

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue surgical mask and a matching blue top. She is sitting at a wooden desk with her hands clasped in front of her. The background is a blurred office or clinical setting with a framed picture on the wall.

# OPERATING HEALTHCARE ESTATES DURING COVID-19

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How to stay safe  
and use the estate  
to enable excellent  
patient care

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This guide is designed to help our customers to effectively plan how property and facilities can help keep patients and NHS staff safe during COVID-19.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 around the world, organisations have rapidly adapted how they work including changed use of their estate and a more stringent approach to the safety and effectiveness of the facilities management services being delivered, none more so than the NHS.

Working with our NHS colleagues across England, we have developed our strategic asset management services and operational facilities management services to support our customers to continue to deliver excellent patient care throughout the next stages of the pandemic.



As well as the information here, the latest updates are available:



at our website  
[www.property.nhs.uk/covid19](http://www.property.nhs.uk/covid19)



by signing up to our regular updates at  
[www.property.nhs.uk/newsletter](http://www.property.nhs.uk/newsletter)

## Who we are

NHS Property Services is a government-owned company which exists to help the NHS get the most from its estate and ensure that it is consistently fit for purpose so that healthcare professionals can deliver excellent patient care.

Our unique property and facilities management expertise allows us to work collaboratively with our NHS colleagues to enable them to make the right estate decisions for their patients so the NHS is fit for purpose now, and in the future.

At the heart of NHS properties across the country, our dedicated facilities management teams work on the frontline to keep buildings clean, safe, warm and compliant so every patient can get the care they need in the best place for them at a time when they most need it.



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## Important! When to contact us

To ensure safety of staff and patients, it's important that customers contact NHS Property Services in relation to COVID-19 cases. Please contact us via our Facilities Management helpdesk on 0808 196 2045 for the following reasons:

- to report an emergency or urgent facilities issue.
- to notify us of positive cases of COVID-19 at one of our buildings. We ask that customers inform our reception colleagues of any procedures in place to deal with patients who attend with symptoms of COVID-19.
- to notify us of any segregation/cohort areas of in-patient treatment established in one of our buildings, so we can effectively plan resources to support this.
- to discuss repurposing space to better support clinical needs.

# STAYING SAFE: Creating a COVID-19 secure building



Our buildings are open to NHS staff and patients ensuring that our customers can continue to provide excellent patient care in their communities.

Our customers and the wider NHS face ongoing challenges to maintain COVID-secure buildings and it is likely there will be additional guidance and requirements issued as the pandemic evolves. We will update our approach, working with our partners across the NHS. We're focusing on supporting:

- effective estate planning

- ensuring safety on site
- increasing capacity, repurposing space and enabling vaccinations

Over the next few pages are some helpful links to how NHS Property Services can help customers and where to find guidance about estates and facilities management.



# Planning

NHS Property Services has worked extensively with customers, local partners, regional and national bodies to help plan for the next stages of the pandemic based on our experiences during the initial phases on COVID-19.



## Pandemic Preparedness Procedure

Our procedure outlines how NHS Property Services will effectively manage pandemic situations whilst ensuring key services are still provided through our Major Incident Management (MIM) and Business Continuity (BC) procedures, processes and assessments.

[< Read our procedure >](#)



## Working in future lockdowns

Lockdown restrictions are under constant review by the government and like other parts of the NHS, we work closely with the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England/Improvement to monitor the situation.

NHS Property Services works closely with government, our NHS colleagues and local partners to ensure that we adhere to lockdown requirements whilst ensuring that buildings can remain operational for patient care and safe working for staff. Our local and regional teams will work with their counterparts in NHS England/Improvement and customers.



## COVID-19 secure risk assessment

To ensure your building and operations are safe, you should carry out a risk assessment. We have produced a short guide on how to do this including a handy risk assessment for customers to review the key considerations to be taken.

[< View the risk assessment >](#)



## Preparing for winter

Winter weather can affect the performance of your building and how patients and staff move around. We have prepared a helpful checklist of things to consider in cold weather. Please report any building related issues to our Facilities Management Helpdesk.

[< Read our winter guidance >](#)



## Providing additional or new services

Whilst our priority is to help maintain the services of our existing customers, we are happy to discuss how we may be able to provide additional services to existing or new customers. Where able to, we are helping more parts of the NHS with extra requests (such as cleaning) and nationally on strategic planning. Contact our Customer Support Centre if you wish to discuss any additional requirements you may have.



## Guidance on charges related to COVID-19 requests

In line with changing funding mechanisms for the health system from October, NHS England will no longer centrally fund incremental costs arising from COVID-19 related requests for NHS Property Services. Therefore these costs will now have to be passed onto our colleagues and customers directly.

[< Read latest NHSPS charging advice >](#)

# Safety on site

NHS Property Services has taken guidance from Public Health England and NHS England to create standard procedures regarding cleaning and decontamination requirements which must be followed by our staff when on-site and especially where there are confirmed cases of COVID-19. These will be updated as when any wider government guidance is revised and the latest information can always be found at [www.property.nhs.uk/covid19](http://www.property.nhs.uk/covid19)



## Staff training

NHS Property Services health and safety specialists have created specific guidance and training for our staff to ensure they have the latest information and guidance on staying safe, in accordance with the latest government guidance. We have an extensive catalogue of guidance notes that outline the actions, tasks and precautions our staff must take when working in COVID-19 environments.



## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Ensuring our staff have the right PPE is critically important to us. We have established a supply chain which allows us to maintain appropriate levels of PPE in-line with government guidance. We may need to rely on clinical teams to provide appropriate PPE including FFP3 masks, if NHS Property Services is unable to procure sufficient quantities to protect our teams; we will let you know where this is the case. Our health and safety team has produced extensive guidance and training to support our people with PPE and safety whilst on site.



## Cleaning standard operating procedure

We operate in accordance with the guidelines issued by Public Health England and NHS England to provide cleaning services in areas where COVID-19 may be present. Our staff have received general health and safety and personal hygiene guidance, including good handwashing routines and cleaning regimes.



## Construction and refurbishment

During any peaks in the pandemic, it is likely that we will pause construction and refurbishment sites to safeguard customers, colleagues and patients. Some sites may continue, especially where there will be extra clinical capacity created to support the response to COVID-19. We will review on a project by project basis in full liaison with customers to arrive at a mutually agreed decision. At all times, we will continue to work with suppliers to ensure our staff have the right equipment and PPE.



## Signage, access and wayfinding

Each building we operate is different and requires a bespoke solution to help make sure the correct signage, access and wayfinding is in place across the site. Customers should consider signage used around a building to direct staff and patients safely. Please visit our COVID-19 secure risk assessment which helps to identify requirements specific to your building. NHSPS is responsible for providing signage in shared areas and where there are multiple occupiers in place, we will work with each to reach a solution.

[< View our risk assessment support >](#)



## Supply chain management

NHS Property Services has worked over the last few years to bring more services in-house so we can assure our customers of a guaranteed, quality service. We work with select partners in several areas and maintain strong supply chain management processes to ensure we have the correct resource to match any peaks in demand throughout the pandemic. This includes the supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).



## Maintenance and compliance

During any future peaks in demand, we will reduce non-essential maintenance to properties at risk of COVID-19 infections as part of our risk mitigation process, for both planned and reactive maintenance work. During these times, we will only accept urgent jobs that could stop a building from operation, that endanger patients or NHS staff or to maintain statutory compliance. By doing this, we can focus on our efforts where they are really needed and for longer.

[< Latest log a job status here >](#)



## Car parking

In line with government policy, our car parks will be free to use for NHS staff during the pandemic period. We will review this policy in line with national guidance.

# Increasing capacity and repurposing space



## Hot and cold sites

During the initial phase of the pandemic, we were able to support a number of customers to identify space or reconfigure space to transform in to 'hot' sites as well as helping move other occupiers to 'cold' sites.

