

G-Cloud 15 Service Definition Document: Govforms Digital Service Builder

Service Overview

What Govforms Does

Govforms is a Digital Service Builder enabling public sector organisations to create, deploy, and manage accessible digital services without software development expertise. Users build government forms, online applications, calculators, surveys, and data management interfaces through a visual builder interface.

Key Capabilities

- Visual form and service builder with drag-and-drop components
- Integrated GOV.UK Design System and Ministry of Justice pattern library ensuring automatic accessibility compliance
- Conditional logic engine for dynamic user journeys
- REST API integration for connecting to existing departmental systems
- Multi-environment deployment (Prototype, QA, Production)
- Real-time performance analytics and audit logging
- Document generation and secure file management with virus scanning
- Review and approval workflow management
- Authentication via OIDC, AWS Cognito, or passwordless magic links
- Data feeds integration from Excel, CSV, or SharePoint sources

Target User Base

Policy teams, service designers, business analysts, and digital service managers in UK central government, local authorities, NHS organisations, and public bodies who need to deliver accessible digital services rapidly without procuring bespoke development.

Use Cases

- Citizen-facing application forms (grants, licenses, registrations)
- Internal staff workflows (approvals, case management, data collection)
- Public consultations and surveys with complex routing
- Task list-based services for multi-step processes
- Search and record management interfaces
- Calculator and eligibility checking tools

Service Levels

Availability Commitment

Govforms SLA is 99.5% uptime

Availability measured monthly across all Production environments. Pro-rate Service credits will be applied when falling below the guaranteed threshold in clips of 0.1% in uptime

Performance Metrics

- Page load time: < 3 seconds for 95th percentile
- API response time: < 500ms for internal operations
- Form submission processing: < 2 seconds
- Analytics data refresh: 30-minute delay maximum

Support Hours

- **Business hours support:** Monday-Friday 09:00-17:00 GMT/BST excluding bank holidays
- **Critical incident support:** 24/7 for Production outages affecting live citizen services

Response Time Commitments

- **Critical** (Production service unavailable): 1 hour response, 4 hour resolution target
- **High** (major functionality impaired): 4 hour response, next business day resolution

target

- **Standard** (general queries, minor issues): 8 business hour response, 5 business day resolution target
- **Low** (feature requests, guidance): 2 business day response

Weekend and bank holiday support limited to critical Production incidents only.

Data Management

Backup Procedures

- **Frequency:** Continuous replication to multiple AWS availability zones; point-in-time recovery available
- **Retention:** 35-day backup retention for all environments
- **Recovery Point Objective (RPO):** < 5 minutes data loss maximum
- **Recovery Time Objective (RTO):** < 4 hours for full service restoration

Business Continuity

Infrastructure hosted across multiple AWS UK regions. Automatic failover to secondary region if primary region experiences outage. Database replication maintains data consistency.

Disaster Recovery

- Documented DR runbooks tested quarterly
- Alternative infrastructure provisioned in secondary AWS region
- Regular restore testing validates backup integrity
- Annual DR simulation exercises

Data Location for Govforms Secure Public Cloud

All data stored exclusively in AWS UK regions (London and/or Cardiff). No data transferred outside UK jurisdiction. Compliant with data residency requirements for the UK public sector.

Data Extraction & Portability

Upon contract termination:

- Export all submission data as JSON or CSV within 5 business days
- Provide form configuration exports in JSON format
- Maintain read-only access for 30 days post-termination
- Secure data deletion certified within 90 days of exit

Onboarding & Offboarding

Setup Process

1. **Organisation provisioning** (1 business day): Library created, initial administrator account configured
2. **Authentication configuration** (2-3 business days if using OIDC/SSO): Integration with departmental identity provider
3. **User training** (1-2 weeks): Online tutorials, documentation access, optional live training sessions
4. **First service deployment** (user-driven): Prototype environment immediately available; QA and Production deployment user-controlled

Total onboarding: 1-3 weeks depending on authentication complexity and training requirements.

