

Occupier Handbook

Your guide to occupying an
NHS Property Services building

A woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a dark jacket over a white shirt, is smiling and looking at a large open spiral-bound book on a desk. The background is a blurred office or storage room with shelves. The entire image has a blue tint.

2021/22

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How to Contact us

Within this section:

- Customer Support Centre
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Customer Support Centre

We provide a dedicated Customer Support Centre that can help answer any queries you have about NHS Property Services and the services we deliver.

Our Customer Support Team will take responsibility for managing your query through to resolution, including tracking your request so that you can receive an update whenever you require one.

Email: customer.service@property.nhs.uk

Phone: 0800 085 3015
Available 24/7 365 days a year

Address: Customer Support Centre
NHS Property Services Ltd
Regent House
Heaton Lane
Stockport, SK4 1BS



How to Contact us

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Facilities Management (FM) Helpdesk – 24/7 support

For any facilities management related queries, including emergencies, requests for building maintenance or to report a fault, contact our FM Helpdesks, 24/7 365 days a year.

For non-urgent or routine FM maintenance services, please visit our webpage to log a job: www.property.nhs.uk/CORE

For urgent services, please call our FM helpdesk on freephone:

0808 196 2045

Non-urgent/routine jobs – log via the new online form	Urgent requests – call the FM Helpdesk
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Additional access fob request✓ Dripping tap✓ Loose door handle✓ Minor fabric works✓ Minor landscaping works e.g. over grown bush✓ Minor pest control jobs e.g. ant infestation✓ Multiple non urgent jobs✓ One light not working✓ Single blocked toilet where other toilets available✓ Toilet not flushing✓ Upgrades to decoration/building✓ Boiler out of order✓ Shower not working if other showers available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">! Any alarm sounding! Burst pipe! Locked out of site! No water in building! No heating in the building or air conditioning down in building! Overflowing toilets threatening closure! Power failure! Severe leaks! Lift entrapment or lift stopped working! Severe structural damage! Smell of gas! Spillages! Trip hazards



How to Contact us

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Compliments and Complaints

We aim to provide a first-class service at all times but occasionally things do go wrong. When this happens, we will do our very best to put them right. If you are unhappy with our services or our facilities, we encourage you to contact us as soon as possible so that we can take action.

When customers complain, we take what they say seriously. Your feedback provides a valuable opportunity for us to improve the quality of the services we provide you.

How we handle complaints

Our complaints procedure applies to any form of complaint received.

- Once received, your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within two working days.
- Your complaint will be managed from start to finish by a single member of staff within our complaints team, who will provide you with regular progress updates.
- We aim to resolve all complaints within 20 working days. We will always aim to respond as early as possible if our investigation is complete before this.
- If we think it will take a little longer, we will keep you informed about the reason for this and when you can expect a reply.



How we resolve complaints

In every case, we actively work to try to resolve things to your satisfaction. When we think we have a resolution to your complaint, you will receive a written response detailing our investigation into the issues raised and any actions that are going to be taken as a result of the complaint.

If, after you've received a response from us, you don't feel as if your complaint has been fully resolved, you can ask for it to be escalated to a manager – simply contact our Customer Support Centre.

Logging a complaint

You can alert us to a complaint by contacting our Customer Support Centre on **0800 085 3015**. Alternatively, you can tell any member of our staff about your complaint.

Passing on compliments

We're also keen to hear about when things go well so we can make sure good performance is rewarded. Let us know if you've experienced great service, either via our Customer Support Centre or any of our staff.

2 About NHS Property Services



Within this section:

- Who are NHS Property Services
- Our Strategy

Welcome to the Occupier Handbook, a helpful guide for organisations occupying NHS Property Services (NHSPS) buildings.

We welcome your feedback and encourage you to get in touch with your comments and what you would like to see in future editions.

Please take the time to read this handbook as it will answer some of the common questions you have.

You can find out more information about our organisation by visiting our website:
www.property.nhs.uk





Who are NHS Property Services

We are a property owner, service provider and advisor, helping to shape the NHS estate of the future. As a government-owned company we have one goal: to ensure the NHS makes the right property and facilities management choices that enable excellent patient care.

