

Year in Review

Highlights from 2024/25

The RUH,
where you matter

The RUH, where you matter

Welcome to the Year in Review 2024/5. This is our annual opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the progress we've made in delivering the best possible care and outcomes for the people we care for, and to share just some of our achievements and highlights with you.

Last year, the RUH came together with Great Western Hospitals in Swindon and Salisbury Foundation Trust to form BSW Hospitals Group. I am proud to lead all three hospitals as Group CEO, and believe that we can achieve much by collaborating and innovating together.

However, each hospital is also unique, with its own staff, patients and community. The Year in Review is an important opportunity for us to share more about the RUH's own year.

2024/25 has brought its share of challenges. We have navigated changing demands and a need to adapt and innovate – all with tighter finances. These pressures will continue into 2025/6.

However, there is still much to be proud of. Our maternity and neonates team retained their outstanding CQC rating last year and they've kept improving. Highlights include a redesigned maternity outpatients area and a new at-home tube feeding service helping premature babies go home sooner.

Looking ahead, we're excited to launch our shared Electronic Patient Record (EPR) across the BSW Hospitals Group. This will give clinicians instant access to the same up-to-date patient information, making care safer, more efficient, and seamless across all three hospitals.

We're also proud of our role in the wider community. In May 2024, we signed a civic agreement with Bath Spa University, the University of Bath, the council, and Curo. This affirms our commitment to work together to tackle regional challenges. Our first Community Day in September 2024 welcomed visitors into the hospital, helping build trust with our local community, as well as patients and their loved ones. And our large-scale decarbonisation project is well underway, which, when complete, will create a cleaner environment for our local community.

None of this would be possible without our incredible staff. We're committed to creating a safe, inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued – doing this allows our staff to focus on looking after patients to the best of their abilities. So 2024/5 saw the launch of intersectional Inclusion Weeks, our participation in Bath Pride, and a new Violence Reduction and Prevention policy. We've also made progress in reducing bullying and harassment, especially for disabled staff – we'll keep working on this in 2025. And one of the highlights of the calendar is our Annual Awards Ceremony, where we get to celebrate our staff's achievements.

As ever, I'm deeply grateful for the dedication, compassion, and resilience shown across our organisation, and for the support of our partners and community.



Cara Charles-Barkes
BSW Hospitals Group
Chief Executive

Contents

Welcome	2	The people in our community	16	Working Together, Learning Together, Improving Together	22
Strategy overview	3	Financial summary	19	Members and Governors	23
The people we care for	4	Community support	20	Keep up to date	24
The people we work with	10				

Strategy overview

We have a compelling Trust strategy to help us achieve our You Matter vision. You can read more on the 'About Us' section of our website. Each year we choose three to four breakthrough objectives to focus our energy on. Our progress against our breakthrough objectives are described throughout this document.

The people we **work** with

Together, we will create the conditions to perform at our best.

- Demonstrating our shared values with kindness, civility and respect all day, every day.
- Taking care of and investing in teams, training and facilities to maximise the potential of all that we have.
- Celebrating our diversity and passion to make a difference.

The people in our **community**

Together, we will create one of the healthiest places to live and work.

- Working with partners to make the most of our shared resources and plan wisely for future needs.
- Taking positive action to reduce health inequalities.
- Creating a community that promotes the wellbeing of our people and environment.

The people we **care** for

Together, we will support you as and when you need us most.

- Connecting with you – helping you feel safe, understood and always welcome.
- Consistently delivery the highest quality care and outcomes.
- Communicating well, listening and acting on what matters most to you.



The people we care for

At the RUH we work together to support the people we care for, as and when they need us most. Over the next few pages we share some highlights to show how we are achieving this.

Looking back at the last year...

A new cath lab

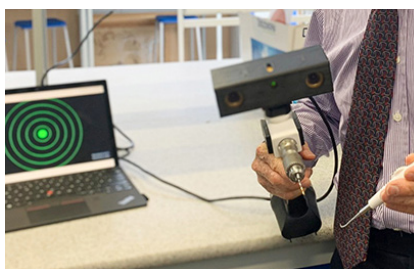
We opened a new cath lab with advanced technology, enabling safer, faster cardiology procedures and better care for patients and staff.



2024 April

First use for new drill guidance system

The new drill guidance system improves surgical accuracy, reduces x-rays and infection risk, and speeds up recovery.



July

Patient praise for

Emergency Department

A national survey found that the RUH's care rated significantly above average, with patients feeling treated with dignity, respect and compassion throughout their experience.



November

May



Improving antenatal care
Our redesigned maternity outpatients offers more space, separate areas for urgent care, and one contact number for easier, faster support when it's needed most.

