits management through the life cycle of the work. The framework should be clear and concise, and should fit within the wider governance and management framework.

Start by understanding the organisational context for benefits management. Agree the approach, roles and responsibilities based on the nature, scale, complexity, and life cycle of the work, and where it sits in the organisation.

This forms the basis for drafting the framework.

Once the framework is final, it should be approved and saved as the baseline version. Track changes clearly so that updates can be reviewed and audited. Review the framework at agreed points during the life cycle of the work.

You should develop the framework early in the work, even if not all details are known. It's fine to start with a basic version and update it as more information becomes available. What matters is having a clear structure in place to support benefits management from the start.

6.6.2 Identify organisational frameworks and tools

Check if there are any frameworks, tools or templates that could be helpful or should be used. It's important to understand the wider context and make sure your approach supports benefits management at portfolio, organisation level and government level.

Using an existing framework or template can save time and help you think through what's needed. A simple benefits management framework template can be found in the benefits management toolkit. But don't just copy and paste. The framework should be tailored to the specific needs of the work and show clear thinking behind it.

6.6.3 Agree the approach to benefits management

It's helpful to agree the approach to benefits management early on. This provides an opportunity to consider what arrangements are needed, and how best to manage them. For example:

- a new rail scheme might require an extensive public consultation exercise and specialist expertise to identify, value and track benefits, managed by the benefits team through external contracts

- an internal digital transformation programme might need an iterative approach to benefits identification and realisation, with ongoing involvement of users and business change specialists, co-ordinated by the benefits manager

Agreeing the approach is often done through a benefits management workshop, going through the different areas to be covered in the framework. The discussion also helps people understand what benefits management will involve, so they can feed it into wider planning.

6.6.4 Agree roles and responsibilities for benefits management

Alongside agreeing the approach, discuss and agree roles and responsibilities for benefits management. These are described in Section 2.

Information on roles and responsibilities is usually set out in a RACI matrix, which shows who is responsible, accountable, consulted or informed, as shown in Figure 6.1. The matrix should be included in the benefits management framework.

Try to agree the names of the people carrying out each role as early as possible. Add these to the framework or list them separately. Keep this information up to date to maintain a clear view of responsibilities and avoid gaps.

Benefits owners are usually agreed later and recorded separately.

Benefits management roles should also be included in the wider governance and management framework for the work.

Table 6.1 Example of a RACI matrix for benefits management

Activity	Actions	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Understand objectives	Agree objectives/outcomes	PfM/PM	PfD/SRO	Stakeholders	BM
	Map objectives/ outcomes to potential benefits	BM	PfM/PM	Stakeholders	PfD/SRO
Develop framework	Identify organisational frameworks and tools	BM	PfM/PM	PO	PfD/SRO
	Agree benefits approach	BM	PfM/PM	ET	PfD/SRO
	Agree roles	BM	PfM/PM	Team	PfD/SRO
	Draft framework	BM	PfM/PM	Team	PO
	Gain approval and baseline	BM	PfM/PM	PfD/SRO	PO
	Review/update framework	BM	PfM/PM	ET, PfD/SRO	PO
Identify benefits	Agree stakeholders to consult	BM	PfM/PM	ET, PfD/SRO	Team
	Identify benefits	BM	PfM/PM	Stakeholders commercial, team	ET
	Agree long list of benefits	BM	PfM/PM	Business case manager	ET
	Classify~~ategorise~~ benefits	BM	PfM/PM	Team	ET
	Develop benefits register	BM	PfM/PM	Team	ET
	Identify benefit owners	BM	PfM/PM	Team	PfD/SRO
Value benefits	Agree methods	BM	PfM/PM	BOs, ET	Team
	Develop profile template	BM	PfM/PM	PfO	BOs
	Develop benefit profiles	BM & BOs	PfM/PM	Stakeholders	ET
	Do benefit modelling	BM & BOs	PfM/PM	BCM	ET

	Validate modelling	BCM	PfM/PM	Expert analysts	BM, ET
	Appraisal for business case	BCM	PfM/PM	BM, ET	PfD/SRO
Plan benefits	Plan benefits realisation activities for solution	BM & BOs	PfM/PM	Planning & change teams	Team
	Develop realisation plan	BM	PfM/PM	Planning, change, ET	BOs
	Develop tracker/reports	BM	PfM/PM	RT, PfO	BOs, team
Realise benefits	Track benefits realisation	BM & BOs	PfM/PM	RT	Team
	Report on realisation	BM & RT	PfM/PM	BOs, ET	PfD/SRO, PfO, stakeholders
Review benefits	Agree review activities / timing	PfM/PM	PfD/SRO	BOs, BM, ET, team	PfO, stakeholders
	Interim benefits review	PfM/PM & review team	PfD/SRO	BM, BOs, ET, stakeholders,	Team, PfO, stakeholders
	Final benefits review	BM or manager responsible & review team	PfD/SRO/business owner	BOs, stakeholders, ET	BOs, PfO, stakeholders
	Final evaluation review	ET	PfD/SRO/business owner	Bos, stakeholders,	BOs, PfO, stakeholders
	Document lessons learned	BM or manager responsible	PfD/SRO/business owner	Bs, ET	Team, PfO, stakeholders
Close benefits	Agree criteria for closing	BM	PfM/PM	ET, PfD/SRO	BOs, PfO
	Review case to close a benefit	BO & BM or manager responsible	BM or manager responsible	BCT, ET	PfD/SRO/business owner
	Decision to close a benefit	BM or manager responsible	BM or manager responsible	PfD/SRO/BO	BO, RT, PfO
	Close benefit	BM or manager responsible	PfD/SRO/BO	BO, ET	RT, PfO
Close framework	Close benefits framework	BM or manager responsible	PfD/SRO/BO	BOs, ET	RT, PfO

Key: BM – benefits manager, BCM – business case manager, BO – Benefit owner, ET – evaluation team, PfD – portfolio director, PfO – portfolio office, PfM – portfolio manager, PM – programme or project manager, RT – reporting team, SRO – senior responsible owner.

6.6.5 Draft the benefits management framework

Drafting the framework is usually an iterative process. You can often work on different sections in parallel.

Follow a clear and logical structure. This should usually reflect the sequence of benefits activities through the life cycle of the work. The framework should cover the following areas.

6.6.5.1 Context

Start the framework by describing the context for benefits management. This should cover:

- the nature, scale and complexity of the work, and where it sits in the organisation, for example, a portfolio, programme or standalone project
- what this means for the approach to benefits management, including any frameworks, tools, templates or software that must or could be used
- any other factors that may affect how benefits management is carried out
- how long the framework is expected to be in use, and when it should be reviewed

6.6.5.2 Objectives, outcomes and potential benefits

The framework should briefly summarise the main objectives and intended outcomes of the work. It should also outline the potential benefits that may be realised as a result.

This is often shown using a logic map. Update this as your understanding of benefits develops during planning.

For more on objectives and outcomes, see Section 5.

6.6.5.3 Identifying benefits

The framework should describe how a list of potential benefits is to be developed during feasibility or discovery. This should involve potential beneficiaries and other stakeholders. It should link to the stakeholder map, which should also be part of the governance and management framework.

Include a clear process for involving stakeholders, identifying potential benefits and developing the **benefits map**.. Make sure this links to evaluation plans to avoid repeated or unnecessary consultation and to show how plans join up.

Tailoring the approach to the life cycle

The approach to identifying benefits should take account of the life cycle agreed for the work.

In a programme or portfolio, benefits are often identified iteratively, starting at project or work package level and building up to a broader view.

Some benefits, especially wider programme or portfolio benefits, might only be identified top-down or by taking a holistic view.

Thinking this through early helps ensure important benefits are not missed.

Classifying benefits

The framework should explain how benefits are to be classified. This should normally follow the approach set out in the Green Book and is explained in Section 7. You may also need to include other categories specific to the work, for example if some benefits are critical dependencies or enablers for other activity.

This analysis is usually shown in a matrix, which then forms the basis for the **benefits register**.

Setting up the benefits register

The framework should describe:

- what information is to be captured in the benefits register
- the format to be used
- any existing tools or templates to be used

For more on identifying and classifying benefits see Section 7.

6.6.5.4 Valuing benefits

The framework should explain how benefits are to be valued, and how any modelling will be validated and assured. This should reflect the nature, scale and complexity of the work, and the types of benefit identified. It should also explain how this information feeds into appraisal and evaluation. Valuing a benefit usually needs more detail to understand its impact and timing. The framework should set out what information is needed, typically captured in a **benefits profile**. Use existing tools or templates where possible and explain the format to be used.

Some sectors or organisations have specific methods for valuing certain types of benefit. The Green Book and Magenta Book provide more guidance on this.

For more on valuing benefits see Section 8.

6.6.5.5 Planning and realising benefits

The framework should set out how benefits are to be planned and managed through to realisation.

The approach needs to be tailored to the relevant life cycle and the consequent timelines for planning and realisation, approvals and assurance, as appropriate. This is the basis for developing the **benefits realisation plan**.

For more on planning and managing benefits realisation see Sections 9 and 10.

6.6.5.6 Tracking and reporting benefits

The framework should explain how benefits are to be tracked and reported. This provides an opportunity to think through what is needed from the outset and the basis for developing the **benefits tracker** and other reports.

This section of the benefits management framework should describe:

- at high level, what benefits information is to be tracked and reported, and to whom
- the tools to be used for benefits tracking and reporting, using existing tools or templates wherever possible
- the triggers for starting to track and report benefits, which might be during delivery or following transition of part or all of the solution into operations
- the data standards to be followed in collecting, analysing and reporting data
- the handling of variances to the targets or milestones in the benefits realisation plan, including any tolerances or confidence levels to be considered in analysing or reporting the data.
- the roles responsible for collecting, analysing and reporting data

The framework should briefly set out how data on benefits will be collected, validated, recorded, and stored. This includes specifying any software or tools to be used. The approach should link to the relevant data management and storage section in the wider governance and management framework.

For more on tracking and reporting see Sections 9 and 10. For further detail, see also Chapter 18: Reporting and Chapter 24: Information and data management in The Teal Book.

6.6.5.7 Reviewing benefits

The framework should also describe how and when benefits are to be reviewed and how this contributes to evaluation. This should link to the arrangements for evaluation established for the work and supports development of the evaluation plan.

For more on reviewing benefits see Section 11.

6.6.5.8 Closing benefits and the benefits management framework

The framework should set out arrangements for closing individual benefits, including the process for agreeing closure and who should be involved.

It should also set out arrangements for closing the benefits management framework, once all benefits have been closed.

For more on this see Sections 12 and 13.

6.6.5.9 Roles and responsibilities

The list of roles and responsibilities should be included in the benefits management framework, typically as a RACI matrix included as an annex (see 6.6.4 above).

6.6.6 Secure approval and baseline the benefits management framework

The benefits management framework should be reviewed and approved by the portfolio director or senior responsible owner. Additional approval may also be needed from the relevant portfolio, programme or project board.

The framework should then be baselined, with any subsequent changes approved and managed under version control to ensure traceability.

6.6.7 Review and update the benefits management framework

Arrangements for periodic review of the benefits management framework should be agreed and documented in the framework document.

In a portfolio, this is typically on a cyclical basis, alongside the review of benefits, to feed into the next planning cycle.

In a project or programme, the framework should usually be reviewed as part of preparing for the next stage gate, or if the work changes significantly, for example requiring a reset.

Part C: Key activities in managing benefits

Overview

Part B explained how to get ready for benefits management. Part C shows how to put that preparation into practice during delivery.

Managing benefits involves five key activities, shown in Figure C.1. These are listed below and explored further in the rest of Part C.

Identifying benefits (Section 7)

Work with stakeholders to identify and classify potential benefits. Explore the impacts of proposed changes and build a benefits map.

Valuing benefits (Section 8)

Identify benefit owners and work with them to profile and assess the value of benefits. Use this to inform investment decisions.

Planning benefits (Section 9)

Plan how and when benefits will be realised. Manage risks, optimise delivery, and set up processes to track progress for reporting and evaluation.

Realising benefits (Section 10)

Carry out change and benefits realisation activities. Track and report on progress and take action to address any issues.

Reviewing benefits (Section 11)

Review benefits realisation against the plan. Recommend further action if needed, and feed findings into evaluation.

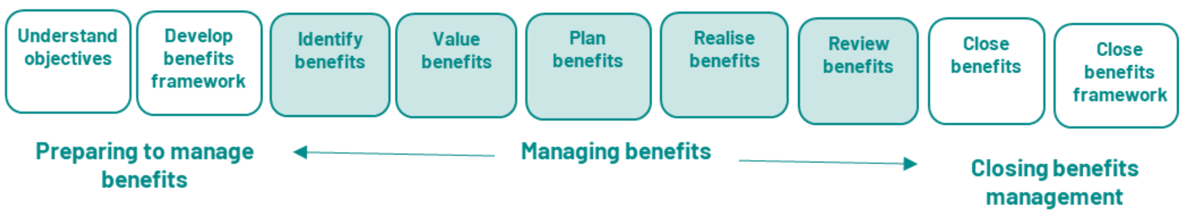

Figure C.1 Overview of activities in managing benefits

Figure C.1 shows these activities as a sequence, but in practice they may be repeated or revisited. This is especially true in programmes, which often use iterative cycles, and in portfolios, where the process is usually cyclical (see Section 3).

All these activities are central to planning and controlling delivery and apply across all types of benefits management. The way you carry them out will depend on whether you are working with a portfolio, programme or project.

As in Part B, you should tailor these activities to the nature, scale and complexity of your work, and to the life cycle you are using. Each section explains how to do this in more detail.

Section 7: Identifying benefits

7.1 Purpose of identifying benefits

Identifying benefits builds the evidence base for the proposed work and is a key part of planning.

The benefits identified will:

- provide the basis for deciding whether to proceed with the work
- support the appraisal of options and the choice of preferred solution
- help set baselines for controlling delivery and tracking progress

Clear identification of benefits helps everyone understand what the work aims to achieve and how success will be measured.

7.2 Key points

What to consider

Who are the stakeholders for the work? How can they best be involved in identifying benefits? How can negative impacts best be identified?

How should benefits be organised to enable understanding, prioritisation and delivery of benefits? Who is best placed to be the benefit owner for each benefit?

Key activities

- Agree stakeholders to be consulted
- Identify benefits with stakeholders
- Create a benefits map
- Classify benefits
- Develop the benefits register
- Identify benefits owners

Key products

- Benefits management map

- Benefits management register

7.3 Why is identifying benefits important?

Identifying benefits is the next step after preparation. It moves from objectives and outcomes to examine what positive, measurable impacts the proposed changes could have, seen through the eyes of different stakeholders.