Today our portfolio is one of the largest in the UK, comprising more than 3,000 properties with 7,000 occupiers across England and over 5000 staff. At a total value of more than £3.9bn, this represents about 10% of the total NHS estate.

Our properties range from listed buildings through to award-winning, state-of-the-art integrated health campuses. Few property companies have such a high level of expertise as both a landlord and a service provider.

Since NHS Property Services was established in 2013, our portfolio has been evolving. It is a period of tremendous change for the NHS. New models of care mean that properties have to deliver much more than in the past. We use our expertise in estate management and service provision to achieve the best value and cost savings possible.



Reinvestment and cost savings are vital to help health services improve, as pressure on the NHS increases. We invest in the estate to create new state-of-the-art facilities or optimise existing properties. Parts of the NHS estate have been vacant for many years and disposing of unwanted assets can lead to significant savings of taxpayers' money.



3 Occupancy charges

Within this section:

- Our approach to charging
- Paying rent and other occupancy charges

Our approach to charging

NHS Property Services, in conjunction with NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care, published a refreshed Charging Policy in 2017/18.

The Charging Policy provides clarity to NHS Property Services' occupiers on the charges payable for occupation of properties. The policy is primarily of relevance for occupiers without a formal occupation agreement in place, however the policy also includes content that applies to all occupiers.

The policy clarifies our core charging principles and outlines charges payable for occupation of NHS Property Services properties. This includes regular charges (such as rent and service charges), invoicing, VAT, capital expenditure recovery and dilapidations.

Paying rent and other occupancy charges

For further information about how we apply rent and other occupancy charges, visit www.property.nhs.uk/billing where you will find support including an interactive Annual Charging Schedule.

The Guide to Service Charges details how we apply service charges in our properties, visit www.property.nhs.uk/servicechargeguide for more information.

Charging policy

Where a customer has a documented occupation and/or FM Service Level Agreement, the provisions of those documents override any contradictory provision of the Charging Policy. Read more and download a copy; www.property.nhs.uk/about-us/policies/charging-policy/

4 Occupying an NHSPS building



Within this section:

- Occupancy Agreements
- Keeping your building information up to date
- Apply to the Vacant Space Handback Scheme

Occupancy Agreements

The Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England are supporting the implementation of occupancy agreements of NHS owned and leased properties, to improve property utilisation and value for money. Formally agreeing the occupancy of a building enables:

1. Quality patient care

It's in the best interests of patients for NHS occupiers to occupy a safe and compliant building on a secure legal footing.

2. Security of occupation

A formal agreement sets out:

- What space the occupier can exclusively use and how
- What rights occupiers have over shared or common areas
- How long the right to occupy the space lasts and how it can be terminated
- What responsibilities there are between an occupier and landlord
- What services the landlord provides to the building

Clarity on space used will also help identify vacant space which can be let or disposed of to save money and provide reinvestment in the NHS.



3. Clarity on costs

Establishing your occupancy gives clarity on costs by:

- Allocating costs accurately to occupiers
- Greater detail on how costs are calculated
- Clarity and agreement on reimbursements, where applicable
- Forecasting of future costs

4. Informing future investment

With an occupancy agreement in place, we can better support occupiers to deliver effective patient care in NHS buildings by optimising occupancy, identifying and addressing poorly used space and investing in new space.

Any application for a premises improvement grant under the Premises Cost Directions, or grants from the Estates and Technology Transformation Fund (ETTF) require a formal documented agreement to be in place.





Help us keep your property data up to date

Help us keep your property data correct by letting us know of any changes.

Occupiers with a formal occupancy agreement must refer to the terms of their agreement when considering any occupancy changes.

Occupiers without a formal occupancy agreement must inform us of any planned changes to occupancy, at least three months in advance, by completing an Occupancy Change Notice which can be found at www.property.nhs.uk/occupancy-change-notice, ensuring that you also inform your Clinical Commissioning Group.

Once the form has been completed and submitted, a member of NHS Property Services will contact you to discuss your occupancy requirements. This process ensures occupancy data is correct and drives accurate billing.

Apply to the Vacant Space Handback Scheme

One of NHS Property Services' key priorities is to reduce vacant space in our estate. Vacant space is a drain on NHS funds that cannot be sustained as pressure on its services increases.