2025 February



Super Rehab launched
Super Rehab, a personalised lifestyle programme for heart patients, combines tailored diet and exercise to improve wellbeing, reduce procedures, and potentially reverse heart disease.

2024/2025 in numbers

Our 2024/5 breakthrough goal for the people we care for was to reduce our inpatient length of stay, and be in the top 25% of acute trusts for this. While an overall reduction in non-elective length of stay was not achieved, there have been significant improvements at ward level.

Other highlights include:

94% of maternity service users and 96% of outpatients rated their care as 'good' or 'very good'.

Delivering and supporting:



613,966 outpatient appointments, up almost 5% from 2023/4



13,201 operations



155,041 diagnostic tests,



4,025 babies' births,



101,475 A&E attendances, 3% more than in 2023/4

Thanks to RUHX funding, 100 sensory journals have been provided to families in our neonatal unit offering comfort, connection, and support during their time in hospital.



New Intensive Care Unit
We opened a modern 16-bed ICU with better light, improved spaces for families and cutting-edge equipment, designed to deliver outstanding care for our sickest patients.



March

March



Supporting premature babies to go home sooner
At-home tube feeding for premature babies, which is supported by outreach nurses, is allowing families to get back to the comfort and familiarity of their home sooner.

A warm welcome for Her Majesty the Queen

We were delighted to welcome Her Majesty the Queen to officially open the Dyson Cancer Centre in September 2024. It was a truly celebratory occasion with patients, staff, supporters and guests from the wider community all on hand to mark the moment.

Her Majesty was given a guided tour of the new purpose-built centre, which brings together many of the RUH's cancer services under one roof. The Queen said "Can I congratulate all of you on this wonderful centre. I've had a brief tour around and everybody I've met – whether it's the patients, the families or the nursing staff and the helpers – all seem to be over the moon about it.

It's got a very welcoming atmosphere and you can see that it actually raises people's spirits in a very difficult time. So, congratulations to you all ... it is very special."



Her Majesty the Queen and Cara-Charles Barks, CEO
of BSW Hospitals Group

Providing the right care for all our patients

We want all the people we care for to receive the right care and support, in the right place and at the right time. We also know that some of our patients are more vulnerable than others, perhaps due to age, disability or the need for special care, or perhaps they are at risk of abuse or neglect or just at a particularly challenging time of life. Our new and first Vulnerable People Strategy sets out how we will support people who are considered vulnerable.

We worked with patients, families and carers, RUH staff and partner organisations, people in our local community, and voluntary and community groups to understand what vulnerable people value most when receiving healthcare.

We used this insight to look at ways to improve our service for vulnerable people, whether that's through better training for our staff or making it easier for vulnerable people to access our services in a way that works for them.



Quality priorities report back



Our priorities from 2024/25:

We set priorities every year that ensure we are focusing on patient safety, clinical effectiveness, and the experience of the people we care for. They are based on reviewing what our data is telling us about the services we provide, consultation with our key stakeholders and, most importantly, through listening to the feedback we receive from patients and carers.

We are pleased to report we made positive progress in our 2024/25 priorities.



Improving learning from patient safety events

Patient safety is at the heart of everything we do at the RUH. We all want to avoid unintended or unexpected harm to the people we are care for.

In line with the measurements of the Patient Safety Incident and Response Framework (PSIRF) we looked at the whole patient safety process, from reporting incidents and near misses through to how we learn from these events. We know there is much we can learn from incidents that may have caused no or low levels of harm. We've streamlined processes and made it easier to report and learn from incidents, focusing much more on how and why incidents happen, so we can improve learning and make care safer. We launched a wide-ranging training programme to support patient safety across the organisation and we developed resources so that when a patient safety incident has occurred we ensure compassionate engagement with families and loved ones.



Developing our safety culture

We increased our compliance for staff undertaking patient safety training to 90%. More patient safety training has been delivered to staff throughout the organisation, including the RUH Trust Board. A new intranet platform was also developed to improve communication. We also started to use our quarterly staff 'people pulse' survey to create a baseline assessment of our safety culture.



Improving communication access with patients, their carers and families

We were awarded accreditation by Communication Access UK, which recognises our commitment to meeting the needs of people with communication difficulties and making appropriate adjustments to support their needs.

Initiatives developed include providing training and creating an intranet page of resources for staff to help them when communicating with patients who need additional support.

Communication support, guidance and training will continue to be developed and promoted in 2025/6.

What are the plans for 2025/6?