[< Read case studies >](#)



## Test centres

We have helped several customers to identify and set up test centres either through actively repurposing a space or bringing back in to action a vacant space. This can be used for increased COVID-19 testing capacity and for winter flu vaccinations.

[< Read test centre case studies >](#)



## Modular Building Quick Reference Guide

Modular healthcare buildings can be used in the NHS estate to provide additional capacity. Read our guide on how to identify, procure and deliver modular buildings that match the evolving treatment requirements for COVID-19.

[< Read our guide >](#)



## Town Planning Guidance

There have been significant changes to the town planning system recently which have major implications on the interaction of the NHS with the town planning system. Our dedicated healthcare town planning team has produced a guidance note on these changes and can assist customers with navigating and exploring the opportunities presented.

[< Read the guidance note >](#)



## NHS Open Space

NHS Open Space operates across the country providing clinical and non-clinical rooms available to book by the hour or session, as and when needed. Open Space sites operate COVID-19 health and safety precautions.

[< Visit \[www.openspace.nhs.uk\]\(http://www.openspace.nhs.uk\) >](#)



## Vaccination site support

We have helped over 250 sites to transform spaces to deliver vaccinations.

[< Read more >](#)



# OUR SERVICES: How we can help

We provide strategic asset management and facilities management services to our customers to help the NHS get the most from its estate, now and in the future. During the initial stages of COVID-19, our customers told us the most frequent challenges they are facing within their estate are:

- **maintaining health and safety to keep staff and patients safe**
- **delivering enhanced and specialised cleaning regimes**
- **ensuring availability of the right space to accommodate the additional demands of COVID-19, such as testing sites, hot/cold sites, additional local bed capacity and vaccination sites**

NHS Property Services can assist customers with these challenges as we move into the next stages of the pandemic and for longer-term planning.

## Providing the right space locally

NHS Property Services works with Integrated Care Systems (ICS), Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and regional colleagues at NHS England and Improvement to provide urgent additional capacity as well as plan longer term space requirements.

We can assist with planning and delivery of solutions which require changes to all or part of a site and work with customers in the early stages to identify any additional estate or facilities management requirements.







# Repurposing space

During the initial wave of COVID-19, we worked closely with our customers across the country to provide urgent additional bed capacity and fast-changing requirements for space.

Our specialist strategic asset management and delivery teams helped to repurpose space, recommission vacant space and reconfigure sites creating hundreds of extra beds in the system. We also assisted with solutions to accommodate 'hot' and 'cold' sites and test centres.

As the response to the pandemic continues to develop, we can work with customers to help find the right space solutions to evolving needs as you have them. This includes changing the use of space, opening vacant/underutilised space to new purposes and reconfiguring sites.

[< Find out more >](#)

## Creating more space for local treatment and testing

We have delivered:



Over **26,000m<sup>2</sup>**

to help create



Over **1,000**  
additional beds locally

We have identified:



Over **52**  
sites

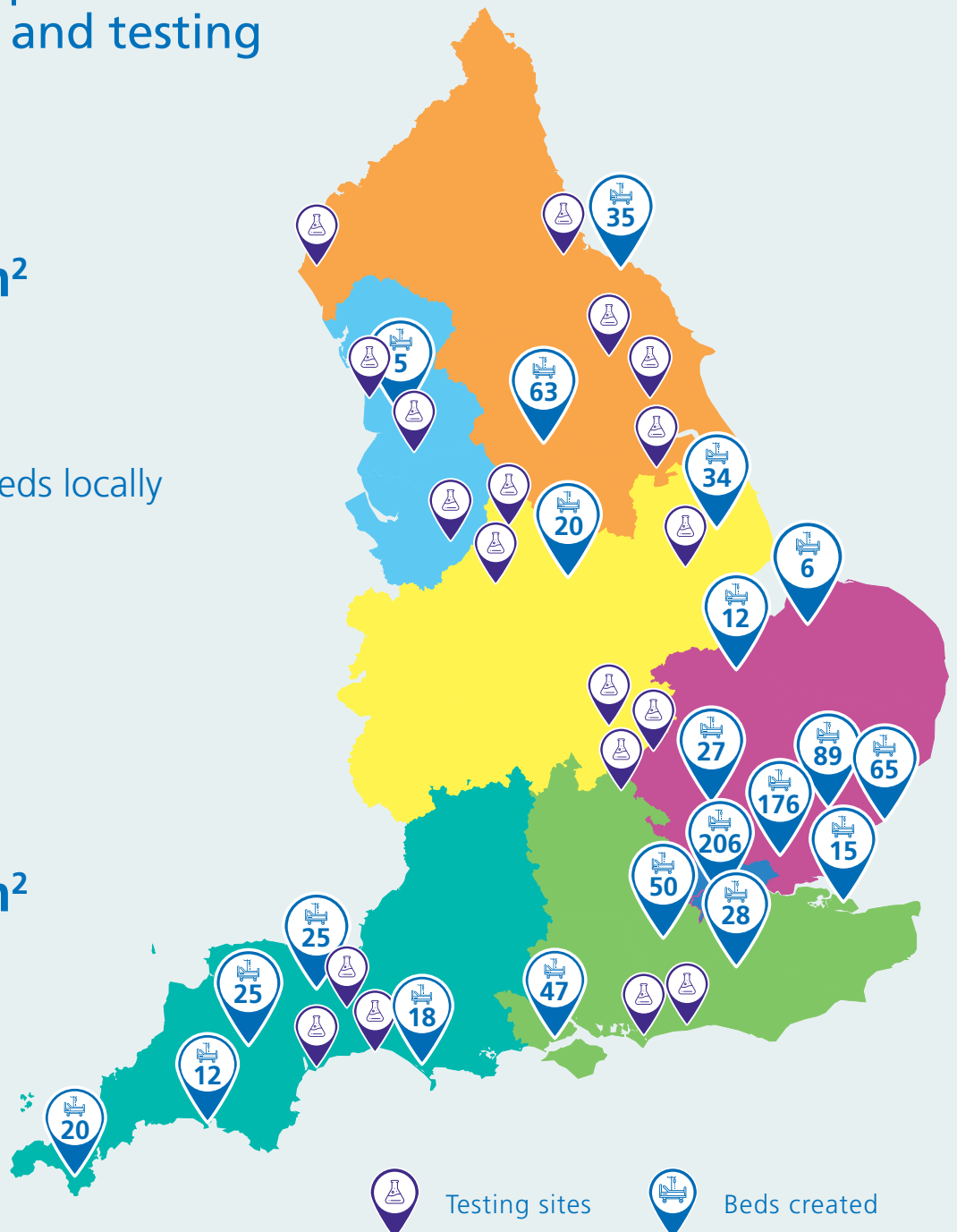


**46,000m<sup>2</sup>**

and



Over **1,700**  
beds





## CASE STUDY



### Providing space for 176 new beds for COVID-19 treatment

#### Repurposing and reconfiguring space at Brentwood Community Hospital

- Sub-acute, step down and palliative care for the local health economy, easing pressure on acute care sites
- Recommissioned vacant ward within two days to provide 25 beds
- Worked with a PFI company, CCG, North East London Foundation Trust and the army to repurpose space across the wider hospital site

[< Read the full case study >](#)

## CASE STUDY



### Reconfiguring and recommissioning space to provide patient beds and staff residential units

#### Helping staff and patients at Clacton Community Hospital

- Over two weeks, we recommissioned and prepared space to provide 50 additional palliative care beds and 15 one-bed residential units for staff
- NHSPS helped move occupiers to other parts of the building, reconfigure the space and run deep cleans

*"A big thank you to you and your team who did some brilliant work to get our Durban ward up and running. It was an exceptional piece of joined up working and I'm keen that we share the good news."*

**Frank Simms**, Chief Executive, Anglia Community Enterprise

[< Read the full case study >](#)

