

Case study

BATH ROAD, READING

Unlocking hidden capacity to support clinical growth

Owned by **NHS Property Services**, Bath Road is a modern, three-storey building in Reading, totalling **2,108 sqm**. The site accommodates a mix of NHS and private sector occupiers, including **Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust** (BHFT) and local system partners.

The challenge

BHFT wanted to **expand clinical services across the ground and first floors**. However, there was no objective evidence showing how space was used day to day. Perceived space pressure did not match operational reality. Without trusted data, estate leaders could not confidently decide whether the site could absorb growth or whether alternative options were needed, such as a costly building extension.

The approach

The **NHS Open Space team** delivered a six-week digital utilisation study between May and July 2024:

- **127** desk sensors installed
- **20 rooms monitored** across the ground and first floors
- **Real-time occupancy data** captured during core working hours

NHS Property Services' **Estates Strategy team** then reviewed the data to understand utilisation, pinpoint where space was underperforming and develop evidence based options to optimise the site.

What the data showed



Overall utilisation:
7.1%



Ground floor:
3.6%



First floor: **9.6%**



Peak usage: just
19 desks at the
busiest point

The analysis showed that all existing users could be accommodated on the second floor using **only 15 desks**, releasing a significant amount of underused space elsewhere in the building.

The outcome

The insight, supported by clear estate strategy recommendations, showed a **credible route to release space at Bath Road** for clinical expansion. This resulted in **over £1.1m in combined savings** for the ICB and Trust, achieved by consolidating services and the release of two additional sites. This enabled a refurbishment of Bath Road and the creation of new clinical capacity within the existing footprint.

Crucially, partners worked from a shared, trusted evidence base, enabling confident decisions on rationalisation and future investment.



The impact of utilisation monitoring

This case study shows how combining **digital utilisation insight** with **expert estate strategy review** strengthens decision making.

A building that appeared busy was shown to be significantly underused once real world data was analysed. This helped estate leaders challenge assumptions, unlock hidden capacity and support service growth without **expanding the estate**.

For estate leaders, the benefits are clear:

- Objective utilisation data, reviewed by estate experts, **de-risks major decisions**
- Hidden capacity can often **meet demand without new capital spend**
- A shared evidence base supports **system-wide collaboration**
- Smarter use of space **improves productivity, value for money and patient care**

By combining NHS Open Space data with NHS Property Services' estate strategy expertise, systems can move faster from insight to action and ensure the NHS estate is fit for the future.



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