Migration Support

- Guidance documentation for migrating from PDF forms, legacy systems, or competitor platforms
- Template library with common government form patterns
- Bulk data import support for existing records (CSV, Excel, SharePoint)
- API integration consultancy available as optional service

Exit Procedures

1. **Notice period:** 90-day notification requested for orderly transition
2. **Data extraction:** Exports provided in open formats (JSON, CSV)
3. **Service configuration handover:** Complete form definitions, conditions, workflows exported
4. **Transition support:** 30-day read-only access; optional consultancy for migration to alternative platform
5. **Data destruction:** Certified secure deletion within 90 days; certificates provided

Documentation Handover

- Technical architecture documentation
- Integration specifications and API credentials
- User guides and training materials
- Analytics reports and usage history

Service Constraints

Planned Maintenance Windows

- **Standard maintenance:** Second Tuesday of month, 22:00-02:00 GMT/BST (4-hour window)
- **Emergency patches:** Applied outside business hours with 24-hour notice where possible
- **Advance notification:** 5 business days' notice for planned downtime via email and status page

Customisation Limitations

- Custom CSS/Sass supported; custom JavaScript requires review for security/compatibility

- GOV.UK Design System framework must be maintained for accessibility compliance
- Database schema modifications not permitted (standard data model maintained for platform stability)
- Custom authentication providers must support OIDC or SAML standards

Scalability Boundaries

Service Metric	Standard Default Limit	Policy for Expansion
Daily Submissions	10,000 active submissions per service	Flexible; higher volumes require an infrastructure capacity review.
Service Scale	500 pages per individual service	Flexible; but we recommend optimizing user journeys for very large services.
API Responsiveness	30-second timeout	Flexible external system integration timing can be adjusted upon request.
Individual File Size	5GB	Flexible with consultancy for capacity review and technical testing.
Number of files	100 files per submission	Flexible with consultancy for capacity review and technical testing.

Usage Restrictions

- Services must comply with UK public sector accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1 AA minimum)
- Email sending limits apply (GOV.UK Notify quotas; AWS SES limits)

Technical Requirements

User Device Requirements

- **Operating Systems:** Windows 10+, macOS 10.14+, iOS 13+, Android 8+, ChromeOS
- **Browsers:** Latest two versions of Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge; Internet Explorer not supported
- **Screen Resolution:** Minimum 320px width (mobile-first responsive design)
- **JavaScript:** Required for builder interface; citizen-facing forms function with progressive enhancement

Network Requirements

- **Minimum bandwidth:** 1 Mbps for form building; 512 Kbps for citizen form completion
- **Ports:** HTTPS (443) outbound access required
- **Latency:** < 200ms recommended for optimal builder experience
- **Firewall exceptions:** None required for cloud-hosted service; API integrations may require allow listing AWS IP ranges

Browser Compatibility

Form builder and admin interfaces:

- Chrome 100+, Firefox 100+, Edge 100+, Safari 15+

Citizen-facing published forms:

- All modern browsers including mobile browsers
- Tested against GOV.UK browser support matrix
- Graceful degradation for older browsers (functionality maintained, enhanced features disabled)

Integration Capabilities

- **REST APIs:** Standard HTTP methods (GET, POST, PUT, PATCH, DELETE) with custom headers and authentication
- **Authentication protocols:** OIDC, OAuth 2.0, SAML 2.0, AWS Cognito
- **File storage:** SharePoint Online, AWS S3, Google Cloud Storage, Azure Blob Storage
- **Email/SMS:** GOV.UK Notify, AWS SES integration
- **Data feeds:** Excel, CSV file uploads or SharePoint document libraries
- **Webhooks:** Outbound HTTP requests to departmental systems

Accessibility

- Built on GOV.UK Frontend framework (WCAG 2.1 AA compliant)
- Screen reader compatible (JAWS, NVDA, VoiceOver tested)

- Keyboard navigation fully supported
- Automated accessibility testing integrated into builder

Security

Security Controls

- **Infrastructure:** AWS cloud services with inherent physical and network security controls
- **Application security:** OWASP Top 10 mitigation; regular penetration testing; vulnerability scanning
- **Access control:** Role-based permissions (Administrator, Designer, Read-only, QA Tester, Live Data Access)
- **Multi-factor authentication:** Mandatory for users with Production data access; optional for others
- **Session management:** Configurable timeout periods; automatic logout on inactivity

Security Certifications

- **ISO 27001:** Information Security Management System certified by Citation ISO Certification and certificate number 486492025
- **Cyber Essentials Plus:** UK NCSC scheme certified by Citation Cyber, certificate number aa3f401c2-0d8e-4f42-904b-6eb1574b2acd and renews annually on 2026-10-06
- **AWS compliance inheritance:** SOC 2 Type II, ISO 27017/27018 (cloud security standards)

Encryption Standards

- **Data in transit:** TLS 1.2+ with strong cipher suites (AES-256-GCM); HSTS enforced
- **Data at rest:** AES-256 encryption for database storage and file uploads
- **Key management:** AWS KMS with customer-managed keys available for sensitive organisations

