

The Great Reset: Why 2026 Will Redefine the Future of Facilities Management

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The FM sector is undergoing rapid change. For years, we have been caught between rising expectations, shrinking workforces, and a patchwork of legacy technologies, yet still expected to deliver seamless, safe, frictionless environments with customer and tenant experience at the heart. But 2026 will mark the moment where FM starts leading and taking charge.

The insights from [askporter](#)'s recent UK FM Market Research Report reveal a sector under sustained pressure, yet one with extraordinary opportunity. The year ahead will separate those organisations that evolve into intelligent, trusted, high-performing partners from those that remain anchored to outdated operating models.

Here is what I believe will define the next chapter in UK facilities management.

1. Artificial Intelligence Will Shift from Buzzword to Operational Backbone

AI has often been spoken of as a future ambition. In FM, it is quickly becoming a present necessity.

With 73% of teams caught in reactive firefighting, AI will become the capability that transforms how organisations prioritise tasks, allocate resources, and prevent issues before they escalate.

In 2026, AI will not be an add-on.

It will:

- Predict bottlenecks
- Orchestrate tasks in real time
- Prevent SLA breaches
- Provide instant clarity to operational teams and clients

The question is no longer “Should FM use AI?” It is “How intelligently can AI direct our daily operations?” The organisations that lean into this shift will gain resilience, capacity, and competitive advantage.

2. The Labour Crisis Will Accelerate the Rise of the Digital Co-Worker

The UK FM workforce is ageing, overstretched, and increasingly difficult to recruit. 68% of leaders struggle to hire skilled staff, and 76% are concerned about losing critical institutional knowledge.

These pressures will collide in 2026. This is the year technology becomes a genuine digital co-worker, capturing expertise, supporting training, automating repetitive tasks, and protecting FM organisations from knowledge drain.

This is not automation replacing people. It is automation safeguarding the profession.

FM has always relied on human judgment, experience, and craftsmanship. Technology will increasingly serve to amplify those strengths, not diminish them.

3. Bespoke Technology and Data Openness Will Empower Teams

The most effective FM teams will have the ability to create a specialist, dedicated communications and triage product, like askporter; designed to gather information from end-users with far less friction and in the way that suits them. This customisation and ability to adapt to local processes will lead to faster operational workflows that work for the businesses that use it.

With askporter’s recent research citing that 75% of Facilities Managers are experiencing an operational disconnect that interrupts technology integration. This crisis is not due to a lack of solutions, but a failure of existing building systems to communicate, creating costs and frustration for both staff and end-users.

The core principle is to use technology to eliminate the repetitive, predictable, or manual actions that add operational drag. This informs every design decision, from conversation flows to how tasks are pushed into the FM’s systems.

If FM teams are to have the freedom to choose their best-in-class stack, then interoperability is critical. Data must move cleanly and predictably between systems without expensive bespoke work.

This is why FMs should ensure their system can easily connect with others using open APIs and proven integration methods. Crucially, it should work *alongside* other specialised systems, filling in the gaps, rather than attempting to replace them all.

The 75% operational disconnect is not just an inconvenience; it is a strategic threat leading to spiraling costs, accelerated asset decay, and a failure to meet modern ESG targets. The future of maintenance is unified data.

4. Radical Transparency Will Transform Client Relationships to Real Partnerships

Our report highlights a significant contradiction:

85% of FM leaders believe their clients have visibility into what has been completed, yet 67% say those same clients frequently threaten non-renewal over perceived service issues.

This tells us one thing: Visibility isn't enough, verifiable transparency is what matters.

In 2026, FM providers will embrace real-time, evidence-based communication:

- Photo-verified proof of work
- Live job logs
- Instant digital updates
- Transparent reporting shared directly with clients

Providers who adopt transparency will win trust and long-term partnerships. Those who do not will find themselves increasingly exposed.

5. Compliance Will Move from Box-Ticking to Continuous, Automated Assurance

FM leaders express confidence in compliance, yet the reality is stark: 44% of compliance tasks remain unautomated, creating unnecessary risk.

In 2026, compliance will shift from a manual, retrospective process to a fully integrated and automated discipline. The most forward-thinking organisations will adopt:

- Automated scheduling
- Real-time compliance alerts
- Digital evidence capture
- Integrated audit trails

This is no longer about avoiding penalties, it is about safeguarding reputation, safety, and trust.

6. Closing The Gaps of Fragmentation

Echoing our point at number three, another transformative shift will be structural. FM has traditionally oscillated between complex, expensive CAFM, BMS, IoT, HR, compliance platforms and the chaos of spreadsheets, WhatsApp messages, and email chains. In 2026, there needs to be an operational bridge between these systems and the people doing the work.

This is where most failures happen when:

- Tasks are issued, but not clearly understood
- Work is completed, but not evidenced
- Information exists, but not where decisions are made
- Clients receive reports, but not confidence

FM leaders who win in the next cycle will not be those with the most systems, but those who connect people, processes and proof into one coherent operational flow.

askporter closes this gap by acting as the intelligence and communication layer that orchestrates tasks across teams, suppliers and locations, connects to existing systems without replacing them and captures proof of work in real time.

It is about making existing FM operations finally work as intended and translating operational activity into transparent, client-ready insight

The Future of FM Is Intelligent, Integrated, and Unapologetically Human

Every insight from the report points to one conclusion: the next era of FM belongs to the organisations that embrace intelligence, transparency, and holistic integration.

Technology is not replacing the human element. It is enabling FM professionals to operate with greater clarity, confidence, and impact than ever before.

In 2026, FM will be:

- More transparent
- More predictable
- More trusted
- More efficient
- More compliant
- More resilient

- And ultimately, more human

At askporter, our mission is to empower FM leaders to shape this future, not react to it.

By providing the intelligence layer that unifies systems, automates operations, and builds trust, we help organisations redefine what excellence in FM looks like.

If 2025 was the year the sector recognised the need for change, 2026 will be the year it realises its full potential.