Without this detailed work, planning and investment decisions may be based on broad assumptions or untested theories about what the change might achieve. These outcome assumptions may be wrong or skewed, so they need to be tested further.

By identifying benefits, you break down these assumptions into, practical outputs and their positive impacts – benefits – for different stakeholder groups, as shown in Figure 7.1 below. Once identified, the benefits can be grouped into different types, valued, and used to inform decisions about the way forward.

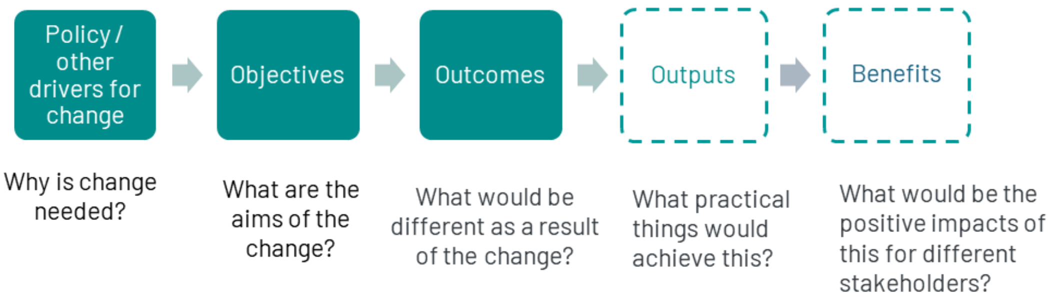

Figure 7.1 Mapping drivers, objectives and outcomes to potential outputs and benefits

7.4 What is involved in identifying benefits?

Identifying benefits involves several activities, usually carried out in sequence but sometimes repeated as the work develops. The approach should be set out in the benefits management framework.

Identifying benefits starts with stakeholders. First, agree who should be involved in identifying benefits. Then work with them to explore the proposed changes and understand both the positive and negative impacts.

This should generate a long list of potential impacts. These are organised into groups and recorded, either as:

- positive impacts – benefits to society, called **social costs** in government
- negative impacts – considered as costs to society, or social **costs** in government, which are sometimes called disbenefits or detriments.

This list forms the basis for the **benefits register**.

An owner is then be agreed for each benefit or cost to society and recorded in the benefits register. In the early stages, benefits can be uncertain and are sometimes described as 'potential' benefits. As plans develop and decisions are taken, the associated benefits are described as 'planned'. New benefits identified later in the life cycle, especially in agile or iterative work, are called 'emergent'.

Think carefully about which social costs and benefits are likely to have the greatest impact, particularly in showing the difference between different options. Not all benefits and costs need to be identified: only those that are significant.

All benefits and costs, whenever identified, should be classified, recorded and assigned an owner in the same way.

7.5 Who is involved in identifying benefits?

The portfolio, programme or project manager is accountable for overseeing the identification of benefits and for developing the benefits register. They may also lead these activities. Where a benefits manager is appointed, day-to-day responsibility is usually delegated to them.

In a portfolio

The **portfolio manager** is accountable for benefits identification at portfolio level and oversees the portfolio benefits register. However, most activities are carried out at programme and project level, with responsibility held by the relevant senior responsible owner and programme or project manager, or delegated to the benefits manager. See Section 7.6.1 for more detail.

In a programme or project

As well as the people above, other team members are often involved as the work develops. For example:

- **analysts** should be consulted on the approach to identifying benefits and may help develop it
- **programme, project or work package managers** often work with stakeholders to identify benefits and benefit owners in their areas
- the **stakeholder engagement manager** should help design, plan and manage activities with stakeholders to identify benefits and owners
- the **business case manager** should help classify benefits and develop the long list of benefits as part of the business case

- **commercial managers** should ensure that benefits requirements are identified and valued as part of procurement, in line with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and relevant Procurement Policy Notes

Once the benefits register is developed and benefit owners identified, the portfolio, programme or project manager should review and approve it according to the benefits management framework.

7.6 Key activities in identifying benefits

7.6.1 Overview

Identifying benefits is the first step towards managing and realising them. Benefits may be recognised early during planning or may emerge as work progresses. A systematic approach to identifying, classifying and recording them is essential. This should be set out in the benefits management framework.

Negative impacts (social costs) should also be identified and recorded alongside benefits. These are important for options appraisal and impact assessment, including place-based and distributional analysis, as required by the Green Book.

Identifying both positive and negative impacts is critical for evaluation. Analysts who lead evaluation work should be involved from the design stage, ensuring that impacts are properly identified, classified and handled as part of investment appraisal

In a portfolio

In portfolios, the work to identify benefits often starts at the programme or project level.

Some benefits or costs, however, only become apparent through the collective impact of multiple projects or programmes, so work at portfolio level is needed to capture the higher-level picture.

The aim then is to bring together all of these benefits and costs into a single comprehensive view across the portfolio. This can be a snapshot over a defined period, such as a spending review, to support investment decisions, or it can be a rolling view, updated regularly to support ongoing management and optimisation.

In a programme or project

At the programme or project level, work to identify benefits is typically part of planning and business case development, usually during feasibility or discovery phases.

This work is closely linked to stakeholder engagement and impact assessment, but new benefits may also be identified as the work continues.

In agile or iterative environments, benefits identification is often a progressive activity, carried out in each cycle, though high-level benefits are usually identified early to support the initial business case.

Outputs

The main outputs from benefits identification are the benefits map and the benefits register. These are described in more detail later in this section.

7.6.2 Agree the stakeholders to be involved

7.6.2.1 Defining who has a stake

Benefits are the positive impacts of change as seen by stakeholders, so it's important to understand their views. Negative impacts similarly need to be understood so they can be considered in decision-making.

Stakeholders can be individuals, groups or organisations who sponsor, deliver, benefit from, are affected by, or have an interest in the work. This includes customers or end-users, operational teams, commercial teams, subject-matter experts, analytical teams, and current or future asset owners.

7.6.2.2 Deciding who to consult

Not every stakeholder can be consulted individually. Use the stakeholder register and the high-level logic map (linking drivers, objectives and outcomes) to identify a representative mix. The chosen group should reflect those who benefit from, deliver, are impacted by, or are responsible for the change.

7.6.2.3 Checking legal and practical requirements

Some forms of engagement, such as public consultation and statutory impact assessments, are required by law in government. Understand these obligations before planning your engagement approach.

7.6.2.4 Involving the right teams

Consult the evaluation team early to align with evaluation activities and avoid duplication. Bring in specialist analytical support if needed. Other teams or organisations may also need to be involved, for example if they already work closely with particular stakeholder groups.

7.6.2.5 Sense-checking and refining

Test the proposed list of stakeholders with senior leaders such as the portfolio director, senior responsible owner, or governance board. Add further stakeholders later if gaps are found.

7.6.3 Identify benefits with stakeholders

7.6.3.1 Overview

The aim is to explore with stakeholders what successful change could look like from their perspective. Often this is done face-to-face, for example through facilitated workshops or user research. Different stakeholder groups may need separate sessions or a mix of approaches.

At this stage, the aim is to gather as broad a set of perspectives as possible, rather than narrowing them down. This helps ensure that both potential benefits and downsides are considered early. It also reassures stakeholders that the process is transparent, inclusive and balanced, recognising negative impacts and unintended consequences as well as positive outcomes.

Sometimes stakeholders can be reluctant to talk about negative impacts if they support the change. Equally, people who oppose a change may not want to talk about benefits. Most proposals have both positive and negative aspects, and something seen as an improvement by one group may be a problem for another. The process should be designed to surface as many perspectives as possible so that they can all be considered.

There are also specific requirements for identifying and valuing social value impacts in procurement, covered in Section 7.6.3.5.

7.6.3.2 Designing the approach

The approach should be designed to generate a long list of potential benefits and other impacts. Providing stakeholders with information in advance helps them consider the key questions and ensures that time spent together is used well.

A clear description of the proposed changes is the best starting point. This could be a written summary, a presentation, a target operating model, a visual map, or a demonstration of a prototype. The more visual and tangible the description, the easier it is for stakeholders to engage and imagine the future.

Prompts can help people think broadly about impacts. One example is the MEDIC framework, which asks whether a change might:

- maintain: keep something constant that would otherwise be expected to change (for example, to maintain market share)
- eliminate: remove something that is undesirable (for example, to eliminate errors in data)
- decrease: reduce the size, impact or frequency of something (for example, to decrease the cost of maintenance)
- increase: increase the size, impact or frequency of something (for example, to increase the capabilities of staff)

- create: produce something that doesn't currently exist (for example, to create new jobs for local people)

This helps surface a wider range of benefits and downsides.

It can also be helpful to offer a menu of different benefit types. For example, social wellbeing is usually defined as social, economic or environmental. These can then be broken down further, for example by government mission, as in the social value model used for procurement (see 7.6.3.5). Some organisations use the 'seven capitals' model, which looks at different types of 'capital' created by investment (financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and relationship, natural and political capital). These models are not exhaustive, but they provide a useful starting point for generating ideas.

7.6.3.3 Running a stakeholder benefits workshop

In a workshop, a facilitator guides participants through the objectives, outcomes, and outputs of the work, and gathers their views on how these might affect them or others. This can be done using sticky notes or group discussions recorded on flip charts. The information is grouped as positive or negative impacts against the outputs and explored in more depth as time allows.

Capturing as much detail as possible is important, including:

- where or how the benefit or impact happens
- what causes it
- what results from it
- who receives the value

This information forms the basis for benefits mapping and the benefits register.

7.6.3.4 Conducting user-based research

User-based research follows a similar approach but relies on individual interviews or surveys to gather responses. It's important to involve someone with the right expertise, such as an operational research analyst, in designing and conducting this research. When user-based research is used, alone or in combination with other approaches, benefits mapping should always be done separately.

7.6.3.5 Identifying social value benefits in procurement

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires public authorities to consider how procurement can improve economic, social and environmental wellbeing. This might include supplier commitments to create local jobs or apprenticeships, increase access to services, cut carbon emissions or improve local biodiversity.

Procurement Policy Notes 002 and 003 require social value benefits to be explicitly evaluated in all central government procurements, using the criteria in the social value model, where relevant and proportionate to the contract. This applies to all central government organisations, subject to defined exemptions in the Procurement Act 2023.

Social value data is typically used for procurement evaluation, but all social benefits and costs identified should also be included in investment appraisal.

7.6.3.6 Collating the long list of benefits

Outputs from workshops or user research should be shared with stakeholders, and further contributions incorporated. Once validated, the long list of benefits and beneficiaries can be collated. Negative impacts (social costs) and where they fall should also be collated. This may show some duplication, which should be removed, or gaps, which may need further discussion. The final long list then feeds into the benefits map and the benefits register.

7.6.4 Develop the benefits map

7.6.4.1 Overview

As benefits and impacts are identified, you can start to create a benefits map. This can be done progressively or once the long list has been established.

A benefits map is a visual tool that links the objectives, benefits, and the activities needed to achieve them. It helps you plan, manage, and review the delivery of benefits throughout the project lifecycle. Negative impacts can also be included so you can plan to manage them.

The benefits map is essential for understanding key dependencies and for monitoring progress. It shows how outcomes, benefits, and objectives are connected. Keep the map up to date as the project develops, and make sure it is handed over to operational teams at transition.

7.6.4.2 Designing the approach

A benefits map is a type of logic model. It sets out the relationships between objectives, requirements, outputs (or solutions), outcomes, and benefits. This helps you show how your work can deliver the intended objectives.

There are several ways to develop a benefits map, and some are shown here. The method you choose should fit the scale, complexity, and needs of your work. Templates are available in the Benefits Management Toolkit, and specialist software can also be used.

Bi-directional benefits mapping

This method traces the links between objectives, benefits, and the activities needed to deliver them. It works both forwards and backwards, helping you check that all objectives are supported by clear actions and benefits. Bi-directional mapping is simple and useful early in planning, or for providing a high-level overview.

The simple logic map shown earlier can easily be developed into a bi-directional map, as shown below.

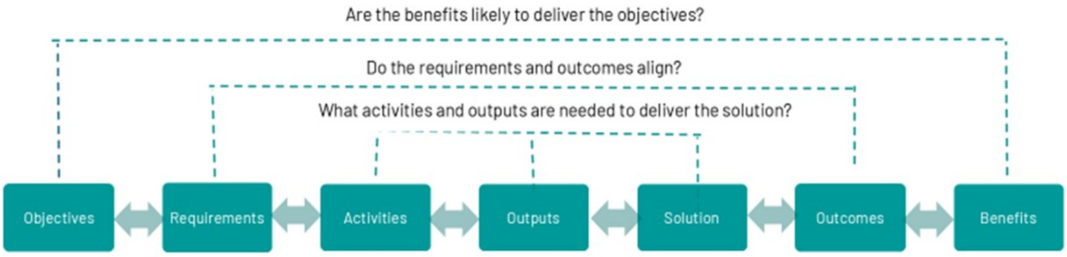

Figure 7.2 Example of bi-directional benefits mapping

Benefits dependency network mapping

This approach starts with the benefits and works backwards to identify the outcomes, outputs, and enablers needed to achieve them. It is useful for highlighting dependencies and supporting planning and risk management.

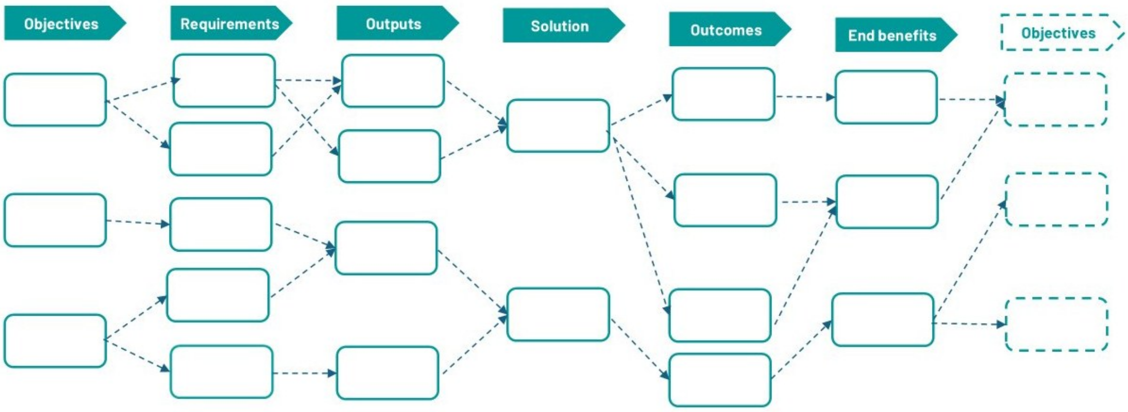

Figure 7.3 Example of benefits dependency network mapping

Results chain mapping

This method shows the sequence of activities, outputs and outcomes that lead to benefits over time. It is especially useful for complex or long-term projects and programmes, as it can show multiple intermediate states and dependencies.