Our breakthrough goal for 2025/6 is to reduce the time it takes for ambulances to hand over patients at the RUH. This improves the experience for patients, while also ensuring that ambulances and paramedics are freed up to care for more people in our community.



What are we doing to improve ambulance offload times?

We know that we don't always have capacity in our Emergency Department (ED) or our wards to admit patients as quickly as we'd like.

As part of this we're looking at how our ED works and how we can support more patients with an urgent medical condition to be safely treated on the same day without requiring hospital admission.

Our Same Day Emergency Care service (SDEC) is a key way we will achieve this

Some of the other improvements for the people we care for include...

A new website

We're developing a new website, which will create an aligned look and feel across the hospitals in the BSW Hospitals Group. It is designed to make information clearer, easier to navigate, and more accessible for our patients. The new site will also be simpler for staff to update, helping ensure content stays accurate.

This upgrade is part of our wider commitment to improving patient experience and streamlining internal processes. Whether you're looking for appointment details, service information or support resources, the new site will make it quicker and easier to find what you need.



and has already been redesigned in the summer of 2025.

Patients, referred from primary care, such as GP practices, are directed to Medical SDEC for assessment and treatment.

The service also takes patients from the hospital's Urgent Treatment Centre and ED, if they can be treated on the same day.



Hidden Disabilities Sunflower launch

Next year, we will become official supporters of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower.

This is an important next step towards realising our vision set out in the Vulnerable People Strategy (see page 6): that all vulnerable people will receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time.

The Sunflower symbol is worn voluntarily by people with non-visible disabilities and conditions, or their carer, to signify that someone may need extra help or understanding.

Globally, 1 in 6 people live with a disability, and it's estimated that up to 80% of those are non-visible.

Non-visible disabilities and conditions include (but are not limited to) autism, ADHD, chronic pain, mental health conditions, hearing or visual impairment, learning difficulties, dementia and fatigue-related conditions such as long COVID and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

We are grateful to the support of our official hospital charity RUHX, who are enabling us to make this improvement for the people we care for and the people we work with.

By becoming official members of the Sunflower, we will be able to:

- Ensure RUH staff have the tools, knowledge and understanding to support those who choose to wear the Sunflower
- Give reassurance to those who wear the Sunflower that we will be able to support them while on site
- Supply lanyards on site free of charge to patients, visitors, carers and staff members

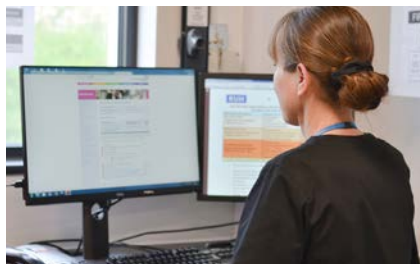


The people we work with

At the RUH we recognise the importance of looking after the people who look after you. That's why we strive to create the conditions for every single colleague to perform at their best. The following pages show just some of the ways we are achieving this.

Looking back at the last year...

Paperless inpatients go-live
The project sees an end to paper documentation, and will improve safety, accessibility and efficiency. It will also result in resource savings across inpatient nursing, doctor and therapy areas.



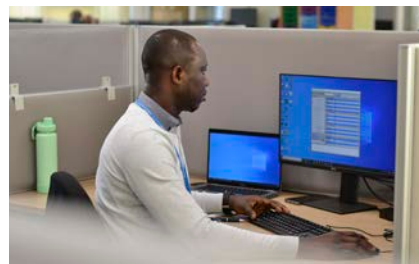
2024 August

Nature comes to Philip Yeoman ward
Junior Sister Ewa Wojtysiak introduced nature-themed photography to Philip Yeoman ward, promoting holistic healing by bringing the calming power of nature in to patient spaces.



November

Launch of Halo platform
HALO is a self-service portal for Digital and People queries. It streamlines processes, improves efficiency, and makes it easier for staff to get the help they need.



December

October



Inclusion Matters
Inclusion Champions are staff who support colleagues with inclusion challenges, share resources, signpost services, and help create a workplace where everyone feels valued and heard.

2025 January



Ramping up our support for neurodiversity
A neurodiversity support group for staff, students, volunteers, and allies offers peer support, raises awareness, and contributes to inclusion across the RUH staff community.

2024/2025 in numbers

Our 2024/25 breakthrough goal for the people we work with was addressing discrimination.

We want the RUH to be a safe and inclusive working environment, where colleagues can thrive and enjoy their work. This means generating a culture in which every single person feels empowered to speak up when things aren't right, and to support each other to challenge poor behaviours.

Our new Violence Prevention and Reduction Policy will address abuse, discrimination and violence to staff from patients, relatives and members of the public, helping us to ensure we all feel safe at work. You can read more about this on the next page.

Other highlights include:

150%
more Inclusion
Champions are
now in place

We're so proud of our Inclusion Champions who are having meaningful conversations, challenging inequality and supporting colleagues across the trust.

More than 100 teams are now running regular improvement huddles – showing a growing culture of continuous improvement across the organisation.

over **2,000**
improvement
tickets have been
implemented
across the trust.

54%
of staff took
part in the
latest NHS Staff
survey

A strong response that gives us valuable insight into what matters most to our people, and helps shape the future of our workplace together.

Lori Grace room opened on NICU
We opened the Lori Grace Room within our Neonatal service. This is a comforting space for families, created in memory of Lori Grace Robertson, who tragically lost her life in a car accident shortly before beginning her role as a paediatric nurse. The room honours her legacy and supports togetherness in care and healing.



February

March



First EDI newsletter published
We shared our first EDI newsletter, celebrating projects across the Trust that champion inclusion, equity, and belonging for colleagues and the people we care for.

Violence Prevention and Reduction Policy launched.

At the RUH, we are committed to providing safe and inclusive working environments, where colleagues can thrive and enjoy their work. This means generating a culture in which every single person feels empowered to speak up when things aren't right, and to support each other to challenge poor behaviours.

As an organisation, we will not tolerate bullying, abuse, harassment, discrimination and violence. Our commitment to challenging this is at the heart of our You Matter vision.



To support this commitment, we launched our Violence Prevention and Reduction (VPR) Policy. This includes a three-step approach to address abuse, discrimination and violence to staff from patients, relatives and members of the public.

The policy represents a huge step forward for the RUH, helping us to ensure we all feel safe at work, supported by those around us, and able to get the right help when we need it.

Occupational Health prestigious accreditation

In February our Occupational Health team achieved prestigious SEQOHS accreditation from the Faculty of Occupational Medicine. SEQOHS stands for Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service and is known as the industry benchmark for quality.

Inspectors praised the service for being 'truly innovative and forward thinking' and highlighted its commitment to 'continuous improvement and development'.

They also congratulated the team for being 'knowledgeable, engaged and committed to their roles'.

This impressive achievement further underlines the Trust's commitment to ensuring that the people we work with always have the best possible health and wellbeing support.



Occupational Health team

Staff events

Foodie Fayres

Our monthly Foodie Fayres continue to be a real hit with staff. The Fayres have seen many local independent traders visit the RUH site to further widen the food options for staff at meal times.

Colleagues have been able to enjoy mouth-watering cuisine from around the world, including Japanese street food and Spanish tapas as well as Caribbean, Sri Lankan and Italian dishes.



Spring Inclusion Week

Our first-ever intersectional Inclusion Week took place in March. Each Inclusion Week allows our staff networks to highlight the conversations that are important to them and come together to have these discussions with other groups so that colleagues can learn from each other, share experiences, and keep the conversations going.

A range of events have taken place to celebrate inclusion at the RUH, including talks, exhibitions, presentations and even a special coffee morning.

Pride Fete 2024

To mark Pride month, we hosted a popular Pride fete for our staff. Colleagues could find out more about the new rainbow badges for NHS staff and also had the opportunity to pledge their support to ensuring the RUH is a place that is welcoming for all. There was also an ice cream van, fresh bread and cakes, music and games.



Staff Awards Ceremony

Every year we recognise the highest quality of care, compassion and innovation at our fantastic staff awards ceremony.

Winners are selected from hundreds of nominations. Staff are celebrated for their exceptional dedication to people they care for, the people they work with and people in the wider community.

Awards and recognition

As well as our own annual awards ceremony (see page 13) we're proud that the people we work with have picked up a number of other accolades too. Below are just a few examples.



National praise for Nicky

Nicky Bonner was named the Leader of the Year at the national Health Estates and Facilities Management Association Awards.

Nicky is responsible for leading a team of more than forty people in Estates, and the award recognised her role in cultivating an open and inclusive environment where every idea is valued. Nicky was also celebrated for championing inclusivity, leading by example in setting a benchmark for work ethic and commitment, and for being an excellent role model to her team.



Outstanding Healthcare Support Workers

Healthcare support workers Andreena Anderson, Gregory Jessop and Leah Moyle were honoured with national awards in recognition of the outstanding care they provide.

The trio received Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Midwifery Officer Awards for being role models for their profession, demonstrating commitment and compassion, and acting as ambassadors for best practice.



A round of a-paws for PAT dog Nessa!

Pets as Therapy dog Nessa was awarded The Harriet Heart Medal for outstanding service by Therapy Dogs Nationwide. