Returning to the Office

How technology can create a Covid safe workplace

Start Planning the Return to your Office

Workspace management systems have typically been used to measure and manage occupancy, with organisations employing these systems to help make the most of their valuable real estate. These same tools can be employed to keep the use of space within acceptable levels to ensure the safety of all, through controlling building occupancy, encouraging physical distancing, and providing track and trace capability.

Positive news of vaccines mean that our economies can see the beginning of the end of the pandemic, and we can start to plan for the return to the office. Throughout the lockdown Matrix Booking has been engaging with our clients regarding how they want to begin opening up their offices in a way that ensures the health and safety of all people involved. As we start to plan for the return to our offices, we must consider how we can carefully manage the return, whilst implementing processes and controls that can keep our staff safe in our offices.

Throughout 2020, Matrix Booking has been supporting organisations who reopened their offices during the pandemic. Matrix Booking allows users to book their return to the office by utilising familiar, intuitive applications. Organisations now have controls over how many people return, and can rely upon an advanced track and trace capability. These features reduce risk, and improve the safety for all occupants involved.

Looking towards 2021 and beyond, many organisations have embraced the transition to flexible working, and envisage continuing to offer their colleagues the choice of how and where they work. A desk booking system can easily allow team members to see who else is planning to come into the office, and book a desk in their neighbourhood near their colleagues. Facilities professionals can review utilisation and occupancy data which can help understand the future workplace needs of the organisation.

We are here to assist you, so we are providing a free trial for new customers to plan your return to the office. **Matrix Booking is already trusted by over 200 organisations:**
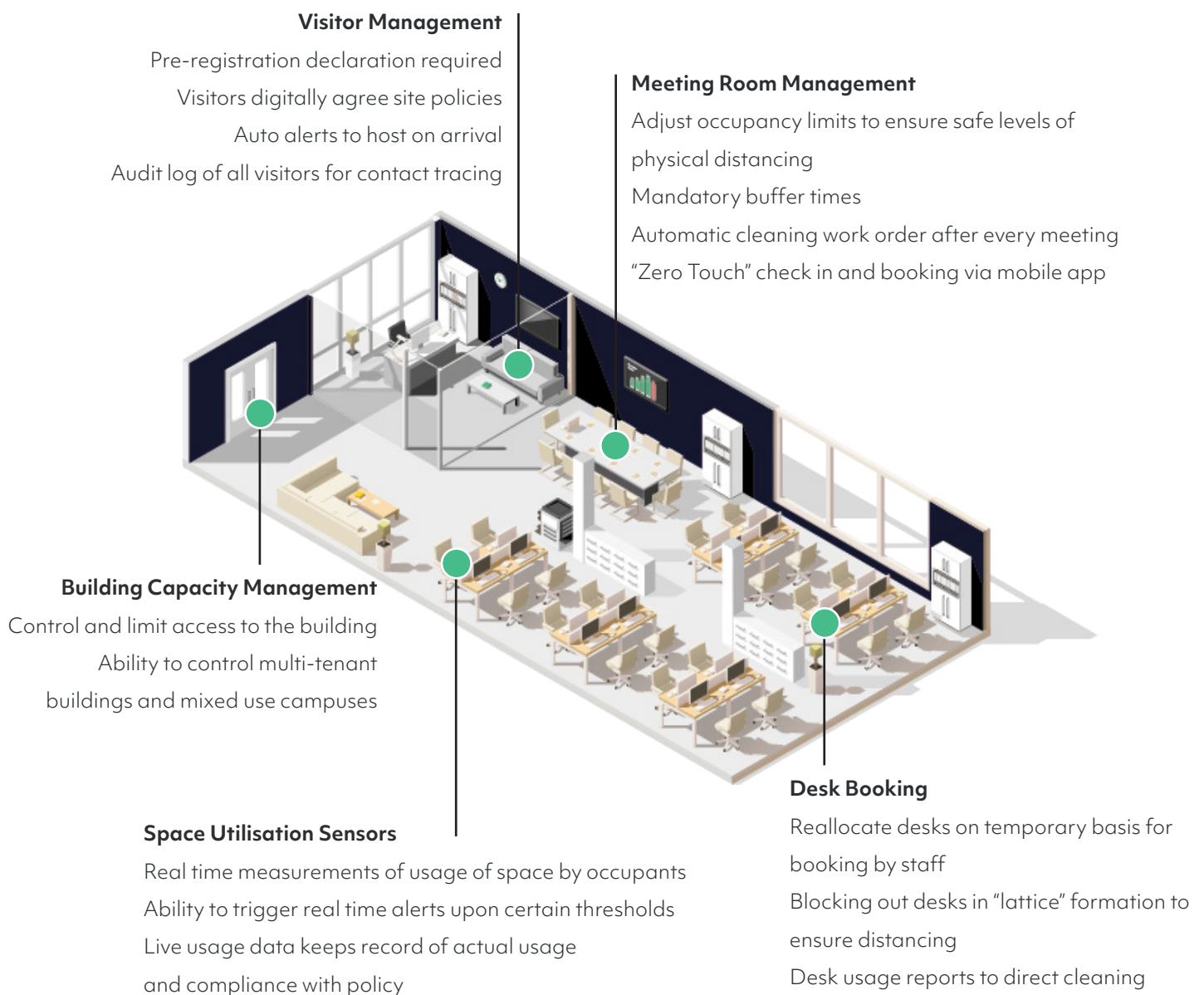
Creating a Covid Safe Workplace