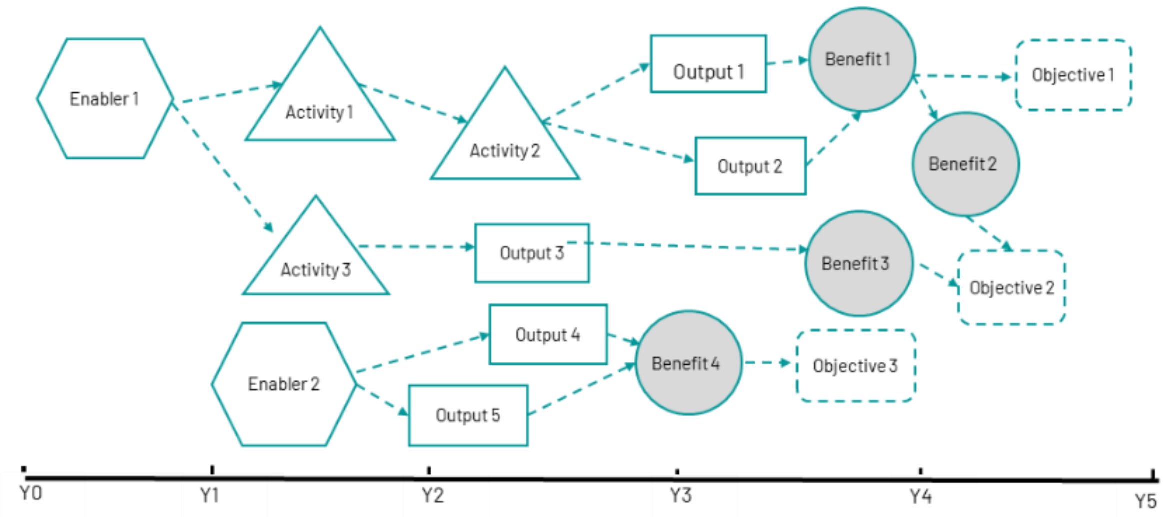

Figure 7.4 Example of results chain mapping

Portfolio benefits matrix

This approach uses a matrix (such as a 2x2 or 3x3 grid) to map different elements of a portfolio against benefits or objectives. It can also help prioritise work by mapping value across the portfolio. For more detail, go to Section 8.

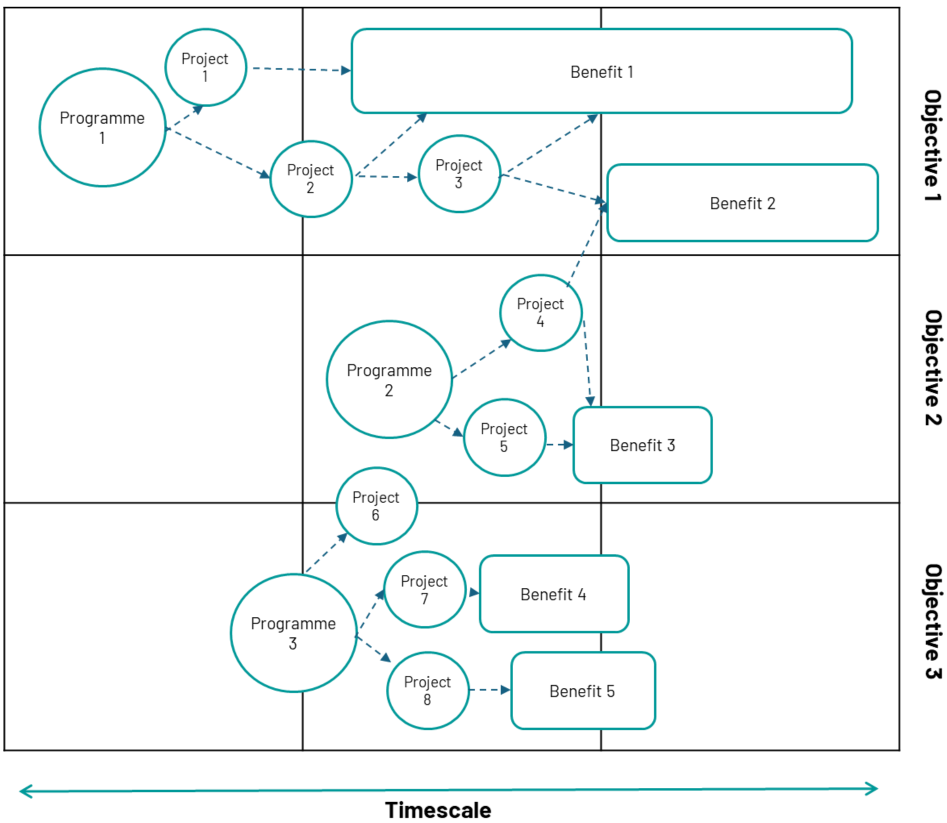

Figure 7.5 Example of portfolio benefits matrix

7.6.4.3 How to do a benefits mapping exercise

Benefits mapping works best as a collaborative exercise. Workshops with stakeholders can help generate ideas and challenge assumptions. Usually, you can start mapping after gathering and validating information from stakeholders.

Benefits mapping involves working through different elements to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between them. It can be used to map negative impacts also.

The mapping process is iterative. Begin with an initial workshop to create a draft map, refine it with the team, and then review it in a follow-up session.

A typical process

1. Start with the benefits identified, for example in the long list (Section 7.6.3).
2. Identify beneficiaries (individuals or groups) and the benefits they may receive.
3. Group benefits and link them to outcomes and objectives.
4. Identify the enablers and outputs needed to achieve the outcomes and benefits.
5. Link activities to outcomes and benefits in a causal chain.
6. Identify assumptions and risks that underpin the map.
7. Record the mapping, including key assumptions, risks and actions to refine or test the analysis, with clear owners for each action.

Benefits mapping can be challenging, particularly in large-scale work where there may be many benefits. If so, you could try:

- mapping high-level benefits or themes first and adding detail later
- presenting the map vertically
- producing separate maps for different types of benefit, or for benefits and costs

7.6.4.4 Refining the benefits map

Benefits maps are rarely finished in one go. They should be developed and refined over time. Avoid making the map too detailed; focus on the key outputs, outcomes, and benefits that relate to your objectives.

It can be hard to reach consensus between stakeholders on the importance of different benefits. If in doubt include the benefits and then review them when prioritising and valuing benefits against objective criteria.

Some benefits identified by stakeholders may not link directly to your objectives. Record these separately as they may still add value or support wider government aims. However, investment decisions should be based on social value as defined by government objectives (see Section 8), so keep these additional benefits distinct.

If needed, develop more detailed maps for different parts of a programme or portfolio. Always maintain a high-level map that links back to the overall objectives. Once agreed, baseline the map as part of the benefits management framework, and keep track of any changes.

7.6.5 Classify benefits

7.6.5.1 Overview

Once benefits have been identified and mapped, they should be classified.

Benefits are grouped into different types, or 'classes', so they can be valued more easily. This makes it easier to appraise and prioritise options and make investment decisions. It also helps you plan, manage, and review benefits realisation throughout the life cycle.

7.6.5.2 Green Book approach to classification

The Green Book sets out how to classify and assess benefits and costs in terms of social value, considering UK society as a whole.

Changes delivered by a project or programme can have positive or negative impacts. Positive impacts are called social benefits. Negative impacts are called social costs

All investment appraisal, review and evaluation should use this approach. Record how social benefits and costs are classified in your benefits register.

Where the social benefit or cost falls

First, consider who receives the social benefits of the proposed change and who bears the social costs. This could be:

the public body that is developing the proposal

- other public bodies
- households and individuals
- businesses
- other non-government organisations such as charities

These groups can be sub-divided further, for example to distinguish between benefits to different social groups, or small and large businesses.

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How the social benefit or cost can be measured

Each benefit or cost is then classified by how it can be measured.

Social benefits and social costs are either:

- monetisable - they can be expressed in financial terms, for example
- unmonetisable – they cannot be expressed in financial terms

Monetisable social benefits and social costs can be either:

- cash - affecting the income or spending of a public body
- non-cash – they do not affect the income or spending of a public body, for example, changes in greenhouse gas emissions

Unmonetisable benefits and costs can be either:

- quantitative – they can be expressed in numbers but not in monetary terms, for example the number of households affected by a proposal
- qualitative – they can only be described in words, rather than numbers, such as improvements to reputation, security or wellbeing.

Figure 7.6 shows the different classes of benefit as defined in the Green Book.

Figure 6. A decision tree for classifying social costs and social benefits

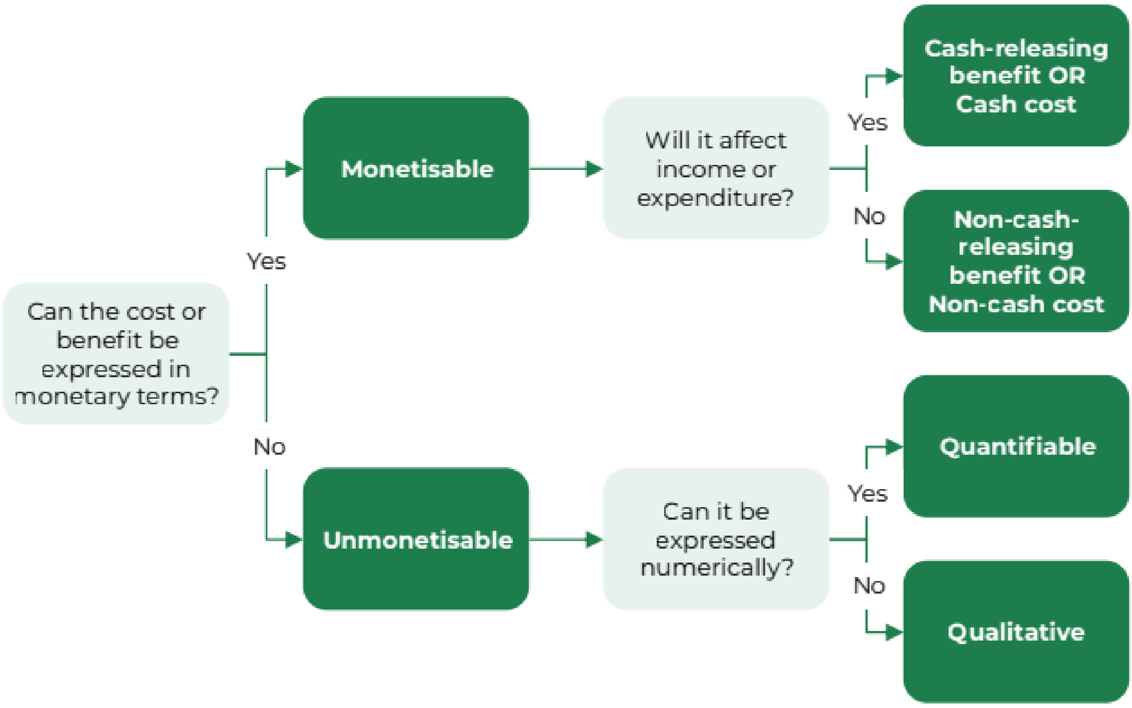

Figure 7.6 Benefits classification in the Green Book

Classifying negative impacts

Negative impacts, sometimes called disbenefits or detriments, are considered social costs in the Green Book. These should be grouped in the same way as benefits, based on where the cost falls and whether the impact can be expressed in monetary terms (as cash or non-cash) or needs to be described in other ways.

It's important to distinguish between public sector financial costs and social costs. The public sector often bears the direct financial cost of a scheme, but social costs may fall elsewhere. For example, the direct cost of building a new road may be funded by the public sector and accounted for in the business case. However, the costs of disruption to local households and businesses are social costs, and they too need to be identified and considered in making decisions on investment.

7.6.5.3 Other ways to organise benefits

In addition to the main Green Book classification, benefits can be grouped in other ways, and these groupings can be recorded in the benefits register. These secondary groupings help with analysis, evaluation, communication and reporting.

One useful approach is to group benefits according to objectives, whether those are specific to the work, the organisation or government priorities. This is often shown in a benefits map. Grouping benefits by objectives helps clarify how portfolios, programmes, and projects contribute to wider priorities, making these links clearer for senior stakeholders.

Other common ways to organise benefits include:

- organisational categories
- geographical area affected
- social wellbeing type: social, economic or environmental
- project or programme themes, such as the part of the organisation leading the work or affected by it
- how they support the different UN Sustainable Development Goals

7.6.5.4 Recording different types of benefit and cost

Benefit classifications should be recorded in the long list, usually using a spreadsheet so benefits can be sorted by different types. This list can then form the basis for the benefits register. Alternatively, the long list can be imported into the benefits register directly, and classifications recorded individually.

7.6.6 Develop the benefits register

7.6.6.1 Overview

A benefits register is a record of all benefits, potential or planned. It allows benefit owners and decision-makers to sort and classify benefits easily.

The register is usually created as a spreadsheet or in project delivery software. A flexible template is available in the benefits management toolkit.

The benefits register is used for planning and control throughout the life cycle. It should be kept up to date as work progresses, with clear traceability maintained.

7.6.6.2 The key elements of a benefits register

At a minimum, the benefits register should include:

- a description of each benefit, including the beneficiary (see 7.6.6.3)
- the primary classification of the benefit
- any secondary groupings
- the benefit owner

As more information becomes available, the register should also include:

- the proposed measure and baseline performance

- expected timelines for realisation
- its status (whether or not it is on track)

7.6.6.3 Describing benefits accurately

Describe each benefit clearly and concisely so that the team and stakeholders can quickly understand what it is, who benefits, how it will be achieved, and its scale.

This requires:

- use of plain, concise language
- a consistent approach to descriptions
- a summary that gives a clear understanding of the benefit
- a description that explains the value to stakeholders

Each benefit summary should cover:

- the context: where and/or how the benefit happens
- the means of change: what creates the benefit
- the consequences: the result of the change
- the beneficiary or beneficiaries: who receives the value

The same approach should be used for recording negative impacts. These should be entered as social costs in a separate section of the register to keep positive and negative impacts distinct.

