

## CASE STUDY - VEOLIA

**PROJECT:** Veolia UK, Pentonville Road, N1  
**DURATION:** 20 weeks (Phased)  
**SIZE:** 30,000sqft  
**OCCUPANCY:** Office Space & Meeting Suite



Veolia UK commissioned us to support them with the re-evaluation of the way they occupied their UK Head Office at 210 Pentonville Road.

An impending and significant increase in rent & rates had galvanised the management team to research any reasonable options to support the reduction of floor space at 210.

We instigated a detailed information gathering process to ensure all options supported actual business needs, including a significant 2 week Time Utilisation Survey mapping how the space was being used by all staff.

A detailed report was provided which identified average and peak occupancy rates for all departments as well as mapping meeting room, breakout area and printer activity/occupancy.

Further discussions suggested that space plans to support both traditional and agile office layouts would be needed for consideration in order to compare and contrast the suggestions offered.

We also provided a high level budget to confirm project feasibility and it soon became clear that a move to agile working could provide both better and more supportive office accommodation as well as pay for itself in less than 2 years.



*“Veolia occupies high quality offices very close to Kings Cross Station, it is an important location for us because of its proximity to the Eurostar and our ability to reach our northern plants and depots. We were faced with a considerable problem because of extreme rises in rental values and of rateable costs. Regrettably, no immediate alternatives presented themselves to us within Central London so we approached Workspace to see what solutions might be possible. They approached the task with imagination, professionalism and a can-do attitude while producing results which are self-evident and which, despite initial nervousness from some, has brought about a much refreshed working atmosphere and very positive comments indeed from all of our staff. What a result.”*

**Robert Hunt, Chief Corporate Officer and External Affairs Director**

**THE WORKSPACE CONSULTANTS LLP**

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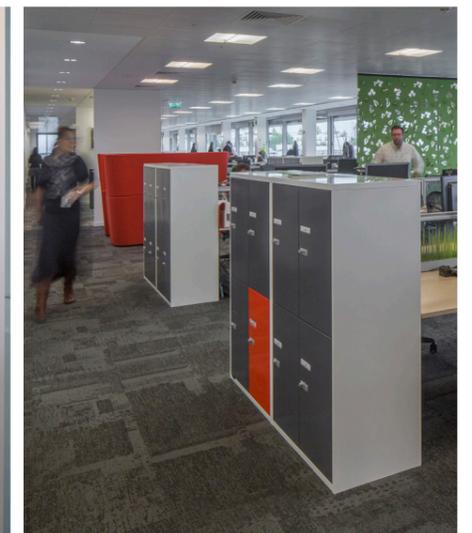
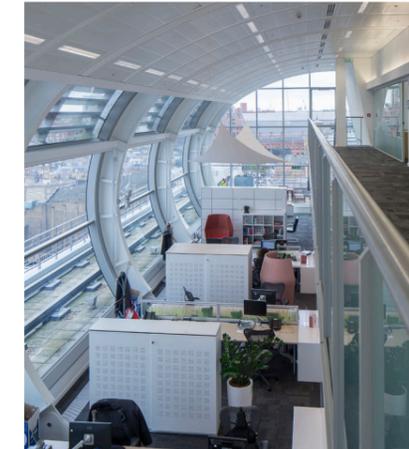
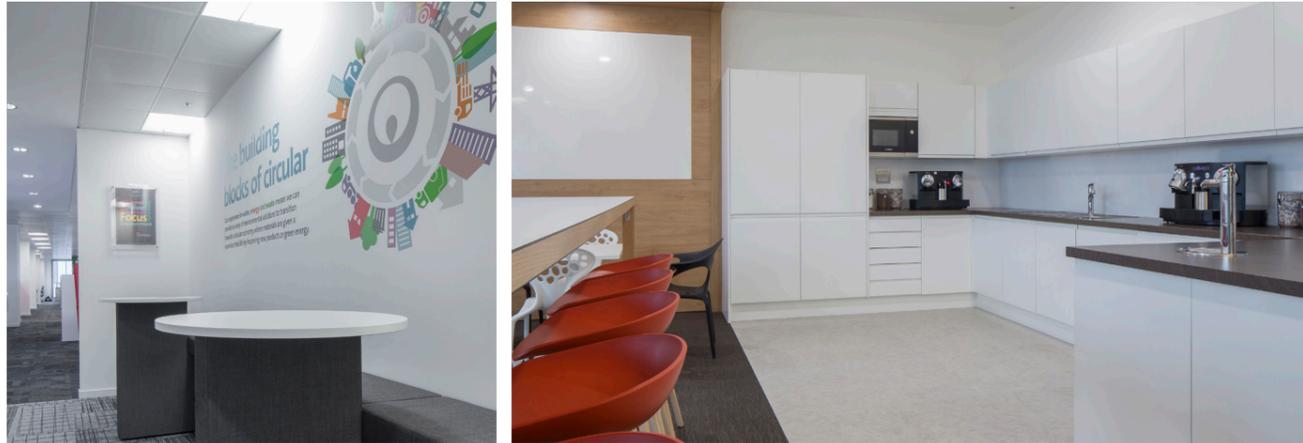
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With average occupancy rates of 42% and peak rates at just 75% the layout supporting flexible working was selected.

During the briefing process of the project, Veolia's HR Department began to investigate agile working and how it might be introduced more widely. A successful pilot was instigated and confirmed acceptability of the principle of agile working for the business as a whole.

The move from a traditional layout allowed the removal of superfluous workstations in favour of increased quantities of meeting spaces (both formal and informal) as well as quiet rooms and a spacious communal breakout area. It was agreed that desks would be provided for 80% of the headcount with lockers and hotboxes for all users.

*"During the planning phase, monthly meetings were held with interlocutors from each department and we were regularly asked about how it could work with fewer desks - I can confirm that it has worked really well and the office is now a much more pleasant & buzzing environment."* **Marsha Karakashian, Project Administrator**



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Workshops on flexible working with user representatives helped to manage the transition and staff were told why changes were being implemented to ensure a positive response.

A new furniture package was specified and tendered to supplement existing items and some areas of the space were refitted to suit the new design. These included a new reception area, breakout area, small meeting rooms and quiet rooms.

A presentation highlighting the new spaces was placed on the company intranet to ensure full understanding of the scheme.

The timeline for implementation was rapid and necessitated negotiation with pre-vetted contractors rather than a full tender process. AIS were appointed after a short but effective negotiation and we managed the works to completion supported by Veolia's estates department and onsite administrators.



*"The agile concept has enabled us to consolidate our occupation and release circa 20% of our office footprint for sub-letting. Just as importantly, the move to agile working and the increased take up of workstations has produced a more vibrant, dynamic and collaborative working environment for our employees. We now enjoy a workspace with more diversity, more communal meeting space, more informal collaborative opportunities and greater flexibility compared to our former traditional office model. The new office layout and the new working concepts have been favourably received by the business and employees alike"*  
**Jon Whittaker, Head of Estates**