As we start to open up, we will need to consider implications of physical distancing and "zero touch" compliance throughout the office.
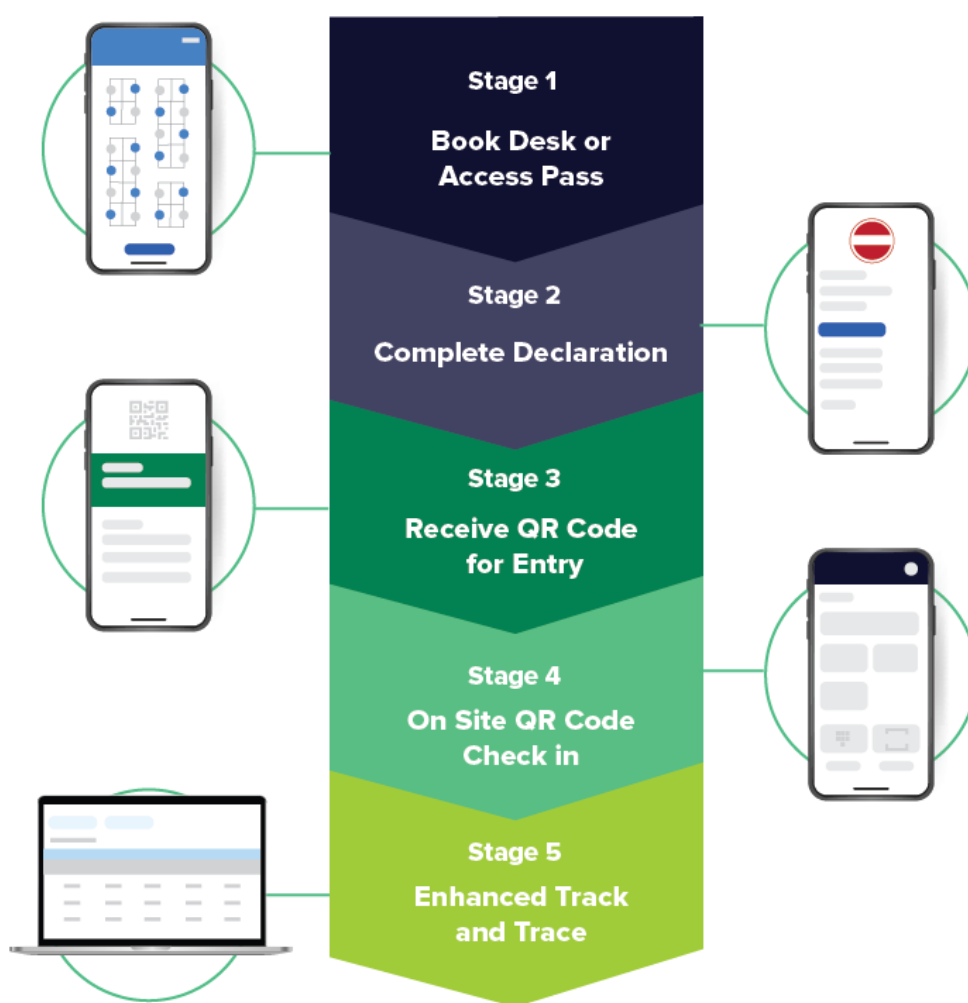
Throughout the pandemic, Matrix Booking has been used by organisations to control who has access to the office to ensure that use of workspace is kept to acceptable levels. These organisations are now starting to plan the permanent reopening of their offices. During this period of reopening there will still be implications around who gets to use what spaces, and under what rules and permission framework. Matrix Booking can assist in the following areas:

Visitor Management
Pre-registration declaration required
Visitors digitally agree site policies
Auto alerts to host on arrival
Audit log of all visitors for contact tracing

Meeting Room Management
Adjust occupancy limits to ensure safe levels of physical distancing
Mandatory buffer times
Automatic cleaning work order after every meeting
"Zero Touch" check in and booking via mobile app

Building Capacity Management
Control and limit access to the building
Ability to control multi-tenant buildings and mixed use campuses

Space Utilisation Sensors
Real time measurements of usage of space by occupants
Ability to trigger real time alerts upon certain thresholds
Live usage data keeps record of actual usage and compliance with policy

Desk Booking
Reallocate desks on temporary basis for booking by staff
Blocking out desks in "lattice" formation to ensure distancing
Desk usage reports to direct cleaning

5 Steps for Returning to the Office

Matrix Booking has been enhanced to support the needs of the user when re-entering the office during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The following features have been designed and developed alongside existing customers, and are fully configurable to support the needs of your organisation:

Stage 1

Book Desk or Access Pass

Stage 2

Complete Declaration

Stage 3

Receive QR Code for Entry

Stage 4

On Site QR Code Check in

Stage 5

Enhanced Track and Trace

The Return to Office workflow can be easily configured for the requirements of each office within the portfolio

1. Book a desk with physical distance rules

Current UK Government guidance recommends physical distancing of 2 metres.

Organisations can control the number of people who can return to the office, by controlling the number of bookable desks or access passes per day. These are then provided to staff on a first come, first served basis. Booking permissions can control what teams and departments can use which zones or desks. Furthermore, request approval permissions can be configured for some user groups.
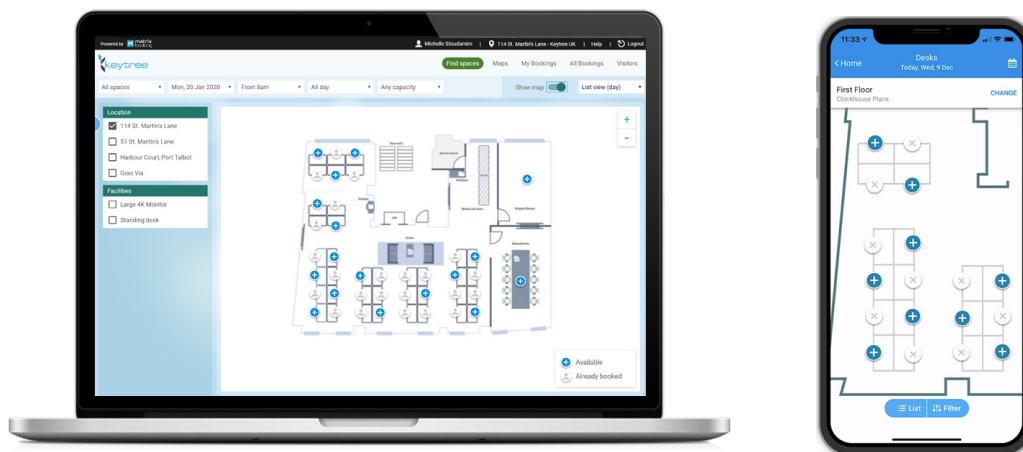
Desk availability can be configured in a "lattice" style formation, ensuring physical distancing between occupants
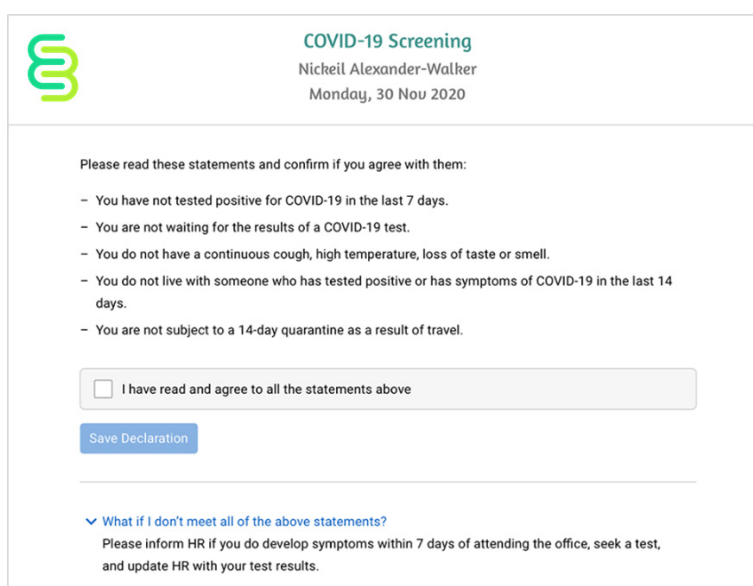
Desks can be marked as unavailable by the administrator, either by configuring their availability directly, or by block booking alternative desks in a "lattice" style formation. This configuration will ensure that each bookable desk has the minimum level of space between other bookable desks. Therefore occupants can be kept at an appropriate distance from one another when using the space.

Desk booking provides an ideal "first come first served" resource allocation system, which simultaneously allows end users to choose how and where they work, alongside controlling overall numbers of building occupants. Booking policies can be easily changed by the system admin, so when you want to reopen your office fully, you can simply adjust the rules and permissions accordingly.

2. Complete pre arrival declaration form

Declarations are site specific policies and terms that all visitors must review, agree and digitally sign prior to being permitted entrance to the building.

When returning to the office, organisations want to ensure the safety of everyone. As part of the re-opening of the office, organisations require team members to be are aware of any conditions or requirements. These requirements will be site specific and can be tailored according to the local and national regulations for returning to the workplace.

Declarations are custom configurable statements for building occupants to read and agree to prior to entering the office

Declarations is a new feature that allows organisations to configure their own custom text, which can be sent to team members where they must read and accept this prior to being permitted on site. The digitally signed declaration is saved to the users record for a configurable period of days before it must be resubmitted. Declarations can be sent to internal and external visitors to inform them of site specific conditions of entry, as well as any requirements around Covid-19 that the individual needs to be aware of.

It is important that people attending the office are made fully aware of guidelines as the situation develops. System admins can publish attachments, documents, weblinks and guidelines to the web application. These communications can be complemented by configurable banners and alerts which will help with keeping all stakeholders up to date with the latest developments.

3. Recieve QR code for building entry

QR code sent to internal staff and external visitors is proof of booking and used to show declaration approval status

One of the key aspects of controlling the return to the office is monitoring who has entered the building at certain times. Ensuring control over the building access is crucial, in order to have reliable data for contact tracing purposes. Furthermore it is important that internal and external visitors are captured using a single unified process.