Some impacts may have both positive and negative aspects. In these cases, record the positive and negative effects separately as benefits and costs, making clear the link between them. This helps ensure both aspects are considered when valuing these impacts.

7.6.7 Identify benefits owners

The final activity in identifying benefits is to agree a future owner for each benefit and record this in the benefits register. The same process applies to negative impacts.

Identifying owners early allows them to help value, plan for, and realise the benefit, or to manage the impact.

As described in Section 2, the benefit owner is a named individual who works with the benefits manager to:

- confirm and value the benefit

- develop the benefit profile
- agree the benefit assumptions included in the business case
- take responsibility for realising and reporting on the benefit at the agreed point
- agree when the benefit is closed

Often, the benefit owner is clear from the nature of the benefit. For example, a product owner would usually own the benefits from developing a new product, while a senior operational manager responsible for a public-facing service would own the benefits from service transformation.

Sometimes, it can be difficult to identify an owner in the early stages. This is often the case for indirect public benefits, particularly where new organisations or services are being established.

This may not matter much while benefits are being identified but it becomes more important as benefits are valued for the investment case. If an owner cannot be identified at this point, one option is to appoint someone in the team or sponsoring body with appropriate knowledge or expertise to hold ownership on an interim basis until a long-term owner is agreed.

Section 8: Valuing benefits

8.1 Purpose of valuing benefits

Valuing benefits provides a structured way to support planning and investment appraisal in government projects.

By applying a consistent approach, you can see what each benefit contributes and assess the overall value of the change.

This then allows the cost of the change to be weighed against its future value, so that proposals and options can be prioritised and decisions made on how best to use public funding. Once decisions are made, benefit values guide planning, track progress towards realisation, and provide evidence for review and evaluation.

8.2 Key points

What to consider

- How can different benefits best be valued? What about negative impacts?
- Are there standard measures or benchmarks you can use?
- What are the critical outputs or deliverables that benefits depend on?
- How might values change with different solutions or delivery options?
- What assumptions affect how and when benefits will be realised?
- What are the main risks, and how should these be reflected in your modelling?

Key activities

- Agree the approach to valuing benefits and negative impacts
- Develop benefits profiles
- Value individual benefits
- Identify and record risks, issues, assumptions and dependencies
- Conduct and validate benefits modelling
- Appraise and prioritise proposals

- Key products
- Benefits profile
- Benefits RAID (risk, issues, assumptions and dependencies) log (usually part of the benefits register)
- Benefits modelling and appraisal outputs

8.3 Why is valuing benefits important?

By understanding the type and scale of expected benefits, you can weigh them against the costs of delivery. This supports better investment decisions and helps prioritise activity.

Valuing benefits also sets a baseline for tracking progress, reviewing delivery, and learning lessons. It supports transparency by showing how well public funds are being used.

Government considers both costs and benefits from the perspective of UK society as a whole. Outcomes and benefits are assessed in terms of the social value they deliver through government objectives. Wherever possible, these should be given a monetary value, but other ways of measuring them should be used if this isn't possible.

Valuing benefits can be challenging in some areas, such as security, defence, environment or socio-economic programmes. However, it should be done wherever possible to ensure investment decisions are based on the best available evidence.

8.4 What is involved in valuing benefits?

Valuing benefits involves a series of activities to profile, value and model the benefits to be considered in the investment case. Negative impacts should be handled in the same way.

This usually takes place during planning and developing the investment case, but benefits identified later should also be valued and included in further analysis.

Not all the benefits on the long list need to be profiled and valued for the investment case, and you may have to prioritise them, using criteria in the benefits management framework.

You should follow an organised, disciplined approach, as set out in your benefits management framework. Review and agree your approach before starting, adapting it as needed for the specific benefits identified.

Before valuing benefits you need to create a benefits profile for each benefit. This starts with the information in the benefits register and adds more detail, on what will be delivered and when, who will benefit and how it will be measured.

Potential risks, issues, assumptions and dependencies are also identified. These may relate to individual benefits or all of them and could include things like delivery timing, sequencing of outputs, or user numbers. Record these in the benefits register and/or the relevant RAID log.

All this information is used to calculate the value of each benefit over time. Group benefits as needed. For bigger and more complex work, specialist benefits modelling may be needed. Modelling should reflect any risks, issues, assumptions or dependencies identified and should allow for uncertainty.

Use the results of the benefits modelling, alongside economic cost information, to appraise and/or prioritise the proposed work.

8.5 Who is involved in valuing benefits?

The **portfolio, programme or project manager**, as appropriate, is accountable for overseeing the work to develop benefits profiles and value benefits. They may also lead the activities.

In a portfolio, the portfolio manager is accountable for overseeing work to value benefits at portfolio level. However, the activities are largely carried out at programme and/or project level, with responsibility held by the relevant senior responsible owner and programme or project manager respectively. For more on this see Section 8.6.1.

Where a **benefits manager** has been appointed, day to day responsibility for managing these activities is usually delegated to them. Alternatively, this work may instead be delegated to a **business case manager**.

Benefits owners play an important role in developing the benefits profiles for the benefits they own, and in supporting work to model and value them.

Economists and other expert analysts are often involved in valuing benefits and in leading benefits modelling, particularly in large and complex work.

Evaluation and finance specialists should be consulted on the approach to valuing and appraising benefits. They may also be directly involved in the work or in validating modelling.

Commercial managers should ensure that benefits requirements are identified and valued as part of procurement, in line with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

Other members of the team, such as planners and project or work package managers, may help develop benefits profiles, advise on timing, and identify risks and assumptions for modelling. Specialists from within or outside the team may also support validation where they have relevant expertise.

8.6 Key activities in valuing benefits

8.6.1 Overview

Valuing and modelling benefits should follow a clear, structured process to support robust investment appraisal and decision-making. The approach should be described in the benefits management framework but may need to be adapted for the specific benefits identified.

Negative impacts (social costs) should also be valued where possible, following the approach set out below for benefits. Further guidance on modelling social costs is provided in the Green Book and in NISTA guidance on cost estimation. Both positive and negative impacts may also contribute to other forms of impact assessment, such as place-based or distributional analysis, as required by the Green Book.

Valuing benefits and costs supports evaluation but is not the same thing (see Section 1.5). Analysts responsible for evaluation should be consulted on how impacts are valued and may also help with benefits modelling or review the results.

In a portfolio

Benefits profiling, valuation and modelling usually start at programme and project level, following the approach in the portfolio benefits management framework. Results are then reported up to the portfolio on an ongoing basis or updated for new spending review or business planning cycles.

Some higher-level benefits may come from the collective impact of the portfolio. These should also be profiled, valued and modelled at portfolio level and used to support planning and prioritisation.

In a programme or project

Benefits profiling, valuing and modelling usually takes place during planning and business case development, often at the appraisal stage or, for programmes, during validation of the strategic outline case. This work is closely linked to planning and is central to shortlisting options and selecting a preferred solution.

In agile or iterative work

For agile or iterative delivery, benefits valuation can be progressive, carried out in each cycle of activity as new benefits are identified. Even so, a high-level benefits valuation is still needed to validate the programme case or outline business case.

Outputs

Across portfolios, programmes and projects, the main outputs from valuing benefits are:

- the benefits profiles

- a record of associated risks, assumptions, issues and dependencies
- the results of benefits modelling, prioritisation and appraisal.

These outputs are described in more detail in later sections.

8.6.2 Agree the approach to valuing benefits

8.6.2.1 Overview

The approach to valuing benefits should be set out in the benefits management framework. Review this approach and make sure it still fits the needs of the work.

The approach should:

- meet the requirements of the Green Book
- follow any existing frameworks, such as organisational or sector level requirements
- support analysis and evaluation, in line with the Aqua Book and the Magenta Book

Tailor the approach to the nature, scale and complexity of the work, and the types of benefits identified. See Section 8.6.4 for more detail.

8.6.2.2 Deciding which benefits are to be profiled and valued

One of the things to consider is whether all benefits in the long list are to be taken forward to be profiled and valued, or whether some prioritisation is needed, so that work can focus on the main impacts.

Agree a clear approach to prioritising benefits. This helps you decide which ones to profile and value, and where to focus effort. The benefits management framework may have guidance on this.

Use criteria like:

- contribution to objectives – does a benefit directly support the goals of the programme or project?
- scale – what will make the biggest difference?
- type – are some types more important, for example, financial savings or socio-economic impact?
- risk – how likely is it that the impact will occur?
- stakeholder views – which impacts matter most to key stakeholders?
- reach – how wide is the impact, for example, number of people or geographic area?

- ability to measure – can the impact be measured reliably and consistently?

Involve stakeholders in prioritisation. Use visual tools to support discussion, as shown in figures 8.1 and 8.2.

These tools won't give a definitive answer, but they help people understand the trade-offs and agree a ranking.

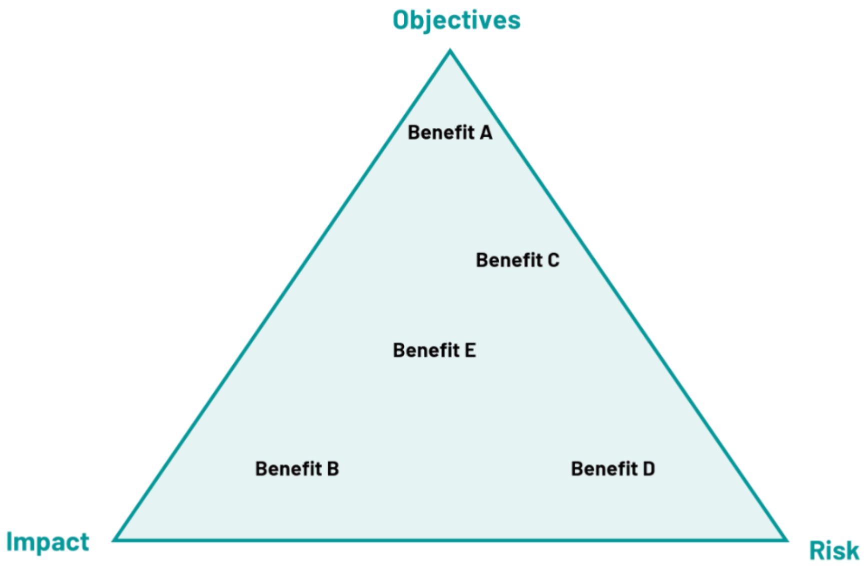

Figure 8.1 Example of triangle grid for benefits prioritisation

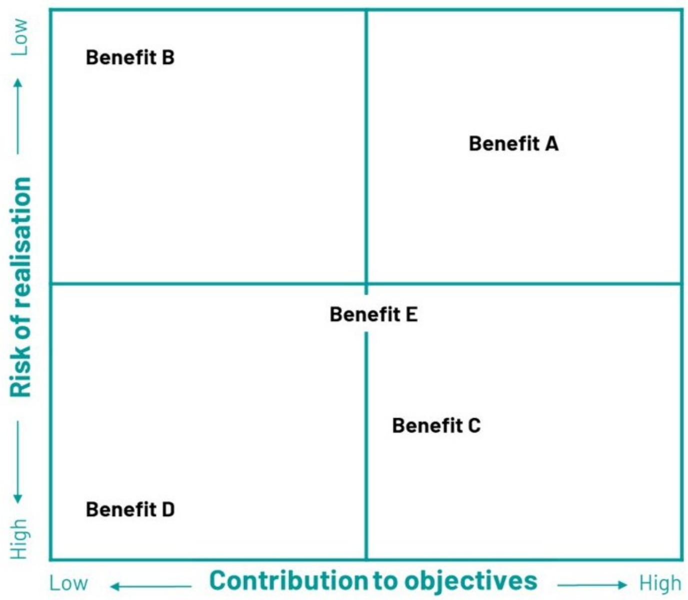

Figure 8.2 Example of two-by-two grid for benefits prioritisation

If there's no clear priority, focus on the impacts:

- linked to the biggest changes
- affecting the largest number of people
- that help distinguish between options, especially if they're hard to quantify

Remember: even if a benefit isn't valued for investment planning, it can still be delivered and tracked in other ways.

8.6.2.3 Document the approach

Once the approach is agreed, update the benefits management framework to explain:

- the methods and frameworks used to prioritise and value impacts
- any expected challenges or risks, and how they'll be managed
- how modelling will be done, validated and verified
- how modelling outputs will support appraisal, prioritisation and evaluation

This helps guide the next stage of work and provides a record of how valuation and modelling were carried out.

8.6.3 Develop the benefits profiles

8.6.3.1 Overview

A benefits profile gives detailed information about each benefit. It complements the summary in the benefits register and provides the source information for investment appraisal. Similar profiles can be created for negative impacts.

Once agreed, the profile becomes the main record for:

- tracking changes in assumptions
- monitoring progress against milestones
- supporting handover to operations
- recording decisions on benefit closure

8.6.3.2 Creating a benefits profile

The benefits manager (or designated lead) should work with the benefit owner to develop the profile. Not all information may be known, and further analysis may be needed.

Once complete, the profile should be reviewed and approved by the benefit owner before it's used for valuation and modelling.

Each benefit profile should include:

- the benefit title and named benefit owner
- a description of the benefit, including:
    - its key features
    - its classification
    - the objectives it supports
    - any risks, issues, dependencies, or assumptions
- when and how the benefit it to be delivered
- how performance is to be measured
- how the benefit is to be realised, including key enablers
- how and when the benefit is to be closed

A standard template benefits profile is available in the Benefits Management Toolkit.

8.6.3.3 Maintaining a benefits profile

Once agreed, the profile should be baselined and managed under change control.

It should be:

- reviewed and updated after the decision to proceed with the work
- updated if assumptions change (for example, if delivery is rescheduled)
- used to track progress against delivery and realisation milestones
- updated to reflect changes in benefit ownership (for example, when handed over to operations)

When the benefit is fully realised, use the profile to record the final outcome and the reason for closing the benefit (see Section 12).

8.6.4 Value individual benefits

8.6.4.1 Overview

Once the benefits profiles are complete, the next step is to value each benefit. To do this, you need to know:

- when the benefit will start to be realised
- how long it will last
- how it will be measured
- how many people will be affected

Use this information to forecast the value of the benefit over time. The forecast should be developed with, and agreed by, the benefit owner.

The method you use will depend on the type of benefit. Some are easier to value than others. Section 8.6.4.3 explains how to approach different types of benefit.

8.6.4.2 Understanding timescales

The time period over which a benefit is realised affects how it's valued and managed.

Planning should cover the whole life of the solution, including through use and disposal.

In portfolios, planning is cyclical, so it's important to define the timescale over which benefits are to be valued for modelling purposes. This could be a spending review period or over a much longer timescale, as used, for example, in infrastructure, defence and nuclear portfolios.

In programmes and projects, benefits are usually modelled and valued over the whole life of the change, through operation and disposal.

The Green Book provides guidance on the length of time over which benefits, costs and risks are assessed, known as the time horizon. Time horizons are based on standard lifespan assumptions for different types of work and should normally be used. If the work is likely to have significant costs and benefits beyond the standard lifespan, the appraisal period may be extended if HM Treasury agrees. The same assumptions should be used through delivery, realisation and review.

Most benefits are realised once the solution is in use. However, some benefits may be realised during delivery, especially in iterative or phased work. Even in predictive and linear projects, benefits can arise from the work itself. These might come from:

- business investment

- local employment and community involvement
- digital and industry innovation
- archaeological work or environmental interventions
- initial benefits from piloting or enabling works

Short-term, or transient, benefits should still be valued and tracked. Remember to include social value benefits identified in procurement. Make sure timing aligns to the terms of the contract and doesn't make assumptions, for example, on contract extension.

8.6.4.3 Valuing different types of benefit

Where possible, benefits should be monetised. If not, try to quantify and value them in other ways.

The benefit's classification should guide how you value it and so are the starting point for valuation. The main types are described below.

Some benefits are harder to value, like those relating to national security, the environment, wellbeing or risk to life. There are recognised government methods for valuing such impacts, using standardised indicators and weighting, listed in the Green Book. Use these where available.

If no standard measures exist, seek advice from economists, social or operational researchers, or other analyst teams in your organisation or from HM Treasury.

Monetisable cash-releasing benefits

Often called efficiency savings, these are usually the easiest benefits to value. They reduce government costs or avoid future spending. For example, they might be benefits that offer:

- contract savings
- lower utility bills
- reduced employee costs

But they're only cashable if the savings can be realised in practice. For example:

- employee savings only count if roles are removed or not backfilled
- vacating a building only saves money when the lease ends or the building is sold
- a legacy technology platform may still incur support costs, even if most users have moved to a new service

Monetisable non-cash releasing benefits

These can be valued in monetary terms but don't reduce government spending. They often relate to wider social impacts, for example through:

- improved public services
- better roads and railways
- lower greenhouse gas emissions

Many economic and social infrastructure programmes deliver this sort of benefit, for example in meeting social need, supporting growth or providing other forms of public benefit.

These benefits are harder to measure. Subject matter experts and specialist analysts should be involved.

Unmonetisable but measurable benefits

These can't be expressed in money but can be quantified (measured) in other ways. For example:

- environmental benefits in terms of biodiversity
- health benefits in quality-adjusted life years (QALYs)

Use the measures recommended in the Green Book and involve specialist analysts with appropriate subject matter expertise.

Qualitative benefits

These are the hardest to value but can still be important, especially for social value. You can assess them by:

- asking stakeholders to rank their importance
- using weighted scoring

Include key qualitative benefits in the strategic case, even if they can't be modelled for the economic case.

Speculative benefits

These are uncertain and often linked to research and development. They can fall into any category. Use forecasting and expert judgement to assess them and always involve specialist analysts.

8.6.4.4.Consider mixed and uneven benefits

A single change can deliver several types of benefit. For example, a new ferry service might:

- reduce operating costs
- boost local tourism
- improve passenger experience

Each type of benefit should be valued separately.

Some benefits may be unevenly distributed, having a positive impact in one area but a negative impact in another. Use distributional analysis to reflect this in the economic case. You can also apply weighting techniques to reflect impacts in specific areas, such as rural or deprived communities.

These methods are usually used to support prioritisation or shortlisting, rather than as part of formal valuation. See Section 8.6.7.3 and the Green Book for more on this.

8.6.5 Identify risks, issues, assumptions and dependencies

8.6.5.1 Overview

Valuing benefits always involves some uncertainty. It's important to identify and record:

- risks or issues that could affect the value or delivery of a benefit
- key assumptions or dependencies that could influence how benefits are realised

This should be done for each benefit and across the work as a whole. Ask:

- are there wider risks or dependencies, like delivery timing, sequencing or user uptake, that could affect multiple benefits?
- are assumptions consistent across all benefits?

Record this information in the benefits register and, where relevant, in the RAID (risks, assumptions, issues and dependencies) log. Use it to inform modelling, appraisal and decision-making.

8.6.5.2 Building uncertainty into benefits analysis and modelling

Just like cost estimation, benefits analysis should account for uncertainty.

Use risk-based planning and estimation techniques to reflect uncertainty in your modelling.

Refer to:

- the Orange Book for risk management
- Cost Estimating Guidance for planning techniques
- the Aqua Book for analytical quality and assurance
- the Green Book for handling uncertainty, optimism bias and risk in business cases

All analysis and modelling should conform to the Government Functional Standard for Analysis.

Make uncertainty visible in your outputs. Use ranges and present different plausible outcomes, not just a single forecast.

When valuing individual benefits:

- reflect risk in the economic case
- include financial risk or liability in the financial case, where relevant
- adjust assumptions as confidence improves over time

8.6.6 Conduct and validate benefits modelling

8.6.6.1 Overview

Benefits modelling should follow the Government Functional Standard for Analysis and the guidance in the Aqua Book.

Use the forecast value from individual benefits profiles to calculate and aggregate forecast values. This creates an overall view of expected benefits.

Modelling is often done using linked spreadsheets. For large or complex work, use specialist software.

The outputs should show:

- the total forecast benefits
- a breakdown by Green Book classification

This helps investment decision-makers understand the impact of each benefit, both on public spending and wider impact.

You can also present benefits by theme. For example:

- contribution to government objectives
- social, economic or environmental impact

These groupings should then also be used to track benefits realisation.

8.6.6.2 Modelling considerations

Modelling often involves multiple inputs from different sources. To maintain quality:

- use clear protocols for data entry
- ensure traceability back to the source data and benefits profiles
- follow the Aqua Book guidance on analytical quality assurance

In long-term or complex work, models can grow large and errors may creep in. Build in regular checks and validation.

Include uncertainty and risk in your modelling (see Section 8.6.5). Use techniques like:

- Monte Carlo analysis
- probability-based estimation

These help show the likelihood of different outcomes and the range of possible scenarios.

Make uncertainty visible in your outputs. Present information in ranges and include a number of plausible outcomes to support appraisal, decision-making and target-setting.

Watch out for optimism bias - the tendency to overestimate benefits. You can reduce this by:

- using probability-based techniques
- benchmarking against similar work
- inviting independent challenge

8.6.6.3 Verification and validation

Once modelling is complete, it must be independently reviewed and validated. This ensures the data used for appraisal and decision-making is robust.

Verification and validation are part of analytical quality assurance. Plan for them early, ideally when designing your approach to valuing benefits (see Section 8.6.2.3).

Tailor the level of scrutiny to the scale and complexity of the work. Follow the Aqua Book guidance.

If validation shows the modelling needs improvement, make changes where possible. If not, clearly explain any data quality issues when presenting benefits assumptions. This helps decision-makers judge whether to include the data and on what basis.

8.6.7 Appraise and prioritise proposals

8.6.7.1 Overview

Once benefits modelling is complete and validated, use it alongside cost modelling to appraise and prioritise proposals.

The aim is to:

- compare different options
- assess their value
- identify a preferred way forward including comparing against the 'do nothing' option

Appraisal is usually led by the business case manager, with input from the benefits manager, finance lead and relevant analysts. It must follow the principles in the Green Book.

8.6.7.2 Appraisal methods

Government investment appraisal is based on assessing social value: the total benefits minus total costs to society.

The Green Book sets out how to express this value for different combinations of social benefits and social cost, for investment appraisal. In each case, the benefits or costs are adjusted for time factors and so expressed as real terms and in present value terms, for consistency.

Net present social value

This shows the difference between the total monetisable social benefits of a proposal and the total monetisable social costs. It shows the overall social impact of an option.

Benefit-cost ratio

The benefit-cost ratio is the social return of a proposal. It shows the monetisable social benefits generated for each unit of monetisable social cost.

Return on public sector cost

This metric helps in comparing different options in terms of how well they optimise social value in relation to their cost to the public sector.

Net present unit cost

This metric enables options to be compared in terms of whether their different levels of social benefit are worth the associated social costs.

These summary metrics of social value are used to compare and rank different options in a proposal, but on their own, they are not enough to make a balanced judgement about value for money. They should also not be used to compare different proposals with different objectives. The Green Book makes clear that decisions on investment should draw on a range of information to decide how to balance different considerations of value for money in each case. This might include, for example, the need to maximise public sector efficiency benefits, or achieve benefits for a particular place, sector or group.

Risk and uncertainty are also key factors to consider, using techniques like sensitivity analysis and switching values. These can also help in assessing unmonetisable benefits, for example by showing how much value they would need to generate a positive net present social value.

For detailed guidance on appraisal methods, see Chapters 6, 7 and 8 of the Green Book.

8.6.7.3 Appraisal and prioritisation in practice

Appraisal using Green Book methods is a requirement for government investment proposals. It provides a consistent way to compare options based on their benefits, costs and risks.

In a portfolio, appraisal helps prioritise proposals, for example, as part of a spending review or annual business planning cycle.

In a programme or project, it's used to shortlist options in the outline business case, or programme case, and to confirm decisions in the full business case or updated programme case.

But prioritising proposals isn't always as simple as ranking them by net present social value or other metrics, as the Green Book notes. These are useful measures, but they don't tell the whole story. There are also often practical thigs to consider.

For example:

- a higher cost option might deliver more benefit and a higher net social value, but it might not be affordable
- a lower cost option might deliver a higher benefit-cost ratio, but it might not meet an important objective or might be delivered too late

So prioritisation often needs to consider more than just benefit and cost, including the wider government objectives and success criteria set out in the strategic case.

You might also need to rank options based on:

- timing
- risk
- distribution of impacts

These should link back to the agreed objectives and outcomes for the work (see Section 5).

8.6.7.3 Presenting appraisal results

Appraisal results should be shown using an appraisal summary table, comparing different options side by side.

Programmes and projects seeking investment approval should follow the template provided in the Green Book and shown below.

Table 12. Generic template for an appraisal summary table (AST)

	Description of option	Summary metrics of social value	Unmonetisable social costs and social benefits	Public sector financial impact	How impacts are distributed among different groups and places *(where relevant)*
	Why is this the preferred option, or inferior to the preferred option?	*Expected values and key uncertainties*	*Expected values and key uncertainties*	*Expected values and key uncertainties*	*Expected effects on groups and places, and key uncertainties*
1. Business as usual					
2. Do minimum					
3. Preferred option *(if not do minimum)*					
4. More ambitious option					
5. Less ambitious option *(unless preferred option is do minimum)*					

Sometimes, there are other impacts to consider alongside benefit and cost appraisal. These include distributional, spatial and socio-economic impacts. Including them helps make prioritisation clearer and more consistent.

You can use techniques such as:

- weighting, which gives more importance to certain impacts
- scoring, which helps compare options fairly across different criteria

You can find more detail on these approaches in the Green Book.

In a portfolio, decision-making can also be more complex. This is because there are more activities and variables to consider. A visual summary, like the one shown in Figure 8.4, can help make comparisons easier and support better decisions.

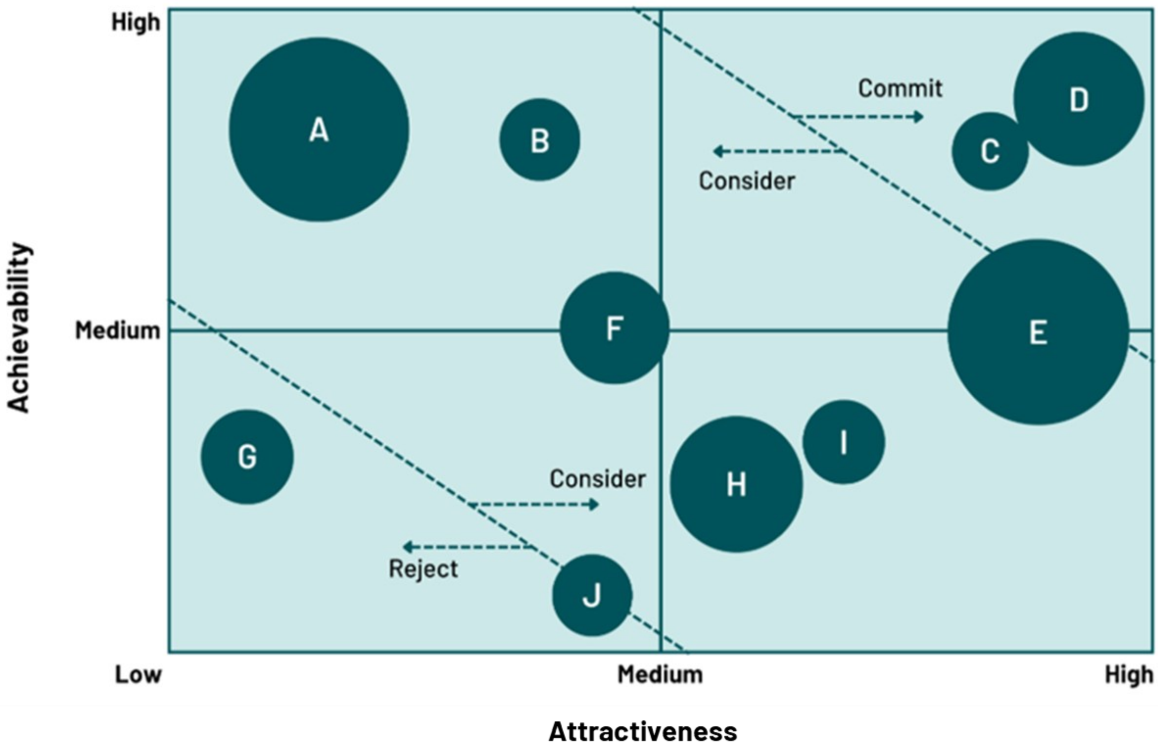

Figure 8.3 An example of portfolio mapping

This shows work components plotted against achievability and attractiveness. The size of the bubble indicates the scale of benefit to cost ratio (taken from The Teal Book).

