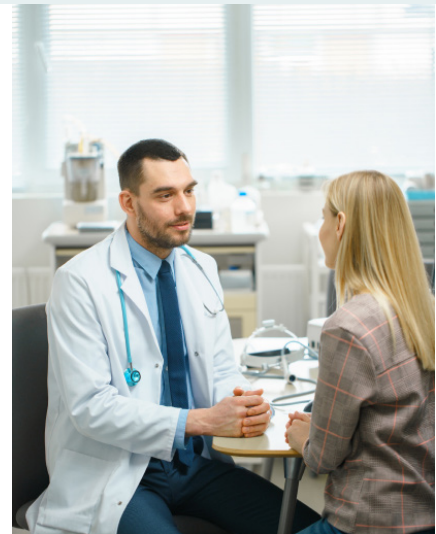


Optimising the NHS Estate with NHS Property Services



INTRODUCTION



JOHN WESTWOOD

Director of Asset
Management
NHS Property Services

Optimising the Primary Care estate is more important now than ever, with the NHS Long Term Plan emphasising its importance in moving health and social care closer to communities and reducing pressure on Acute Care centres. This has become even more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic, with local health hubs offering vital treatment and testing facilities alongside larger hospitals, as well as enabling some 'business as usual' healthcare to continue.

NHS Property Services (NHSPS) is a government owned company which exists to help the NHS get the most from its estate so that healthcare professionals can focus on delivering excellent patient care. Since 2013 we have been working with our NHS partners to make better use of NHS space, building healthier communities and ensuring every patient can get the care they need in the best space and place for them.

Through this work we recognise the challenges NHS organisations face in their estate management. From building a clear picture of how the estate is being used, to securing funding for improvements, to implementing solutions, we can offer our property and facilities management expertise to support.

In this document, we hope to provide an overview of how we can support you in estate optimisation. I hope what is clear throughout this document is that this is not just about achieving efficiencies and cost savings – whilst this is of course important, we also want to help build an effective NHS estate, with spaces enabling wellbeing, collaboration and productivity for NHS patients and staff alike.

We'd really welcome some feedback on the content within this document, so that we can continue to improve how we update and work with you. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any thoughts or ideas, through our Customer Support Centre.

Kind regards,

John Westwood
Director of Asset Management
NHS Property Services

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ESTATE OPTIMISATION

We have the expertise to build new healthcare environments, but we are advocates of making best use of existing space where we can, to avoid unnecessary cost and disruption to the NHS. This option also enables a quicker path to increase much needed Primary Care capacity as we move to a model of community-based health and social care.

This involves increasing the utilisation of space, reconfiguring it to be more efficient, and refurbishing it to enhance the patient and staff experience. Estate optimisation can drive efficiencies that reduce costs for the NHS and support sustainability initiatives, but it can also create environments that improve wellbeing and collaboration.

So far, our efforts to optimise the NHS estate have delivered:



£504m
capital investment in
the NHS estate



441
properties sold since
FY2013/14



46,000
tCO2 saved through
colleague-led initiatives



6,607
new Housing Units delivered
via release of surplus NHS land



£381m
raised for the NHS through
disposal of unwanted assets

Figures correct as of March 2020

HOW NHS PROPERTY SERVICES IS SUPPORTING SPACE OPTIMISATION

Our multidisciplinary team is made up of experts in portfolio strategy, finance/ analytics, development, transactions, and property and facilities management who support the wider NHS estate in evaluating and delivering new healthcare environments.

This means we can support estate optimisation initiatives at scale, from basic cost reduction to more strategic pieces on maximising Primary Care capacity or making space for social prescribing. It also means we can support projects from inception to occupation – from identifying and scoping the initial opportunity through to delivery and review.

Across this range of projects, our teams use the following process to optimise space.

1



UNDERSTANDING REQUIREMENTS

We work closely with our NHS partners to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by occupiers, customers and wider stakeholders. Once we have this insight, we can start gathering evidence to further build and tailor our approach.