QR codes enable visitors to validate they have an active booking and have completed the building declarations approval process

Once a team member has booked a space and completed their declaration, they will be emailed a QR code. External visitors can be sent a declaration and QR code too, providing a single process for all building visitors. The QR code enables the user to validate they have an active booking or attending a meeting, and have completed the Covid declaration process. The QR code check in technology has been developed and enhanced in close collaboration with existing customers.

This process can also be adopted for management of visitors in a multitenant building environment. If receptionists are managing the front of house on behalf of a number of building tenants, the QR code check in workflow can be used across these multi-tenant environments. This streamlines the visitor management workflow for the entire building, and provides the building manager with a single platform for occupancy monitoring and contact tracing purposes.

4. On site check in and building re-entry

Matrix Booking enables a touchless check-in process for internal staff and external visitors where QR codes are scanned by Reception, Front of House and Security teams.

As front of house areas become busier, receptionists and security staff need a quick and easy process to validate staff and visitor arrivals. Ensuring the check in process is as seamless as possible will minimise queues and ensure people are brought through reception. This process must capture who has entered the building, and confirm whether their declaration has been completed and is still valid.
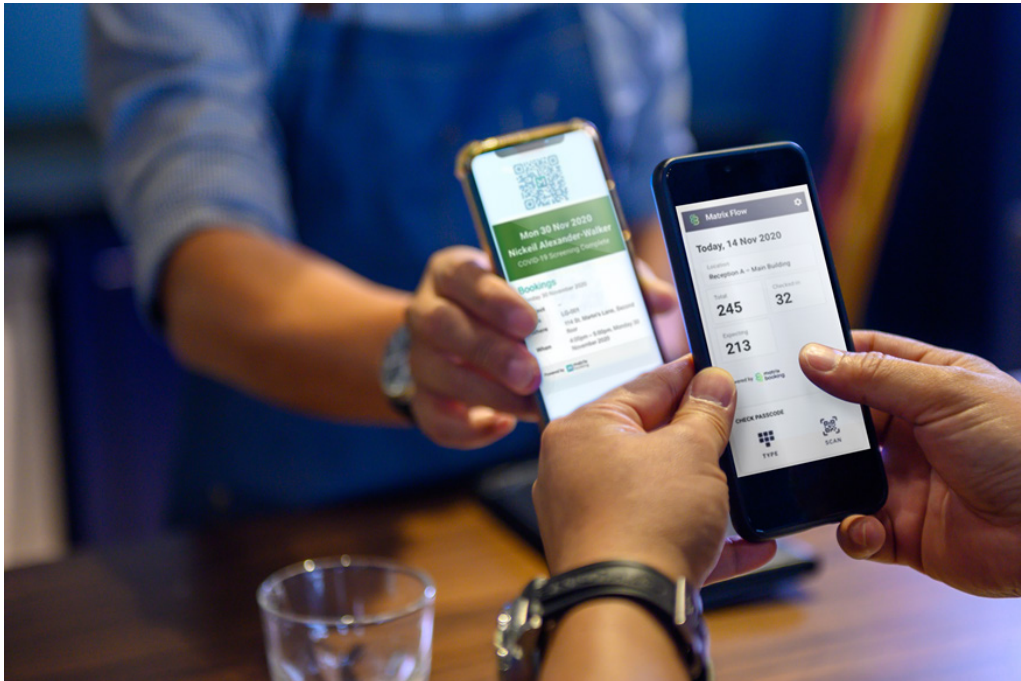

On site check in will arrive the user into the building, confirm the declaration is valid, and check in their desk booking

Receptionists and security staff can be provided a dedicated visitor check in app, where visitor QR codes can be quickly scanned. The app will provide a real time count of people who have entered the building, which will ensure occupancy remains within Covid compliant limits. The app will display the user's declaration status, and will allow the declaration to be resent to the user if it has not been completed or is no longer valid. The app will also handle multiple check in and outs, which will be needed if people leave the office to grab lunch and want to return.