8.6.7.4 Taking account of negative impacts

It's important to consider negative impacts carefully when appraising investment proposals. Sometimes these are called disbenefits or detriments, but those terms are not used in government as they can cause confusion in appraisal and accounting treatment.

The Green Book says that all positive impacts, including cost savings, should be treated as benefits. All negative impacts should be treated as costs.

Some areas of government policy make this harder to apply consistently. For example, carbon emissions and environmental impacts in transport and infrastructure projects can be difficult to classify. In these cases, you may need to use distributional analysis or other techniques to assess how impacts vary across different groups or locations.

If a negative impact can be measured, include it in the economic case as a social cost. Any direct financial costs should go in the financial case. This helps make sure negative impacts are identified, considered in appraisal and managed properly.

If a negative impact is significant but can't be measured, describe it clearly in the strategic case. You should also mention it in the economic case if relevant.

You can find more guidance on this in the Green Book, including on modelling and appraising social costs. If you're unsure, speak to economists in your department or HM Treasury.

Section 9: Planning benefits

9.1 Purpose of planning benefits

Planning how and when benefits will be realised helps make sure:

- key activities are scheduled
- the right people are involved
- risks, issues and dependencies are managed
- progress can be tracked

9.2 Key points

What to consider

- Are benefits targets agreed and baselined? Are they achievable?
- Is benefit documentation up to date?
- What work is needed to deliver and realise the benefits?
- What needs to happen when?
- Who are the key people needed and when? What are the key enablers?
- What are the key risks, issues and dependencies to be managed?
- What information is needed to track realisation and to support review and evaluation?
- What arrangements are needed to support handover to operations?

Key activities

- Establish baselines for planning
- Develop the benefits realisation plan, including
- benefits realisation activities
- risks, issues and dependencies
- benefits tracking and reporting

- review and evaluation
- handover of benefits ownership to operations

Key products

- Benefits realisation plan
- Benefits tracker
- Outline benefits reports
- Outline of benefits handover arrangements

9.3 Why is planning benefits important?

Planning helps make sure benefits are delivered as expected. It ensures that:

- activities are scheduled at the right time
- the right people and enablers are in place when needed
- risks, issues, assumptions and dependencies are identified and managed early

It also prepares for the work needed to support benefits realisation, including:

- tracking and reporting
- review and evaluation
- handing over benefits realisation to operations

Without proper planning, benefits may be delayed, missed or harder to measure.

9.4 What is involved in planning benefits?

Benefits planning is part of wider planning, feeding into the developing case for investment and decisions on the preferred way forward. Planning links the outputs to be delivered and work needed to realise the benefits, such as business change activities, and ensures that these are costed and scheduled into the investment case and planned into any procurement.

Benefits realisation planning, however, really starts in earnest after the way forward is clear.

This could be:

- the result of a spending review bid for a portfolio
- approval to proceed after an outline or full business case

- approval of a programme business case

The first step is to set a clear baseline for benefits. This means understanding what has been agreed in the investment case approved and what targets or assumptions on benefits are linked to the decision. If anything is unclear or unrealistic, it should be resolved before planning for realisation begins. Update the benefits documents to reflect the agreed position.

Once the benefits baseline is confirmed, in-depth planning for realisation can begin. This should include:

- agreeing the activities needed to realise benefits, when they'll happen, and who and what is needed to support them
- identifying risks, issues and dependencies that could affect benefits
- setting up tracking and reporting arrangements, including a benefits tracker and outline reports
- finalising plans for review and evaluation
- preparing to hand over benefits realisation to operations

The main outputs are:

- the benefits realisation plan
- the benefits tracker
- outline benefits reports
- the benefits handover plan

9.5 Who is involved in planning benefits?

The **portfolio, programme or project manager**, as appropriate, is accountable for overseeing benefits realisation planning. Normally, however, planning activities themselves are delegated.

In a portfolio, cross-portfolio planning activities are overseen by the **portfolio manager**, who may lead activities or delegate them to the portfolio benefits manager.

Detailed planning activities are normally carried out at programme and/or project level, with accountability held by the relevant senior responsible owner and responsibility held by the programme or project manager respectively.

Where a **benefits manager** has been appointed, day to day responsibility for managing benefits planning activities is usually delegated to them.

Benefits owners should be involved in benefits realisation planning in relation to the benefits they own.

Analysts leading work on evaluation should also be involved in planning for review and evaluation.

Other members of the team, for example, planners and project managers can also be involved in work to plan and schedule activity. Commercial and finance managers should be consulted to ensure that social value benefits identified in procurement are fully factored in planning and documentation. The reporting manager should be involved in developing the benefit tracker and outline benefits reports.

9.6 Key activities in planning benefits

9.6.1 Overview

Planning for benefits realisation needs to look across the life cycle. This could be an agreed period in the case of a portfolio, or the solution life cycle in the case of a programme or project.

Start with the outline plan in the benefits management framework. Review and update it, along with any other benefits documents. Check that benefits targets and assumptions are clear and realistic and baseline them where needed.

Involve benefits owners and other team members in planning. They should help identify:

- the activities needed to realise benefits
- risks, issues and dependencies
- who is responsible for each part of the work

Also involve the people responsible for:

- tracking and reporting
- review and evaluation
- handing over benefits realisation to operations

This helps make sure the plan is realistic and that everyone understands their role, responsibilities, timescales and key activities.

Document the plan progressively and bring it together as the **benefits realisation plan**. This should be part of the overall plan for the work and managed under change control.

Develop the **benefits tracker** alongside the plan. It should be ready to use as soon as benefits start to be realised.

9.6.2 Establish the baseline for planning

9.6.2.1 Overview

Effective planning needs solid foundations. Start by checking that the assumptions used for planning are still valid. Make sure all benefits documentation is up to date and reflects the investment decision.

Use the outline plan in the benefits management framework as your starting point. Update it to reflect any changes from the investment decision. This updated plan will form the basis of the benefits realisation plan.

9.6.2.2 Confirming the baseline for planning

Each benefit owner should be reconfirmed. They should review and, if needed, update their benefit profiles to reflect the investment decision.

The benefits manager should check that the benefits profiles match the agreed solution, not any shortlisted options that were discounted. Check any social value benefits linked to contracts reflect the final version of the contract.

Once updated, benefit owners should approve their profiles as baseline documents for planning. Any changes after this point should go through formal change control.

Next, review and update the benefits register to reflect the baselined profiles. Close any benefits linked to rejected options and move them to a separate section of the register.

Update the benefits map to reflect the latest assumptions.

9.6.2.3 Managing changes to benefits assumptions

Earlier work on valuing, modelling and appraising benefits should have considered uncertainty and tested whether the assumptions are realistic.

If circumstances have changed, or benefits owners raise concerns, review the assumptions and clarify the position and impact on benefits overall.

The benefits management framework should set out how to handle changes. For example:

- minor profile changes that do not affect overall benefits assumptions can usually be agreed by the benefits manager or another senior manager
- changes that affect assumptions agreed at investment approval should be reported to the portfolio, programme or project manager and the relevant governance board
- significant changes that impact on the investment case may need to go back to the body that gave approval

Any changes to assumptions should be formally approved. Update the benefits profile and register, and baseline them again for planning. Any future changes should go through formal change control.

9.6.3 Develop the benefits realisation plan

9.6.3.1 Overview

Benefits realisation planning is usually developed progressively and brought together into a single plan, the benefits realisation plan.

Like other plans, it's usually made up of linked documents, usually combining narrative, tables, spreadsheets and schedules.

Initial planning for benefits realisation should have started when the benefits management framework is created. It should then be developed further through the work on profiles and assumptions with benefits owners.

Wider financial and resource planning should also include provision for benefits realisation. These plans form the starting point for more detailed benefits realisation planning when decisions on the way forward have been agreed.

The benefits realisation plan should cover:

- what activities are needed to realise benefits, when they happen and who is involved
- how risks, issues and dependencies will be managed
- how benefits will be tracked and reported, and who is responsible
- what reviews and evaluations are needed, and how they link to assurance
- when benefits ownership will be handed over to operations, and how this will be managed

Governance and change control arrangements for benefits realisation should be aligned with wider governance and set out in the governance and management framework. It can be helpful to restate these arrangements in the plan.

If additional governance is needed, include this in the plan. This could include a sub-group to oversee benefits realisation.

Benefits realisation, review and evaluation are closely linked. Plan them together to streamline data collection and make sure metrics are aligned.

Some organisations prefer to create a joint benefits realisation and evaluation plan. This works particularly well in cyclical or iterative life cycles, where activities are closely aligned. It's less effective in sequential delivery, where the timescales for benefits realisation and evaluation can be very different.

9.6.3.2 Plan benefits realisation activities

The benefits realisation plan should set out the planned realisation profile for each benefit. This includes:

- the work outputs, change and communications activities needed
- who is responsible for each activity
- when activities need to happen
- the baselined assumptions and/or targets, expected trajectory and key milestones
- any dependencies, including intermediate or enabling benefits
- known risks and issues

Make sure benefits realisation activities are not planned in isolation and are aligned with the overall schedule for the work. This includes milestones for key deliverables and business change events that trigger benefits.

Consider also any negative impacts that need to be managed and plan for those too.

The way you schedule activities will depend on the delivery approach.

Sequential or predictive delivery

Benefits often depend on full implementation of the solution. Realisation activities may be scheduled in the same time frame.

This is easier to plan but can put pressure on change teams and users. It also increases the risk of delays. To manage this:

- make sure changes are resourced and manageable
- build in breathing space between activities
- allow time for catch-up and contingency

Modular, incremental or iterative delivery

Benefits are delivered progressively, often in cycles. This is common in portfolios, whereas programmes and projects deliver benefits over time.

This approach is harder to plan but easier to manage. It supports continuous learning and adaptation, which can improve benefits realisation. Effective tracking and reporting are essential to keep progress on track.

Other planning considerations

Not all benefits need the same level of support. Focus resources on the areas of greatest need in terms of support and the most critical or impactful benefits.

Think carefully about how to resource realisation activities. Benefit owners should play a central role. Change champions and operational staff can also provide valuable support.

The key is to plan ahead and engage people early. This helps build support and encourages adoption of the changes that lead to benefits.

9.6.3.3 Plan for risks, issues and dependencies

Planning for benefits realisation should include identifying and managing risks, issues and dependencies.

Start by reviewing what's already been captured in:

- the benefits register
- individual benefit profiles

Make sure these are included in the benefits realisation plan. You can also use a separate but linked tab in the main register if that's easier.

Check the profiles for key dependencies. These should also be reviewed and added to the plan.

Look out for new risks and issues. For example:

- what happens if outputs are delayed?
- are there shared dependencies that could cause cumulative impact?
- are there pinch points in resourcing or times when benefits can't be realised for operational reasons?

Once identified, risks, issues and dependencies should be:

- categorised by likelihood and impact
- assigned to owners
- documented using your organisation's standard approach

Where possible, adjust the plan to reduce the likelihood or impact. For example, add contingency time or extra resources. Anything that remains should be monitored and actively managed throughout benefits realisation.

9.6.3.4 Plan for benefits tracking

Tracking benefits helps you monitor progress and respond quickly if things go off track. Planning for tracking should start early so it's ready when benefits begin to be realised.

Follow the project delivery data standard for tracking and reporting. Not all tracking data needs to be included in reports, but all key benefits should be tracked. These usually include:

- quantified benefits from the economic case
- qualitative benefits from the strategic case

Together, these show how well the work is delivering the outcomes and objectives agreed at investment approval. Use the benefits map to check that all key benefits are included.

Next, add the metrics and targets for each benefit. These should be based on the baselined benefit profiles.

The benefits tracker should record, for each benefit:

- benefit name, identifier and classification
- how the benefit will be measured or tracked
- baseline, target and expected trajectory
- progress on realisation

When choosing metrics:

- use standardised measures for quantitative benefits (see section 7)
- track qualitative benefits using milestones or evaluation data
- include both leading indicators (like website visits) and lagging indicators (like completed applications)

Leading indicators help you spot trends early. Lagging indicators show what's already happened. Use both to get a full picture.

Tracking should be frequent enough to support decision-making. Monthly tracking is common during active realisation. In portfolios, quarterly tracking may be more appropriate.

A template benefits tracker aligned to the data standard is available in the benefits management toolkit.

9.6.3.5 Plan benefits reporting

Once the tracker is in place, the benefits manager should agree reporting arrangements with the reporting manager.

Reports usually focus on a subset of key benefits, along with an overall summary.

Tailor the format and level of detail to the audience. This could be:

- a project board
- a programme board
- a portfolio board
- an organisational board

Projects in the Government and Departmental Major Projects Portfolio must also meet GRIP reporting requirements. Try to avoid creating multiple formats for different boards. Instead, use linked reports that offer different views.

All reports should include:

- an overall view of benefits realisation, grouped by Green Book classification
- progress towards headline benefits agreed at investment approval

Reports can be visual or numerical, depending on board preferences.

You can also include progress on the most critical benefits, both quantitative and qualitative. These are often the benefits linked directly to objectives in the benefits map. If there are negative impacts that need tracking, these can be included too.

Report formats are usually set centrally, but make sure they:

- give a balanced view of benefits realisation
- meet the needs of the board or audience
- highlight issues clearly so action can be taken

9.6.3.6 Plan for review and evaluation

Planning for review and evaluation is an important part of benefits realisation planning.

Reviews help give stakeholders confidence that benefits are being delivered. They also give the team a chance to reflect, spot issues, celebrate success and learn lessons.

Initial plans for review and evaluation should be included in the benefits management framework. These should be revisited to check they are still appropriate and updated as necessary.

Next, agree:

- when reviews and evaluations should happen
- who should be involved

Timing is important. Reviews should give a clear picture of progress and be scheduled so their findings are useful. Make sure they don't overlap or duplicate evaluation activities. Work with the evaluation team to coordinate plans.

It is key to ensure that the timing of reviews contributes to, and does not cut across or duplicate, plans for evaluation. Plans should therefore be developed in consultation with the evaluation team and activities scheduled accordingly.

Internal review

The post-implementation review is the main type of internal review for programmes and projects. It's carried out for the senior responsible owner to confirm that the investment is delivering the expected benefits. It also captures lessons learned to inform future work.

Periodic reviews are used in portfolios to check progress on benefits realisation. They help ensure that benefits are being delivered as planned and allow for early intervention if needed.