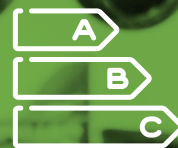
We have established the Vacant Space Handback Scheme to release properties if they are no longer required. By taking part in the scheme, we remove the burden of costs such as rent, business rates and service charges from customers, allowing them to use funds to provide the frontline care our communities need. Commissioners can apply direct to the scheme. Other occupiers should discuss with their commissioner how they may enter the scheme.

As well as saving money for customers, this approach gives others the opportunity to occupy the space. We use our property knowledge to reallocate any space released through re-letting, disposal or development.

Apply online at www.property.nhs.uk/vacant-space or contact our Customer Support Centre.

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Building management



Within this section:

- Energy saving guidance
- Sustainability pledges
- Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Insurances
- Facilities Management (FM) Services
- Occupier alterations, redevelopment and refurbishment plans
- How to access NHSPS capital funding
- NHS Open Space
- What to do if a bailiff appears on site

Energy saving guidance

We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of our buildings. By working together, we can reduce the operating costs, waste and the carbon intensity of our buildings.

The majority of energy used in a building is dictated by your actions. You can help reduce your impact by:

- Turning off lights when leaving a room and at the end of the day
- Turning off PCs, monitors and all chargers when not in use
- Turning off all equipment when not in use
- Ensuring that you do not have heating and cooling on at the same time and that they are set to comfortable levels
- When heating or cooling a room close the windows
- Closing window coverings at night to keep room temperature stable
- Implementing a building/area shut down procedure so at the end of the day everything is turned off before you leave



Sustainability pledges

With over 3,000 properties and 5,000 employees, we have a responsibility (and legal requirement with increasing legislation) towards reducing the environmental impact of our buildings and creating awareness amongst our people and the occupiers of our buildings to help us do this. By working together, we can reduce waste, the carbon intensity of our buildings, and operating costs.

To do this, the newly formed Energy and Environment team are focusing on designing and implementing a strategy that looks at both targeting energy and environment management in a holistic way at a corporate level, as well as at individual sites.

Find out practical ways you can help reduce a building's environmental impact <https://www.property.nhs.uk/services/energy-and-environment/>

We are pledging to become more sustainable:

REDUCING OUR SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CONSUMPTION

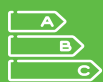
REDUCING OUR CARBON EMISSIONS

REDUCING OUR WASTE

BECOMING MORE FUEL EFFICIENT

BECOMING MORE WATER EFFICIENT





Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)

An EPC gives a property an energy efficiency rating from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient) on how it should be performing and is valid for 10 years.

A copy of the EPC for your building (where applicable) can be found on the Government's EPC portal, called **Landmark** (www.ndepcregister.com).



Insurances

All occupiers operating from one of our buildings are expected to have relevant insurances in place to protect themselves, their employees and their patients.

All businesses must have Contents Insurance and Public Liability Insurance as a minimum requirement. It is against the law to employ anyone without having Employers Liability Insurance. Current copies of documentation must be available to NHS Property Services on request.

Facilities Management (FM) Services

NHS Property Services provide a full range of professional Facilities Management Services through a mixed model of self-delivery and outsourced service providers. Services include Maintenance and Engineering (Hard FM) covering scheduled Planned Preventive Maintenance as well as Reactive Repair services, Cleaning, Catering, Security, Grounds and Gardens Maintenance, Waste Management, Portering, Postal Services, Linen & Laundry, Pest Control, Feminine Hygiene and Window Cleaning.

To find out more about the services we offer please contact our Customer Support Centre.

Occupier alterations, redevelopment and refurbishment plans

If you have any plans for the alteration, redevelopment or refurbishment of space that you occupy you must enquire as to whether a Licence to Alter is required. Please speak with your regional Senior Property Manager to discuss your intentions and to ensure that you obtain all formal consents required, prior to commencing any work.

If you are uncertain as to who your Senior Property Manager is, please contact our Customer Support Centre who will be happy to advise you.

How to access NHS Property Services capital funding

NHS Property Services delivers capital projects that bring wide-ranging benefits for patients and customers. From flagship schemes, such as new hospitals and health centres to refurbishments and upgrades. Whatever your plans, our capital team are available to provide you with professional strategic advice on how to develop your ideas.

Every capital project follows an approvals process to ensure that it is fit for purpose, represents value for money and meets the priorities of the local strategic estates plan. Capital projects generally fall into two main categories: Landlord Capital and Customer Funded Capital.

Landlord Capital refers to small-scale projects that keep buildings legally compliant, and in a good state of repair and condition in line with our obligations as a landlord.

Customer Funded Capital projects include new buildings, extensions and major refurbishments, requested by customers. These projects are generally led by commissioners and, if approved, delivered by NHS Property Services.

If you are planning any redevelopment or refurbishment work that may require capital funding to deliver, please get in touch. Please contact our Customer Support Centre who will direct your call to someone in our Capital Team who will be happy to discuss your proposal and provide advice on any potential capital funding opportunities available.



NHS Open Space

NHS Property Services is pioneering an exciting new service to allow occupiers to use space in a much more flexible, cost-effective way.

NHS Open Space allows occupiers to hire both clinical and non-clinical space as and when they need it, on an hourly or daily basis. This provides greater flexibility and choice, while making much more efficient use of the estate and minimising vacant or underused space.

NHS Open Space is available across 20 sites at present and will be rolled out across more sites in 2019/20.

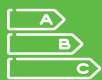
Bookable through an intuitive online platform on an hourly, sessional or daily basis, NHS Open Space provides flexible pay-as-you-use accommodation for approved users. Pricing is based on an hourly chargeable rate, in line with alternative providers, ensuring users only pay for the space and time required which provides greater flexibility and choice.

NHS Open Space

To find out if NHS Open Space is available for hire within your building please contact the NHS Property Services Customer Support Centre or visit:

www.openspace.nhs.uk





What to do if a bailiff appears on site

If an occasion arises where a bailiff appears on site it is important that you follow these simple guidelines:

- Don't panic
- Ask for the bailiff's identification
- Direct the bailiff to a discreet place e.g. meeting room (i.e. away from main reception and/or waiting room)
- Advise the bailiff that he needs to speak to the NHS Property Services Finance team and explain that you are not NHS Property Services staff
- Either contact the NHS Property Services Finance team directly or ask the bailiff to do so using the following contact details:

Kay Brennan

AP Supervisor

07714 640783

Michael Hunter

AP Supervisor

07542 228328

The NHS Property Services contact will speak with the bailiff and request copies of the following documents:

- Identification documents.
- The court judgement or order.
- The court writ or warrant.
- The enforcement notice served together with details of how and where it was issued.

Please be aware that there are a number of 'imposter bailiffs', if practical to do so, please verify the bailiff's identity via an internet search and independent call to the company to check the individual is not an 'imposter bailiff'.

IMPORTANT

If an enforcement notice or court document is received at the site please email this on the day of receipt to **legal@property.nhs.uk** which will allow the legal team to take action to prevent the bailiff from attending the site.

Bailiffs visiting a site is rare. This usually happens when official correspondence (such as a letter or judgement) is sent direct to the occupied building, rather than to the landlords - NHS Property Services. This can be avoided by sending on relevant correspondence.

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Health and safety



Within this section:

- Health and safety
- Your responsibilities

Health and safety

We have procedures and ways of working in place to protect NHS Property Services employees whilst at work and delivering services across any site where we operate.

Our procedures also consider the impact of what we do on other users of the building so that we work in a way that will not put them at risk whilst they are at work or visiting the premises.

As occupiers and employers, you are responsible for the Health and Safety of your employees whilst at work as well as any visitors and patients who are on the premises to receive services from you. It is important to note, that these responsibilities apply irrespective of there being a formal documented occupation agreement in place.





Your responsibilities

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring you have procedures in place to evacuate your employees, patients and visitors from the building in an emergency
- Assessing the risk from the activities you undertake in relation to the potential to cause fire
- Providing first aid arrangements
- Assessing security and other needs in relation to employee, patient and visitor safety in the delivery of your services
- Assessing and controlling the risks inherent in the services you provide to your users
- Complying with all other health and safety legislation that is relevant to your undertaking

We may request from you copies of risk assessments you have completed on your work tasks or areas you occupy. This is to ensure that we are correctly assessing the risks to our staff if they are required to work in areas under your control where any high-risk activities or conditions may exist.