5. Enhanced Contact Tracing

Matrix Booking provides full visitor management capabilities, ensuring organisations can track both internal staff and external people who are visiting the building.

Desk and meeting room reservations provide an ideal source of information for contact tracing purposes. Booking data will provide information regarding who has sat in which zone and when. Meeting bookings inform who were occupants in shared spaces. This information is non-intrusive, and does not require tracking of staff through other means.
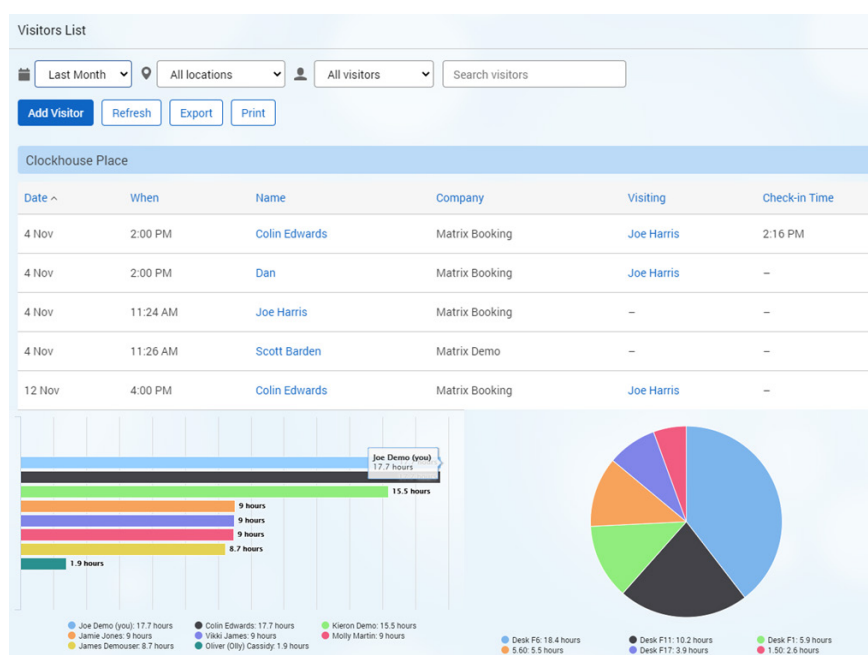
Reservation reports can provide the ability to search for user bookings and understand adjacencies for track and tracing

Within the reservations system it is possible to search for bookings by user across a date series. This data can be used by HR to search for a staff member that has contracted Covid, and to understand the adjacencies for that user. Who did they sit next to, did they attend meetings with external people, and who else was in the building at the same time? These lists can be easily exported and used for contact tracing purposes.

Further reports can provide insights on booking trends, resource utilisation and future forecasting. These metrics will be valuable for Property and Facilities teams as they continue to manage the return to the office for staff, and ensure that all stakeholders are kept safe during

Cleaning Work Order Processing

Matrix Booking provides the ability to book services for meetings.

This can be used to drive the delivery of cleaning services after meeting rooms have been used. Cleaning work orders can be sent to the Facilities management team as emails, a report or as an interactive list.