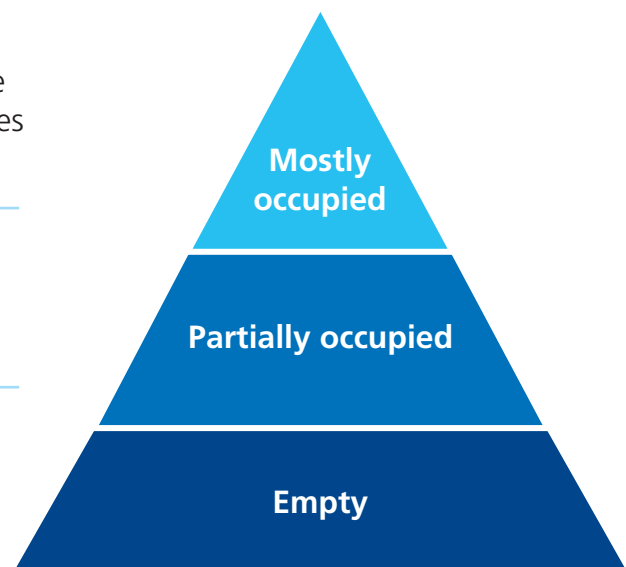
This is through a range of utilisation survey methods, both in person and via technology (sensors), varying our approach according to the scale and type of space in question. We are also mobilising our frontline workforce to identify empty or underused spaces to build this data across the NHS estate.

We consider the space by:

If the space is fully occupied and used, can we make more use of it, e.g. by offering to services outside of core hours?

If the space is partially occupied and used, can we make more efficient use of it? E.g. identifying and re-purposing empty space.

Significant empty space holds the largest opportunity to optimise. E.g. re-purposing for social prescribing, or sub-letting or selling to generate new income.





2

DEFINING AND SCOPING

We first try to understand the space better and consider how we can make better use of it. For example, how much of the space is officially occupied, and how does this compare to actual usage?



3

ASSESSING

With this data and insight, we can better understand the reasons behind low or inefficient usage of a space, diagnosing the gaps between supply and demand. For example, is the issue with the condition of the building, the cost, or a wider misalignment between the area's clinical and estate strategy?

We work with our NHS partners to assess demand and supply of space, to develop the best optimisation strategy.

Future Space Demand

- NHS drivers
- Change enablers
- Requirements (sqm)
- NHS Long-Term Plan



Current Property Supply

- How is it used?
- What does it cost?
- Opportunities?
- Maintenance costs
- Other options in locality

Property options to meet demand:

- Meet clinical requirements
- Minimise running costs
- Maximise reinvestment generated
- Collaboration to create strategic workstreams

Approvals and business case decision

Programme implementation

4



DETERMINING

We can then start identifying and reviewing options to optimise the space, working with stakeholders to agree upon an action plan.

Some of these options could include:

Understanding and managing the space

- We can better work with our customers to manage their space by signing an occupancy agreement with them (property.nhs.uk/propertymanagement). Our Facilities Management teams can help the day to day running of the building, ensuring they are clean and safe for patients and staff.
- Our staff can also help identify underused or empty space, which – if eligible, can be handed back to NHSPS to re-purpose through our Vacant Space Handback Scheme (property.nhs.uk/vacantspace).

Making better use of the estate

- We can change how space is used and enable and support usage with reconfiguration or refurbishment projects, which can be a relatively low-cost solution, working with our Construction team (property.nhs.uk/construction).
- We can increase usage by making space more flexible, for example our NHS Open Space programme (property.nhs.uk/openspace) has introduced a room booking system to offer access to a wider range of services. This increases usage, improves our usage data, and can generate income from third parties for the NHS.



Becoming more efficient

- We review leases with breaks or expirations coming up to explore if we can right-size our footprint. This consolidation can combine occupants – not only saving costs for the NHS but creating central health hubs for communities.
- This applies to office as well as clinical space, and with our National Office Programme (property.nhs.uk/smarterworking) our more efficient use of space enables smarter working practices and creates better working environments.

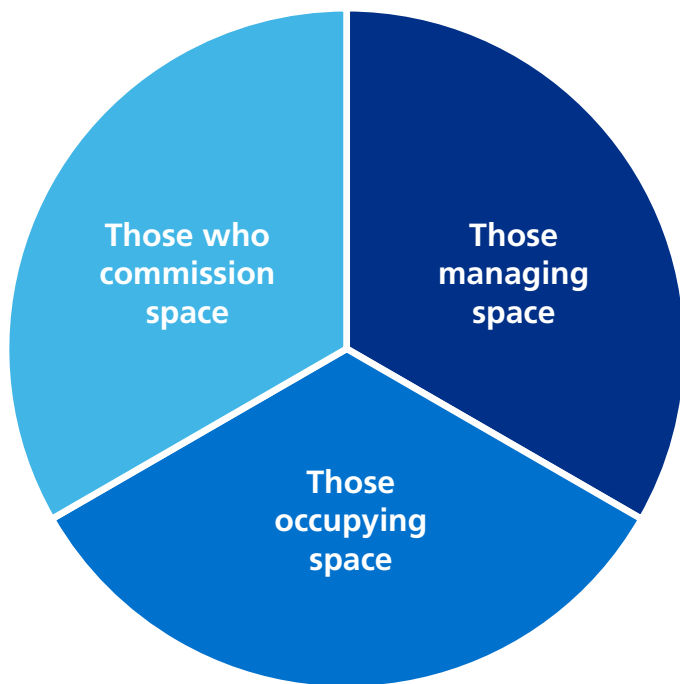
Generating re-investment

- When our NHS partners determine space as surplus to their requirements, we can help sell this space to deliver maximum value to the NHS. Our Transactions team will work across the business to run due diligence, secure planning permission, and market the site to do this (property.nhs.uk/disposals).
- If there is an ongoing requirement but no funding to improve space, our Property Development team can explore options with third party developers, unlocking the value of NHS land by enabling new developments that will also provide healthcare premises (property.nhs.uk/propertydevelopment).



WORKING TOGETHER

Collaboration is key to the success of all space optimisation projects, with those who commission, manage and occupy the space working together to create the most effective NHS estate.



For example, early involvement of estates teams in the commissioning cycle will enable a better alignment of strategies, decreasing the risk of future under- or over-utilisation. Data is at the core of what we do, and with occupancy agreements in place we can improve our estate knowledge and better support occupants.

We are always keen to hear from our NHS partners on their estate challenges and opportunities. If you have a project you'd like to discuss, please contact us via our Customer Support Centre.



WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE FOR THE NHS ESTATE

We have a strong track record of delivering space optimisation projects for our NHS partners.

Re-purposing vacant space



Michael Burke Wellbeing Centre, Suffolk

Many social prescribing networks need space to meet with patients and for community groups to host activities. As an owner of 3,000 properties, we're in a prime position to help, and chose Hartismere Hospital as a proof of concept for this. We repurposed its significant vacant space, reconfiguring and renovating the site to create a range of indoor and outdoor spaces. Since the centre opened in July 2019, over 250 people have benefited from facilitated sessions.

Consolidating and refurbishing space



120 The Broadway, London

We held eight leases across five floors of an office building, with various NHS organisations occupying the space. With lease expiries approaching we were able to explore opportunities for consolidation and found much of the space was under-used. We negotiated to handback five of the eight leases (which will save the NHS £6 million) and reconfigured the remaining two floors to enable smarter and more collaborative working for our NHS partners.

Using technology to maximise utilisation



NHS Open Space is a new solution from NHS Property Services. It enables flexible room booking, allowing services to use space as and when they need it on a pay-as-you-go basis. This is opening access of NHS space to a wider range of services, making better and more efficient use of it to serve patients and communities. We are now live in 500+ rooms across 60 sites nation-wide, and have so far seen increased usage and improved data. We will be expanding across our portfolio throughout 2021/2.