## CASE STUDY



### Providing three hot hub clinics to expand accommodation for primary care demands during COVID-19

#### Buckhurst Way Clinic, Saffron Walden Hospital and Sydenham House, Essex

- NHSPS worked with the CCG and PCN to identify to three hot clinics
- Conversion to and refurbishment of clinical rooms, temporary external covered observation area and deep cleans across the site

*"The speed and expertise of your team has shown in enabling properties - in various states of repair - to be used. It is very much appreciated at this challenging time."*

**Peter Wightman**, Deputy Chief Officer & Director of Primary Care & Localities, West Essex CCG

[< Read the full case study >](#)

# Facilities management services

We have over 4,000 colleagues working in frontline roles to keep buildings clean, safe, warm, and compliant, so healthcare professionals can focus on delivering excellent patient care.

This has been more crucial than ever during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and our teams – spanning cleaners, receptionists, porters,

engineers and many more – have been working even harder than usual to help the NHS family and keep patients safe.

Our Facilities Management Helpdesk has helped customers with 100,000s of jobs during this period and worked tirelessly to keep you informed. We have:



Carried out **over 7,000 deep cleans** of sites that have had patients or staff with confirmed or suspected symptoms



Supported **over 1,244 buildings** in assessing and managing the risk when a patient or member of staff with suspected symptoms has been identified

[< Find out more >](#)





## CASE STUDY



### Refurbishing vacant space to provide assessment suite

#### Falmouth Health Centre, Cornwall

- Three week building programme to create two fully refurbished consultation rooms and a decontamination room
- Installation of clinical hand washing facilities, shower and floor covering to comply with stringent infection prevention and control standards

*"Everyone has pulled out all the stops to get this job done and I'd like to thank the NHSPS team and contractors who have worked tirelessly for the past few weeks."*

**Geoff Dennis**, Practice Business Manager, The Falmouth Health Centre Practice

[< Read the full case study >](#)

## CASE STUDY



### Identifying and helping to install a COVID-19 testing facility

#### Wesham Park, Blackpool

- Identified and supported vacant office site car park within one week
- Increased testing facility in the community and worked with a range of partners

*"The support delivered by NHSPS to our mobile testing unit has been phenomenal. The process only took one week from first phone call to being ready for deployment. Thank you!"*

**Nick**, Police Constable – Operations Support, Lancashire Resilience Forum

[< Read the full case study >](#)

## CASE STUDY



### Refurbishing health centre to accommodate hot clinic for four surgery groups

#### Redruth Health Centre, Cornwall

- In just four weeks, NHSPS transformed the health centre serving 16,000 patients with a capacity to upscale to 60,000 in Cornwall
- Full redecoration, installing clinical compliant sinks, floor coverings and facilitated moving other occupants to comply as a hot site

*"I cannot thank the team enough for the commitment and energy they applied in getting this project off the ground and completed in such a short time frame. No ask was too great, all our requirements were met."*

**Dr Tamsin Craze**, Manor GP Surgery

[< Read the full case study >](#)



# Mobilising vaccination sites

## Supporting over 250 vaccination sites

We're working with NHS England and Improvement to fight COVID-19 by supporting the vaccine delivery programme.

Our regional asset and facilities management teams are working with customers who require advice on how to use their space and support in transforming spaces to deliver vaccinations. Our support is helping the NHS deliver 43,360 vaccines a day across over 250 sites. The majority have been delivered by GPs through their Primary Care Networks.

## How are we supporting customers?

We're supporting customers by:

- identifying useable space for the vaccination programme within our portfolio and beyond
- reconfiguring space upon request to support vaccination delivery
- providing additional facilities management services as required



**230**

Primary Care Network sites supported



**26**

mass vaccination sites supported



Over

**43,000**

vaccinations per day enabled



## CASE STUDY

### Repurposing non-clinical areas for COVID-19 vaccinations

#### South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust; South West London ICS

We were asked to repurpose several non-clinical areas (c 600 m<sup>2</sup>) of a hospital in South West London to support the delivery of COVID19 vaccinations to the local population with one weeks notice. We:

- reassigned contractors to work around the clock to expedite an existing scheduled works programme for 23rd December back to 14th December
- implemented a comprehensive facilities management delivery programme and completed a TAW agreement
- engaged with Police and local schools to ensure site access/egress was suitable and local roads accessible;
- worked hand in hand on site during week 1 to help orientate staff and patients
- re-routed the site to ensure safe queuing system, in tandem with the hospital still delivering their mental health services

#### Impact

Strong, collaborative relationships with our customers and good communication enabled us to get the site operational within the one week timeframe requested.

The site is now set up to support about 800 vaccinations a day, which will increase to a target of 1,400 a day once service expansion completes.

This has cemented some already strong relationships with the ICS and local trust.

*"You and your colleagues have done an astounding job in the past week. Thank you very much. Clearly we wouldn't be vaccinating 975 patients this week without your help. Quite literally a life-saver!"*

**NHS South West London CCG**

## Keep us informed

If you need advice or support in setting up a vaccination site, or will be making changes to the way you operate (including hours of operation and space usage), please contact our Customer Support Centre so that we can provide the appropriate support.





## Helping the NHS get the most from its estate

Our unrivalled property expertise enables customers to make the right estate decisions for your patients.

We help at every stage of a building's life – from the beginnings of a requirement, to managing space utilisation, to building new health centres, to disposing of surplus sites and more.

We partner with NHS colleagues to identify practical, tailored and innovative local property solutions.





## Advisory services

- Professional property advice
- FM support
- Technical guidance
- Procurement advice
- HSE consulting
- Best practice
- Data management
- Technology enablement
- Energy and environment
- People management
- Technical compliance and CAFM expertise



## Portfolio optimisation

- Stakeholder engagement
- Asset management
- Estate optimisation
- Vacation planning



## Legal

- Title due diligence
- Planning law
- Contract negotiations
- Litigation support



## Space management

- Space utilisation studies
- Sessional space management
- Vacant space management



## Options development and analysis

- Options analysis and business case development
- Project evaluation
- Financial analysis and reporting



## Disposal management

- Marketing strategy
- Property due diligence
- Sales process
- Bid analysis/selection
- Transaction negotiations
- Contractual completion
- Housing delivery support



## Town planning

- Local plan representations nationally
- Brownfield and greenbelt reviews
- Planning appraisals
- Pre-application, master planning and planning applications
- Section 106/CIL advice



## Property development

- Delivery of new health infrastructure and value release
- Feasibility and options analysis
- Legal and technical due diligence
- Design and planning
- Development management



## PFI

- PFI advisory
- Cost consultancy
- Contract management



## Helpdesk

- Customer call handling
- FM task management/helpdesk



## Construction project management

- Refurbishment
- Extensions
- New builds



## Soft facilities management

- Catering
- Cleaning
- Reception
- Security
- Waste management
- Portering
- Grounds maintenance



## Hard facilities management

- Building maintenance
- Technical compliance
- M&E systems



## Property management

- Lease negotiations/lease event management
- Rent reviews
- Rates management and rating appeals

# When to contact us

Please contact us via our Facilities Management helpdesk on:

 **0808 196 2045** (freephone)

- to report an emergency or urgent facilities issue
- to notify us of positive cases of COVID-19 at one of our buildings. We ask that you inform our reception colleagues of any procedures you have introduced to deal with patients who attend with symptoms of COVID-19.
- to notify us of any segregation/cohort areas of in-patient treatment established in one of our buildings, so we can effectively plan resources to support this.
- if you require assistance with repurposing space to better support clinical needs

If you are a customer of NHS Property Services and have not received our updates through email or post, please contact our Customer Support Centre to register for updates.

For all other queries:

 **0800 085 3015** (freephone)

 [\*\*customer.service@property.nhs.uk\*\*](mailto:customer.service@property.nhs.uk)

 [\*\*www.property.nhs.uk\*\*](http://www.property.nhs.uk)

 **@nhsproperty**

 **@nhsproperty**