Desk usage reports can provide details around what desks were booked and used by occupants. This can be used at the end of the day as a workflow for concentrating cleaning to those desks that have actually been used.
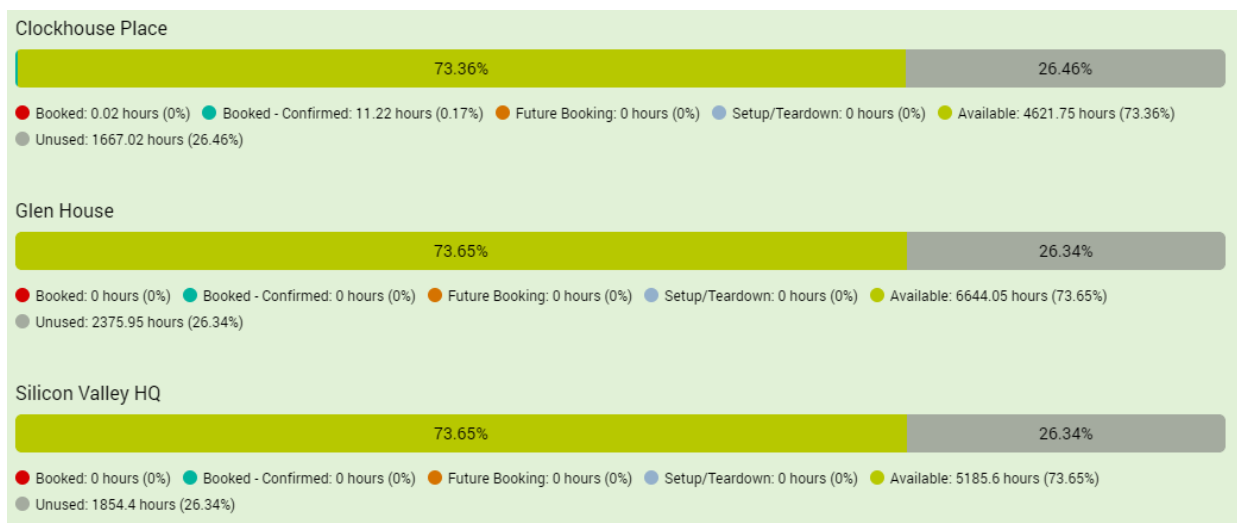
Cleaning resources can be deployed based upon actual space usage, with work orders delivered via email or interactive list

Reporting and Space Usage

Matrix Booking provides a range of standard reports.

These reports will be valuable in monitoring usage of the office as usage increases over time. Key performance indicators such as number of occupants, space usage, utilisation and number of visitors will provide trending data that can ensure proof of physical distancing compliance, and also a record of key contacts should tracing be required.

Building Flow Management
Manage the volume and times that personnel enter and leave the estate with the ability to flex capacity as situation change.

Contact Tracing
Trace who attended and when. Combine with desk and room booking data to create second and third level contact reports.

Visitor Building Passes
Visitors can be allocated building passes by a host to ensure their attendance is monitored along with all other personnel in the building.

Resource Planning
Plan security, cleaning and facilities services based on the volumes and locations occupied enabling optimized use of resources.

Staff Safety and Wellbeing
Manage volumes and timeslots with social distancing measures for desk and room booking to ensure safe working environments.

Attendance Analytics
Historical and future bookings enable compliance checking and advanced resource planning.

Reports highlighting space usage and numbers of occupants provide evidence of distancing compliance, and can also be used as key performance indicators as the office starts to open up more

Publishing Covid-19 Documentation

Matrix Booking provides ability for administrators to publish custom text, links and information to end users.