A one-off review can be held when benefits are off track. They help identify issues and agree actions to get delivery back on course.

Lessons learned reviews should be scheduled at key points during delivery and before closure. They help teams reflect on what worked well and what could be improved.

External review

The main type of external review is the Gate 5 assurance review. This looks at operations and benefits realisation and is usually scheduled before handover to operations. It can be repeated as necessary and it can also be used in portfolios. See Section 2.4.2.3 for more on Gate 5 reviews.

Review plans should be agreed with the portfolio director or senior responsible owner. They should be included in the benefits realisation plan and in the integrated approval and assurance plan for the work as a whole.

9.6.3.7 Plan for benefits handover to operations

The final element of benefits realisation planning is to plan for handover of benefits ownership and realisation activities to operations.

How and when this happens depends on the nature of the work and the delivery approach.

Sequential or predictive delivery

In sequential or predictive delivery, benefits are often realised after implementation. Benefits owners may already be part of the operational team. If they are not, ownership must be transferred before the programme or project closes.

Realisation activities, including tracking and reporting, should also be handed over to operations before closure. This ensures continuity and avoids gaps in responsibility.

Modular, incremental or iterative delivery

In modular, incremental or iterative delivery, benefits are realised progressively. Ownership is usually embedded in operations and handed over as each cycle of activity completes.

Tracking and reporting often continue within the programme, project or portfolio until the work closes. At that point, any remaining realisation activities, including tracking and reporting, should be handed over to operations.

Planning the handover

Planning should set include:

- when the handover is expected to happen
- how it will be managed
- who needs to be involved

Work with benefit owners to agree the handover arrangements. The aim is to ensure a smooth transition of responsibility and continuity in benefits realisation, tracking, reporting and review, especially after the work closes.

See Section 10 for more on handover.

Section 10: Realising benefits

10.1 Purpose of work to realise benefits

Benefits realisation is designed to ensure that the changes delivered by a portfolio, programme or project result in the benefits promised in the investment case.

10.2 Key points

What to consider

- Has the benefits realisation plan been shared? Are the key people engaged?
- Are benefits realisation activities being delivered as planned?
- Are benefits being realised as planned? Are negative impacts being managed?
- Is benefits tracking and reporting working as planned?
- Is further action needed to address risks, issues or opportunities?
- When should benefits realisation move to operations?

Key activities

- Engage people in benefits realisation
- Track benefits realisation activities and outcomes against plan
- Report on benefits realisation
- Act promptly to address risks, issues and opportunities
- Hand over benefits realisation to operations

Key products

- Benefits tracker
- Benefits reports
- Benefits handover documentation, including updated benefits profiles, register and realisation plan

10.3 Why is work to realise benefits important?

Change doesn't automatically lead to benefits. People may resist change if they see it as disruptive or threatening. Even when change is welcome, people often need help to understand and use new services or ways of working.

Benefits realisation helps make change stick. It encourages adoption, tracks progress and tackles anything that's stopping benefits from being fully delivered. It also helps make sure that objectives are met and the expected social value is achieved throughout the life of the solution.

10.4 What is involved in realising benefits?

Realising benefits means managing a set of activities that help ensure benefits are delivered as planned.

The starting point is the benefits realisation plan (see Section 9). Everyone involved in delivering it – including delivery, change, communications and reporting teams, benefits owners and others – needs to understand the plan and their role in it.

Change management is central to benefits realisation. Communicating with users and stakeholders helps promote adoption and support the changes. It also helps manage any negative impacts.

Tracking and reporting show whether activities are happening, and whether the solution is working and delivering benefits. They also provide early warning of risks, issues or opportunities, so action can be taken quickly.

Benefits can be realised at different points in the life cycle. This is especially true in agile or iterative delivery, and in programmes and portfolios, but it can also be true for other work. For example, contracted construction work can have significant benefits from the start of delivery by creating new jobs in a local area and encouraging business investment in services to support them.

Benefits realisation is usually managed by the portfolio, programme or project team. But in some cases – especially when benefits are realised after the work has closed – it may be managed by operational teams.

Handover to operations is a key part of benefits realisation. It ensures that benefits continue to be owned, tracked and delivered for as long as needed.

10.5 Who is involved in realising benefits?

The **portfolio, programme or project manager**, as appropriate, is responsible for overseeing benefits realisation, reporting to the senior responsible owner, until responsibility is handed over to operations. At this point an appropriate senior manager in the sponsoring body should be made responsible for overseeing benefits realisation for as long as it continues.

This could be a senior manager in operations or in a corporate or policy function. Ultimately, the accounting officer in the sponsoring body is accountable for ensuring that benefits are realised as planned.

In a portfolio, cross-portfolio realisation activities are overseen by the **portfolio manager**, who may lead activities or delegate them to the **portfolio benefits manager**. Detailed planning activities are normally carried out at programme and/or project level, with accountability held by the relevant senior responsible owner and responsibility held by the programme or project manager respectively.

Where a **benefits manager** has been appointed, day to day responsibility for managing benefits realisation activities is usually delegated to them.

Benefits owners should play a leading role in realisation activities for the benefits they own and in tracking realisation and recording it in the benefits tracker.

Change managers and **communications managers** also play a key role in supporting adoption and use of the solution and helping stakeholders gain the expected benefits from it, and should be involved in planning and carrying out these activities.

Other members of the team, for example project managers and commercial managers, can also be involved in work to realise benefits and to address any issues or opportunities arising.

The **reporting manager** should be involved in defining benefits reporting and managing it as part of wider reporting.

10.6 Key activities in realising benefits

10.6.1 Overview

Benefits realisation activities help make sure that promised benefits are not only delivered, but sustained and optimised to create the greatest social value.

Engaging with users, listening to feedback and adapting activities to meet their needs are all critical. Tracking and reporting also play a key role. They show how well the solution is working, highlight positive and negative impacts, and give early warning of problems.

By this stage, the main products should already be in place. These include:

- the benefits realisation plan
- the benefits tracker
- benefits reporting tools
- benefits profiles
- the benefits register

- the benefits management framework

Before handing over to operations, check that everything is working as intended and that documents are up to date with the latest information.

10.6.2 Engage people in benefit realisation

Benefits realisation depends on good communication and engagement.

Everyone involved needs to understand the benefits realisation plan and their role in delivering it.

Users and stakeholders also need to understand:

- what the change means for them
- how they can help
- how to give feedback

The approach to engagement will depend on the nature of the work. For example, launching a new internal digital service may involve:

- direct communications
- user training
- workshops to gather feedback
- people on site to support users and troubleshoot issues

Launching a new road system may require:

- communications through local news channels
- engagement with National Highways, emergency services and road user groups
- monitoring of user experience

Principles for effective engagement

Whatever the context, you should:

- plan activities carefully, so they don’t clash with busy periods or other pressures
- communicate early and often, because people rarely hear or remember messages the first time

- track user experience in different ways, and check that feedback channels are working — no complaints might mean no one found the feedback button
- act quickly to resolve problems, so they don't escalate or cause reputational damage

You can find more guidance in The Teal Book, including:

- stakeholder engagement (Chapter 26)
- communications (Chapter 27)
- managing organisational and societal change (Chapter 35)

10.6.3 Track benefits realisation against plan

Tracking benefits realisation helps you understand whether activities are happening as planned and whether benefits are being delivered.

Use the benefits realisation plan and the benefits tracker as soon as outputs go live and benefits start to be realised (see Section 9). Check also for evidence of any negative impacts.

Change adoption, especially behaviour change, can take time. Allow space for benefits to emerge. Leading indicators are useful early on, as they show how users are responding. Lagging indicators will show whether benefits are being delivered.

If feedback indicates a concern, you can add extra measures to understand and track the issue. For example, a spike in password reset requests might suggest users are struggling to access a new system.

If tracking shows that activities are off track or benefits are not being realised as expected, escalate this to the relevant manager, usually the portfolio, programme or project manager, and include it in reporting (see Section 10.6.4).

Section 11: Reviewing benefits

11.1 Purpose of reviewing benefits

Benefits reviews help you understand how well a benefit is being realised and what impact it's having on the agreed objectives.

They provide assurance that benefits are on track and highlight where further action may be needed. Reviews also support wider evaluation and help teams learn lessons to improve future delivery.

11.2 Key points

What to consider

- When should reviews be scheduled to be most useful? How do they contribute to evaluation?
- Are there other reasons to hold a review, for example realisation is significantly off track?
- How should findings be presented and to whom?
- What actions should be taken in consequence?
- Are further reviews needed, for example to check on progress?
- What lessons can be learned from realisation and how can they best be captured and shared?

Key activities

- Schedule reviews in line with plans and to complement evaluation
- Prepare for reviews, providing access to people and data and other support as necessary
- Manage reviews
- Share review findings and lessons and act on them

Key products

- Benefits review reports
- Lessons learned report

11.3 Why is reviewing benefits important?

The main aim of a benefits review is to understand how effectively benefits are being realised and how this supports the agreed objectives.

Reviews give confidence when benefits are on track and flag issues when they're not, so action can be taken.

They also support policy evaluation and help show how public money is being used. Reviews capture lessons learned, which can be shared and used to improve future benefits management and delivery.

11.4 What is involved in reviewing benefits?

As explained in Section 9, reviews can take different forms depending on the nature of the work and its lifecycle. They can be carried out by internal or external teams.

Reviews should be planned and scheduled as part of benefits realisation. Include them in the benefits realisation plan and the integrated assurance and approvals plan. Make sure they're aligned with evaluation plans.

The focus and format of a review depends on its purpose and timing.

In portfolios:

- periodic internal reviews are used to check ongoing benefits realisation
- one-off reviews can be commissioned by the portfolio director if benefits are off track
- external Gate 5 assurance reviews can be used to provide independent scrutiny of benefits management and realisation

In programmes and projects:

- internal reviews can be commissioned to assess benefits realisation, especially where delivery is progressive or issues need deeper understanding
- a post-implementation review should be commissioned by the senior responsible owner before closure. This confirms whether the investment is delivering the expected benefits and captures lessons learned. Findings are included in the closure report, with recommendations for follow-up
- a Gate 5 assurance review usually follows the post-implementation review. It checks readiness for handover and benefits realisation, and can be repeated during operations to assess ongoing delivery

Lessons learned reviews are another type of internal review. These can be held at any time but are usually planned for the end of a sprint, phase or before closure.

More information on Gate 5 and other assurance reviews is in Section 3 and in the Assurance Toolkit. For evaluation, see the Magenta Book. For lessons learned, see Chapter 38 of The Teal Book.

11.5 Who is involved in reviewing benefits?

The **portfolio, programme or project manager**, as appropriate, is accountable for overseeing benefits review. Normally, however, review activities are delegated.

In a portfolio, cross-portfolio review activities are overseen by the **portfolio manager**, who may lead activities or delegate them to the portfolio benefits manager.

Detailed review activities are normally carried out at programme and/or project level, with responsibility held by the relevant senior responsible owner and/or programme or project manager respectively.

Where a **benefits manager** has been appointed, day to day responsibility for planning review activities and leading work on lessons learned is usually delegated to them.

Internal team members can be involved in conducting internal reviews, including post implementation reviews. Gate 5 reviews are externally led, either by a NISTA-appointed team (for projects and programmes in the Government Major Projects Portfolio) or by the sponsoring body for others.

Evaluation is usually conducted by specialist analysts in the evaluation team, which usually sits outside the immediate team.

Benefits owners should be involved in benefits reviews in relation to the benefits they own and in lessons learned activities.

Other members of the team who have been involved in benefits realisation work should contribute to benefits reviews. They should also be involved in lessons learned activities.

11.6 Key activities in reviewing benefits

11.6.1 Overview

Reviewing benefits involves scheduling, preparing, managing the review itself, and sharing findings and lessons learned.

The benefits management framework should set out expected review and evaluation arrangements. These should be reflected in the benefits realisation plan and the evaluation plan. In some cases, a joint plan may be developed if benefits realisation and evaluation are closely aligned.

Work closely with the planning team to make sure reviews and evaluation activities complement each other and don't overlap.

11.6.2 Schedule reviews

The benefits realisation plan should include a schedule of review activities. Review the timing regularly and adjust if needed, especially if reviews are linked to milestones or phases of work.

Allow enough time after implementation for benefits to be realised before starting substantial review or evaluation activity. Reviews should be timed so they can show meaningful change in benefits realisation. They should also be able to capture any negative impacts.

When scheduling reviews:

- avoid busy periods and space reviews sensibly to reduce pressure on the team
- give plenty of notice for external reviews, especially Gate 5 reviews managed by NISTA — early liaison with your central portfolio team and NISTA lead is essential
- agree internal reviewers early so time can be protected in diaries

How long a review should take is determined by the work involved and the kind of review:

- a gateway review is likely to take between 3-5 consecutive days - your organisation or NISTA can advise on this
- an internal review can be scheduled over a given period or conducted over time
- a lessons learned review is often best run as a short workshop for a couple of hours, with follow-up activities as needed

Once dates are agreed, try to stick to them. Rearranging reviews can cause delays, especially if the team can't be reassembled quickly.

11.6.3 Prepare for reviews

Good preparation helps the review team work efficiently and reach clear findings.

Provide a well-organised pack of key benefits documents in advance. This should include:

- the benefits management framework
- benefits profiles
- the benefits register
- the benefits realisation plan
- the tracker and reporting templates

For larger reviews, hold a planning meeting with the review team. This helps them:

- understand the work
- agree the focus of the review
- decide what to review and who to interview

Confirm logistics early, especially for external reviews. This includes:

- whether the review is online or in person
- access to meeting rooms or site visits
- access to secure data or systems
- local support on the day

Agree clear terms of reference and set out the schedule and logistics. Confirm these with the review lead.

11.6.4 Manage reviews

Once the review starts, the review lead manages day-to-day activities. Some logistical support may be needed — for example, arranging interviews or site visits.

Set up regular check-ins with the review team to:

- make sure the review is on track
- answer questions
- understand emerging findings

For Gate 5 reviews, the senior responsible owner or portfolio director should attend daily feedback sessions. Schedule these in advance.

11.6.5 Share and act on findings

After the review, the review team should write up the findings and agree them with the senior responsible owner or portfolio director.

Share the findings and recommendations with the relevant governance board and agree follow-up actions.

For post-implementation reviews, feed the findings into the Gate 5 review. Both sets of findings should be reflected in the closure report.

For lessons learned reviews, record the findings in a report or on the lessons learned register. Share them with the team and others to support ongoing benefits realisation and future planning.