- **Password storage:** bcrypt hashing with per-user salts; minimum 10-character passwords enforced

Compliance Frameworks

- **UK GDPR:** Data processing agreements provided; DPO contact available; privacy by design principles
- **Service Standard:** Aligns with UK Government Service Standard and Technology Code of Practice
- **Accessibility:** WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliant; Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018

Virus Scanning

- AWS GuardDuty malware detection for all file uploads
- Real-time scanning before file storage
- Infected files quarantined and user notified
- Face-blurring capability for images containing personal data

Audit & Monitoring

- Comprehensive audit log of all user actions, form submissions, and system events
- 12-month audit log retention (longer retention available)
- Real-time security monitoring and alerting
- Regular security reviews and third-party penetration testing

Support & Management

After-Sales Support Structure

Support Channels:

- **Email:** support@govforms.co.uk (monitored during business hours)

- **Online portal:** Ticket submission and tracking system
- **Documentation:** Searchable knowledge base and video tutorials
- **Community forum:** Peer support and best practice sharing [if applicable]

User Access Levels:

- **Administrators:** Full library settings and user management access
- **Live Data Access:** Production deployment and citizen data access
- **Designer + Analytics + QA:** Service building and QA deployment
- **Designer + Analytics:** Service building without deployment rights
- **Read-only:** View-only access for stakeholders
- **External QA Tester:** QA environment access only (no builder access)

Incident Management Process

1. **Detection:** User-reported via support channels or automated monitoring alerts
2. **Classification:** Severity assigned (Critical/High/Standard/Low)
3. **Response:** Acknowledgement within SLA timeframe
4. **Investigation:** Root cause analysis and workaround identification
5. **Resolution:** Fix deployed and user notified
6. **Post-incident review:** Major incidents reviewed; improvements identified

Status Communication:

- Public status page showing real-time service health
- Email notifications for planned maintenance and unplanned outages
- In-platform notices for upcoming changes

Change Management Procedures

- **Platform updates:** Deployed fortnightly to Prototype; monthly to QA/Production environments
- **Advance notice:** 5 business days for changes affecting user workflows

- **Release notes:** Published with each update detailing new features, fixes, changes
- **Rollback capability:** Critical changes reversible within 4 hours if issues detected
- **User testing:** New features available in Prototype before Production release

Customer Success Support

- Onboarding guidance and training materials
- Best practice documentation and design patterns
- Template library for common government services
- Optional consultancy for complex integrations (separate engagement)

Escalation Paths

1. Support team (technical queries, how-to questions)
2. Engineering team (platform bugs, integration issues)
3. Architecture team (infrastructure, security, complex technical issues)
4. Management escalation: Account manager for service delivery concerns

Performance Monitoring

- Real-time dashboards for service health
- Proactive monitoring of API integrations and third-party dependencies
- Capacity planning and scaling alerts
- Quarterly service review meetings with Administrator-level users

Differentiation for Public Sector

Government-Specific Design

Unlike generic form builders, Govforms is purpose-built for UK public sector requirements:

- Native GOV.UK Design System implementation (not retrofitted templates)
- Understanding of Government Service Standard assessment criteria

- Built-in patterns for common government journeys (eligibility checking, task lists, find-a-record interfaces)

Accessibility First

Accessibility compliance is automatic, not optional:

- Every component tested with assistive technologies
- Automated accessibility checks prevent non-compliant configurations
- Meets Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018 by default

Data Sovereignty

- UK-only data storage with no international data transfers
- Compliance with UK public sector data protection requirements

No-Code Empowerment

Policy and service design teams can build and iterate services without:

- Procuring development agencies for minor changes
- Waiting for IT department capacity
- Technical coding skills or HTML knowledge

Reduces time-to-live from months to days for typical application forms.

Proven in Government

Currently used by UK central government departments including DEFRA, Scottish Government, Ofsted, Research England, UKRI and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government for citizen-facing and internal services.

Integration-Ready

Designed for departmental ecosystems:

- Direct integration with GOV.UK Notify (no third-party email dependencies)

- SharePoint integration for organisations using Microsoft 365
- OIDC for single sign-on with departmental identity systems
- API-first architecture for connecting to case management, CRM, and legacy systems

Analytics & Continuous Improvement

Real-time performance insights enable service teams to:

- Identify form completion bottlenecks
- Track validation error patterns for iteration
- Measure accessibility of service delivery
- Demonstrate service performance against KPIs

Supports Service Standard assessment requirement for performance data.