Learn more at:
www.openspace.nhs.uk

Reconfiguring and increasing utilisation of existing space

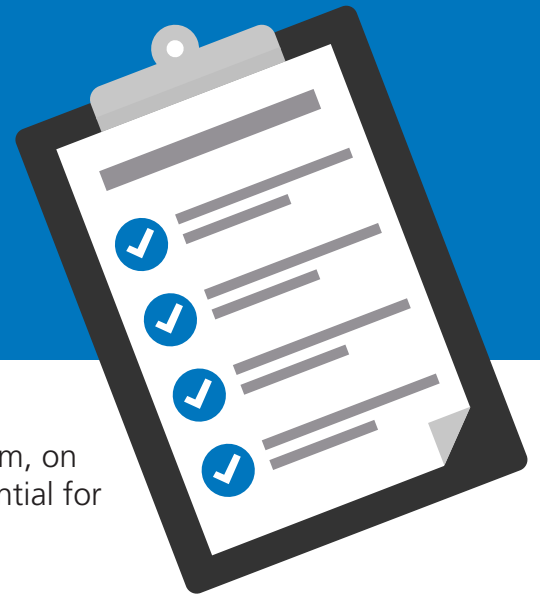


Burscough Health Centre, Lancashire

A GP practice needed to be relocated, and we found that a nearby property we owned could offer the most cost-effective solution as well as creating a central health hub for the community. The building needed significant reconfiguration and modernization, but instead of expanding the site we found ways to better use the space e.g. splitting up larger rooms and moving admin space to the first floor. This has increased the clinical space on site from 15 to 19 rooms, modernizing and making better use of the space to accommodate more services and serve more patients.

For more examples of how we're optimising the NHS estate, browse our library of case studies:
property.nhs.uk/casestudies

TOP TIPS FOR ESTATE OPTIMISATION



To summarise, here are top tips from our Portfolio Optimisation team, on the stages and questions they go through when assessing the potential for estate optimisation.

- Will you get the support needed to make it happen?**
Establish whether the requirement is an organisational priority, and does it have clear leadership. This will help get the resources, support or approvals needed.
- Is a built environment solution the one you need?**
An operational or digital change may be more effective and quicker to implement.
- Who have you got on board?**
Engage all stakeholders early – Commissioner/Provider/National partners – get a full understanding of their perspective and role in the project, and you will save a lot of time.
- Do you have a full understanding of the requirement?**
When you do, test it. Remember - 'want' and 'need' may be different amongst your stakeholders.
- Have you properly understood the clinical demand?**
Documenting this will help your property teams to provide all the estate options that could satisfy this, and clearly set out the pros and cons for each.
- How will it be funded?**
Know your financial envelope / source of funds, and the rules to access them. You may need to adjust solutions and make choices to match available budget.
- What will it cost (capital, revenue)?**
You will also need to understand all cost impacts to partners and the wider NHS, and reach an early agreement of affordability.
- Can you take guidance/inspiration from other projects? If someone else has done something similar, what can you learn from them?**
For example, see our library of case studies: property.nhs.uk/NHSPSCaseStudies
- Does everyone know what they need to do?**
Work up a detailed programme and brief decision-makers early so they know what to expect / approve and when. Allocate resource - you won't just need money, you will need people with skills and/or enthusiasm and time.
- How will everyone work together?**
Ultimately, collaboration is key across all partners to deliver successful optimisation projects, so make sure you have the right governance, and a one-team ambition, from the outset.

HOW TO REACH US

Input and feedback from our NHS customers and partners are crucial as we work to optimise the NHS estate.

There are various ways to get in touch with our teams to find out more and work with us:



0800 085 3015

Monday - Friday, 08:00 - 18:00



customer.service@property.nhs.uk



www.property.nhs.uk/contactus

Facilities Management Helpdesk

We have a dedicated helpdesk which offers 24/7/365 help with all facilities management services matters.



www.property.nhs.uk/newrequest

For **non-urgent** facilities management maintenance requests, fill out the online form.



0808 196 2045

To report an **urgent** facilities management issue that requires immediate resolution at any time of the day.