7 Building safety

Within this section:

- Fire safety
- Fire evacuation / drills
- Fire protective equipment
- Basic fire precautions
- Office electrical equipment
- Emergency situations
- Security

Fire safety

There are certain requirements of 'building safety' that are covered by Health & Safety legislation for example; water quality management; asbestos, compressed gases and lifts. Responsibility for maintenance and legal compliance/ assurance will be determined by the terms of the lease you have with us. Therefore, it is important to refer to your lease to be aware of your obligations and to clarify what you can expect from NHS Property Services under the terms agreed.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) sets out who is responsible for protecting people working or visiting a building from fire. It is not solely the responsibility of NHSPS as the landlord.

The person defined within the FSO as the "Responsible Person" is the employer. In a multi occupied building, with several occupiers, there may be a number of responsible persons who all play an active part in managing fire safety in the building.



As the Responsible Person you should ensure that a fire risk assessment is developed for the parts of the building you occupy and include any routes to and from those areas. Your fire risk assessment should consider the risk of a fire occurring and the measures taken to protect persons from the effects of fire. These measures should include the provision of training for your staff to ensure their safe evacuation and the evacuation of patients and other visitors to your site.

If you do not have someone with the skills to do this, you can engage a company to undertake the fire risk assessment on your behalf. You can do this as a single occupier or collectively with other occupiers within building.

It is a requirement of the FSO that Responsible Persons cooperate and coordinate with others within the building to secure the safety of all occupants, including any visitors, to the premises. This includes sharing the significant findings from your fire risk assessment.





Fire evacuation

An essential part of the requirement to cooperate and coordinate with other occupiers is the collective responsibility for evacuating the building in the event of fire.

You will need to work with other occupiers to ensure that your procedures do not conflict with the procedures of other occupiers and that there are sufficient procedures in place to:

- Raise the alarm and begin evacuating the building
- Investigate the cause of the alarm
- Making sure that all occupants have evacuated the building safely
- Ensuring that the fire service has been contacted to inform them that it is either a false alarm or a real fire
- Communicating with the fire service on their arrival
- Re-occupying the building

You, and other occupiers, should practice these procedures by carrying out fire evacuation drills so that, in the unlikely event of a fire, the building can be evacuated safely and quickly. These will need to be done with the cooperation and coordination of any other occupiers in the building. NHSPS, as Landlord, will help facilitate fire evacuation drills by arranging for a fire competent person to attend the building to activate the fire alarm and reset it following completion of the practice drill.

Fire protective equipment

NHSPS, as landlord for your building provides essential fire protective equipment to help secure the safety of persons working and visiting the site. This equipment includes:

- Fire detection and alarm systems
- Fire extinguishers
- Emergency lighting
- Fire resisting construction, including fire doors
- Fire exit doors

To ensure that these measures are always available, NHSPS applies a planned protective maintenance (PPM) schedule to service and maintain these in accordance with recognised standards and guidance. In addition, where your fire risk assessment identifies defects in fire protective equipment, or during the course of your normal work, you should raise these with the NHSPS Customer Support Centre.

Where a customer has a documented occupation, the responsibility for maintaining and repairing of Fire Protective Equipment within their area of exclusive occupation will fall to them as per The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Any systems (e.g., alarm or sprinkler) that form part of a building-wide system or within the common/shared areas will remain the responsibility of NHSPS. As such, the provisions of those documents override any statement in the Occupiers Handbook that may be deemed to contradict this.



Basic fire precautions

Good fire precautions are fundamental in preventing fire and as a responsible occupier and employer you can ensure these are applied at all times. Simple matters, such as not wedging fire doors open, keeping escape routes clear, and training your staff, are essential in providing an environment that is safe from the risk of fire. Your fire officer or fire “competent person” can assist you in advising you on the measures needed.