If further reviews are recommended, add them to the benefits realisation plan and the integrated assurance and approvals plan.

Part D: Closing benefits management

Overview

An organised approach to closing benefits management is important. It makes sure that:

- benefits management activities are properly completed
- benefits are realised as far as they can be
- information on benefits and benefits management is captured, shared and stored appropriately

Above all, work to close benefits management provides a clear account of what benefits have been realised from the work and any lessons for the future.

Closing benefits management involves two main activities, shown in Figure D.1 and covered in the rest of Part D:

- closing individual benefits (Section 12)
- closing the benefits management framework (Section 13)

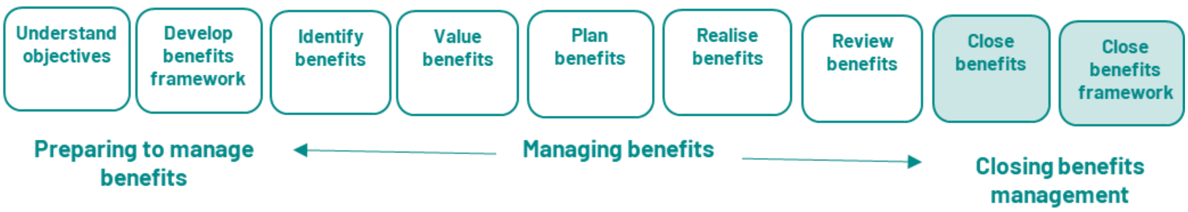

Figure D.1 Overview of activities in closing benefits

In a portfolio

Benefits management in a portfolio is usually cyclical. As individual benefits are delivered by programmes and projects, the position on benefits across the portfolio is reviewed. New objectives and outcomes can then be set for the next cycle of work.

The benefits management framework should also be reviewed and updated at this point and the previous version closed and stored.

In a programme or project

Benefits management in programmes and projects is progressive, designed to achieve one or more specific objectives. Individual benefits are usually delivered over time, sometimes well after the work has been completed and closed. Each benefit is closed once it has been realised.

The benefits management framework stays in place to support benefits realisation, including in operations. When it is no longer needed, it is closed.

Section 12: Closing benefits

12.1 Purpose of closing benefits

Closing benefits once they've been realised helps make sure the position is properly recorded and that monitoring only continues for as long as it's needed.

12.2 Key points

What to consider

- Are there agreed criteria for closing benefits?
- Does realisation of the benefit to date meet the criteria?
- Do the benefits manager and benefit owner both agree that the benefit can be closed?
- Has all benefits realisation data been properly recorded?
- Are there lessons to be drawn to support future benefits management?

Key activities

- Confirm criteria for closing benefits
- Review benefit realisation against criteria and agree whether or not to close it
- Record the decision and realisation data in the benefits profile and register
- Capture lessons learned in the relevant lessons register
- Communicate the decision and outcome, and conclude any related activities
- When all benefits have been closed, close the benefits management register and framework

Key products

- Closure records in the benefits register and relevant benefits profiles
- Lessons from benefits management recorded in the lessons register

12.3 Why is closing benefits important?

A clear process for closing benefits supports efficient benefits management. It helps:

- confirm when a benefit has been delivered
- record why and when it was closed
- maintain traceability and accountability
- stop monitoring and reporting activities when they're no longer needed

12.4 What is involved in closing benefits?

There should be an agreed process for closing benefits, including who approves closure. This should be set out in the benefits management framework.

You should also plan how and when benefits will be closed. Closure criteria can be shared across different benefits or tailored to each one. The criteria should be recorded in the benefit profile.

When a benefit is ready to be closed:

- the benefit owner and benefits manager should review the evidence against the agreed criteria
- any lessons learned should be captured
- the benefit owner should record the actual benefit realised and recommend closure in the benefit profile
- the benefits manager should seek any further approvals needed and record the decision in the benefits register
- lessons learned should be added to the lessons register

Once all benefits have been closed, the benefits management framework should be closed (see Section 13).

12.5 Who is involved in closing benefits?

The **benefit owner** is normally accountable, at this point, for realising and reporting on the relevant benefit. They are also accountable for deciding, with the benefits manager, when to close the benefit.

The **benefits manager**, or the manager in the sponsoring body overseeing benefits management in operations, is responsible for ensuring that benefits are closed in the right way. They agree with the benefit owner when to close an individual benefit.

Business change managers can also be involved in providing evidence on the adoption and maturity of business change as part of benefits realisation, to support decisions to close a benefit,

Analysts are often closely involved in work to review and evaluate benefits realisation in line with the evaluation plan and should be consulted on any proposal to close a benefit. This is essential to ensure that the necessary data has been generated to support evaluation before a benefit is formally closed.

The **portfolio director, senior responsible owner or agreed business owner**, for example the relevant operations director, should always be informed when a benefit is to be closed and may need to be consulted, depending on the closure process agreed.

The process for closing individual benefits should also set out if others should also be consulted, for example key stakeholders.

12.6 Key activities in closing benefits

12.6.1 Overview

Closing a benefit is the final step in managing it. The timing depends on the nature of the benefit. Some are realised early in delivery, while others continue long after the work has moved to operations.

A benefit should only be closed when the benefits manager and benefit owner agree it has been realised and no longer needs to be monitored. A benefit is not closed just because the work to implement the change is complete. Some benefits need to be tracked throughout the life of the solution, sometimes even through to disposal.

In portfolios and many programmes, benefits are closed on a rolling basis. Benefits management continues until all benefits are closed or, in a portfolio, until a new delivery cycle begins and the framework is refreshed.

Benefits closure is sometimes overlooked, especially when benefits are realised long after the work has moved into operations. But it's a vital part of good benefits management. It helps ensure that:

- benefits realisation and review activities are completed properly
- information on realisation and closure is recorded accurately
- evidence is captured to support evaluation
- lessons are shared to improve future benefits management

Agree a clear process and defined responsibilities for closing benefits after handover to operations. If there are multiple benefits, it can help to set up a regular review cycle (for example, quarterly or annually), to support closure, lessons learned and reporting.

12.6.2 Confirm the criteria for closing benefits

Closure criteria should be agreed during benefits planning and recorded in each benefit profile. These criteria can be shared across multiple benefits or tailored to individual ones.

Examples of closure criteria can be that:

- the benefit has been fully realised and further monitoring is unlikely to add value
- the benefit has been partly realised over a set period and is unlikely to increase further, for example because the activity generating it has ended
- the benefit is being realised on an ongoing basis and will be monitored through operational performance reporting

Consult the evaluation team when setting closure criteria. This helps make sure the evidence needed for evaluation is available before the benefit is closed.

12.6.3 Review and decide whether to close the benefit

The benefits owner and benefits manager should review the benefit against the agreed criteria and decide whether it's ready to be closed. They should also consider any lessons learned.

If the benefit meets the criteria, or if there's a valid reason to close it early (such as the work being terminated and the benefit cannot be realised), the benefit owner should record the recommendation to close in the benefit profile.

The benefits manager should then seek any further approvals required, following the process set out in the benefits management framework.

12.6.4 Record the decision and data

Once the decision to close a benefit is made, record it in both the benefit profile and the benefits register. This should include:

- the actual benefit realised
- the reason for closure
- the date and who made the decision

The benefits manager should also make sure any lessons are added to the lessons register.

Keep closed benefits on the register. This supports traceability (see Chapter 23) and helps with future evaluation and audit.

12.6.5 Communicate the decision and outcome, and close any related activities

Share the decision to close the benefit with everyone involved in related activities. This includes the portfolio director or senior responsible owner and the relevant governance board.

Wrap up any remaining realisation or monitoring activities. Share information about the benefits delivered and recognise the work of those involved. Make sure any lessons learned are also shared.

Section 13: Closing the benefits management framework

13.1 Purpose of closing the benefits management framework

Work to close the benefits management framework ensures that benefits management activities are completed or merged into operations, and the final position on benefits is recorded, shared and stored for future use.

13.2 Key points

What to consider

- Have all benefits management activities been completed or merged into operations?
- Have all benefits been closed or merged into operations?
- Has all information on benefits been recorded and shared?
- Are there lessons to share for future benefits management?

Key activities

- Conclude any remaining benefits management activities or ensure they are fully merged into operations
- Check all benefits are closed or are fully merged into operations
- Produce and share a summary of benefits realised and any lessons for the future
- Store the benefits summary with the benefits register
- Add any lessons learned in the relevant lessons register
- Close the benefits management register and framework

Key products

- Summary of benefits realised to be stored with the benefits register and benefits management framework, once closed
- Lessons from benefits management added to the lessons register

13.3 Why is closing the benefits management framework important?

It's important to have a clear end point for benefits management activities. Otherwise, they can linger on when they are no longer needed or fade away without being properly closed down.

A clear process for closing the benefits management framework makes sure that:

- activities end at the right point
- people are told that they have ended
- information is fully captured.

The final benefits management summary is particularly important as it records the story of the benefits achieved and any lessons learned for the future.

13.4 What is involved in closing the benefits management framework?

The benefits management framework should set out what needs to be in place before it can be closed. This depends on the kind of work involved and how benefits are realised, For example:

- where benefits are realised quickly during or after implementation, the framework could say that all benefits should be realised and closed before the framework itself is closed
- where benefits management activities have ended but operational benefits need tracking over a longer period, tracking and reporting could be moved to operational management, and the benefits management framework closed

Once the requirements are in place, the key activities are to:

- close down any remaining benefits management activities, where these are not embedded in operations
- ensure benefits data is up to date
- produce and share a summary report and capture any lessons learnt
- close and store the benefits register and the benefits management framework

13.5 Who is involved in closing the benefits management framework?

The **portfolio director, senior responsible owner** or **agreed business owner** is accountable for deciding when to conclude benefits management and close the framework. They should approve the final benefits summary.

The **benefits manager**, or the manager overseeing benefits in operations, as agreed, is responsible for recommending closure of the benefits management framework when the conditions have been met. The relevant manager is also responsible for the closure activities.

Analysts involved in evaluation should be consulted in deciding when benefits management activities can end or move fully into operations. They should also be involved in work to update and summarise benefits data, in line with the evaluation plan, and should agree the final summary.

Other stakeholders may need to be consulted. These should be set out in the framework.

13.6 Key activities in closing the benefits management framework

13.6.1 Check benefits management is complete

First, check the criteria for closing benefits management. These should be set out in the benefits management framework. This normally includes checking with benefits owners and other stakeholders that:

- benefits management activities are fully completed or are embedded in operations, as agreed in the framework
- benefits are closed, or their realisation is being managed as part of operations, as agreed in the framework
- evaluation needs have been or are being met, in line with the evaluation plan

The benefits manager or other manager overseeing benefits should consult with the relevant senior officer, for example the portfolio director, senior responsible owner or operations director, on whether the time is right to close benefits management.

13.6.2 Record and share the final position on benefits realised

Once the decision to close benefits management has been taken in principle, the next step is to make sure the benefits register is up –to-date and provides a full picture of the benefits achieved. It should also say where, for example, benefits or negative impacts continue to be realised, for example in operations.

The benefits manager or other agreed manager should produce a summary report setting out:

- the decision to close benefits management, and the reasons for it
- the benefits achieved, using the categories in the business case, and how these compare with the projections agreed at investment approval
- any differences and the reasons for them
- any negative impacts and how these have been minimised or managed
- any lessons to share for the future

The summary should be approved by the accountable senior officer, for example the portfolio director, senior responsible owner or operational director.

It should then be shared with benefits owners and other key stakeholders as set out in the benefits management framework. Data for projects in the Government Major Projects Portfolio should also be shared with the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority.

Any lessons identified should also be included in the lessons register for the work or, where it has already been closed, added as an annex.

13.6.3 Close the benefits register and benefits management framework

The benefits register and benefits management framework can then be formally closed and stored with other information relating to the work. Store the benefits summary with them, either separately or as an annex.

Where benefits realisation continues as part of operations, the benefits register and benefits management framework should be dated, closed and stored with the benefits summary. New versions of the framework and register can then be opened for operational use, carrying forward information as necessary to ensure continuity in operations and for evaluation.

Make sure all data and documents are retained in line with your organisation's information retention policy.

Part E: Checklist for benefits managers

When	What	Things to check
Policy / concept Before the work begins	Understand objectives	Objectives and outcomes for the work are clearly defined and agreed
		Users and stakeholders have been identified and involved in shaping the proposal
		A theory of change has been developed to support the expected outcomes
Feasibility Identifying options for a solution	Establish the benefits management framework	A benefits management framework has been established and embedded in governance
		Roles and responsibilities for benefits management are clearly defined
		Methods, tools and techniques for benefits management are agreed
	Identify benefits	Objectives, outcomes and enabling outputs are mapped to potential benefits
		Benefits are classified in line with Green Book guidance
		Benefits are recorded in a benefits register
Appraisal Identifying a preferred solution	Value benefits	Benefit owners are assigned for each benefit
		Benefit profiles are developed, including baselines, targets and tracking metrics
		Benefits are quantified where possible, and qualitative benefits are recorded
		Assumptions, dependencies and risks are documented
		Benefits are assessed alongside costs using sensitivity analysis

Definition Defining the solution and procuring any suppliers	Plan benefits	Benefit owners have agreed final benefit profiles and tracking metrics
		Work and change activities needed to realise benefits are identified
		A benefits realisation plan is developed and integrated with the delivery plan
Delivery Delivering outputs and preparing for change	Realise benefits	Benefits realisation activities are embedded in delivery and operational plans
		Benefits tracking is in place and used to monitor progress
		Corrective action is taken if benefits realisation is off track
		Benefits ownership and handover responsibilities are included in the transition plan
Operation Using the solution as part of business as usual	Review benefits	Reviews are scheduled to assess benefits realisation against objectives
		Ongoing benefits are tracked and reported for evaluation
	Close benefits	Closure criteria are agreed and documented in the benefits framework
		Closure decisions are approved by the benefits manager and benefit owners
		The benefits register is updated with actual benefits and lessons learned
		The benefits framework and register are closed or transferred into operations

Further reading

For more information on benefits management, see:

- The Teal Book, Chapter 19: Benefits management
- Benefits management in government collection

For more on investment appraisal, analysis, evaluation and risk, see:

- Green Book: appraisal in central government
- Aqua Book: guidance on producing quality analysis
- Magenta Book: central government guidance on evaluation
- Orange Book: management of risk – principles and concepts

For more on assurance, see:

- Infrastructure and Projects Authority Assurance Review Toolkit