This can be used to publicise Covid-19 return to work policies, details around booking rules and processes, or ways for people to get in touch to ask questions. This information can be added by an administrator and is visible to all users in the web portal interface. Alerts or messages can be set on each meeting room.
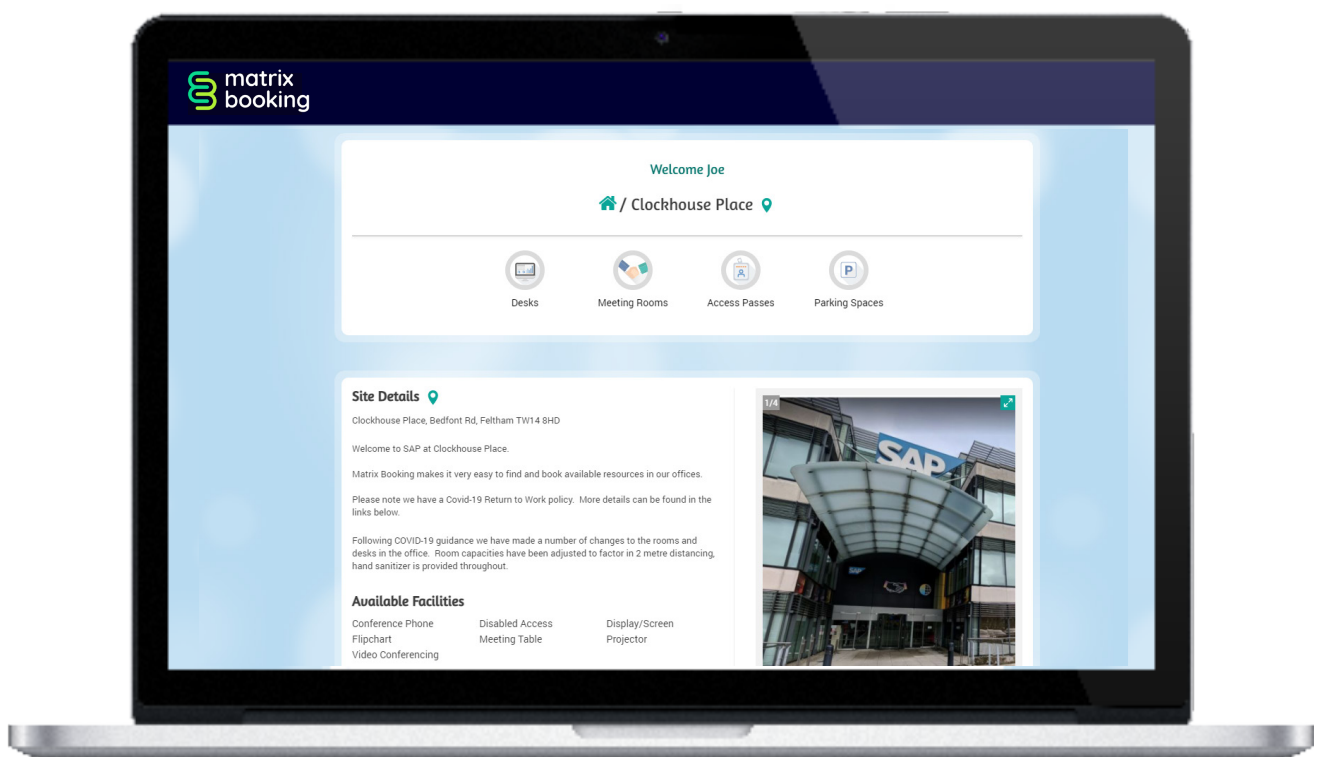
Admins can publish custom text, links and documents within Matrix Booking for users to access. This can be used to echo the widely circulated Covid-19 policies of your organisation

About Matrix Booking

Matrix Booking is an award winning workplace management system which is used by over 100 organisations across the globe.

As a fully cloud hosted solution, it can be deployed quickly and at scale across the enterprise. Out the box functionality includes a range of modules to enable reservations of meeting rooms, desks, visitors and services through a number of different interfaces.

Workplace Sensors
Integrate sensors and beacon technology to enable real-time views of your estate enable users to find and book the most suitable resources.

IOS and Android Mobile App
Book rooms and desks on the go with the Matrix mobile App from the Apple or Google App stores.

Room & desk Booking
Enable sharing of meeting rooms, desk and associated services across the organisation. Robust rules and permissions ensure controls over levels of access.

Digital Signage
Smart digital display applications to enable users to easily view, book, check in and out and cancel.

Outlook and Office 365
Integration enable users to book meeting rooms using the Outlook Add in, enabling a single One Stop Shop for booking the meeting room, visitors and services.

Visitor Management
Integrated Visitor Management toolset to provide an excellent user experience for visitors and hosts.

Contact Us

matrix booking

We are here to answer any questions you have and to support your return to your office.
We can also provide a free trial and demo of Matrix Booking to see if it meets your
requirements. Please contact us below for more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

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