HM Government guidance

Easy to use, simple HM Government practical guidance is available to those responsible for fire safety, providing advice to ensure compliance with the FSO:

bit.ly/GovGuide

Home Office fire advice

The Home Office also provide simple to use guides that you can refer to for good practical advice on fire precautions for your type of building. These can be found free as a download from the following Home Office web pages:

bit.ly/FireAdvice

Our Customer Support Centre allows occupiers to report any defective fire safety provision immediately e.g. damaged fire doors, defective emergency lighting units or faults with the fire alarm system. An engineer will be mobilised to respond and undertake the repair or replace the defective provision so that the matter is resolved without delay.





Office electrical equipment

It is your responsibility to ensure that all your electrical equipment on the premises is in safe working order and that all equipment is PAT tested by a suitably qualified person at recommended intervals. NHS Property Services' Staff reserve the right to seek confirmation from occupiers that such tests have been completed. To improve energy efficiency and reduce fire risks please ensure that all unused electrical equipment is turned off overnight



Emergency situations (major incident)

If there is an emergency in the building such as fire, flood, lack of power, water or heating then you must notify the 24/7 NHS Property Services FM Helpdesk immediately on: **0808 196 2045**

Whoever is nominated to call NHS Property Services must be able to provide details with regard to the incident and whether any regulatory bodies are involved.

Following on from your call, the FM Helpdesk will instigate NHS Property Services incident management process. The appropriate senior managers and site support will be advised, and you will be kept informed by the NHS Property Services FM Helpdesk until assistance arrives on site.



Security

Listed below are some useful security tips:

1. Keep doors locked when not in use.
2. Be aware of tail gating.
3. Practice good key security and return keys at end of occupation.
4. Close window blinds in all offices and rooms when not in use.
5. Ensure lighting is in good working order as good lighting acts as a deterrent.
6. Keep all external landscaping, trimmed and tidy.
7. All areas should be free of debris, (a build-up of debris can be used as a hiding place).
8. Consider wording on signage that you use, certain words could indicate an invitation to criminals.
9. Become acquainted with your neighbours, (be aware of the routines of your neighbours, if you know what is normal activity, you will be more likely to recognise situations that are not normal).
10. Make available training about security procedures for your staff.
11. Make sure your buildings are in good repair.
12. Good communication with all colleagues ensures everyone is aware of any issues/concerns.

Whilst NHS Property Services seek to provide a safe and secure environment for all, it is the responsibility of occupiers and their staff to take all reasonable measures to ensure that their demise is kept safe for their staff and service users. Everyone must be aware of how they can contribute towards ensuring their work environment is a safe place to be.

Further information

If you require any further information on the services and advice offered by NHS Property Services please contact your regional FM Helpdesk.





Lockdown

Lockdown is the process of controlling the movement, access and egress of people around a property or other specific area in response to an identified risk, threat or hazard that might impact on the safety and security or indeed the capacity of that facility to continue to operate.

You are responsible for the development and production of your own lockdown procedures and having the means to implement them. They need to take account of the resources necessary to ensure staff, visitor, client and asset safety, as well as the continuation of your service delivery.

Where your lockdown procedure requires building systems information, including the integration of physical security personnel where present, NHS Property Services as landlord will provide all relevant information to you.

Where the building is large, complex and multi occupied, NHS Property Services accepts that co-ordination of a site lockdown procedure can be difficult, and all relevant parties need to co-operate and communicate. Subject to local resources, NHS Property Services can help with the co-ordination of occupier meetings to allow you to discuss and draw up integrated site plans.

NHS Property Services is not responsible for the initiation of any lockdown procedures as this must be a decision taken by you or the appointed person on site assessing and responding to the risk, threat or hazard as it presents. This may be in partnership with other organisations, both within and beyond the NHS, e.g. if Police intelligence is required.



8

Useful information



Within this section:

- Useful contacts

Useful Contacts

Name	Mobile	Email

NHS Property Services

The Occupier Handbook outlines information you need to know as an occupier of an NHS Property Services building covering occupancy options, charging principles, building management, health and safety, building safety, landlord and occupier responsibilities and a glossary of property terms.

As well as the handbook, you should refer to your specific occupancy agreement. For occupiers with further questions, please get in touch with us via our Customer Support Centre.

Occupier Handbook

We update the handbook on a frequent basis and the latest copy can be found online at: www.property.nhs.uk/handbook



customer.service@property.nhs.uk



0800 085 3015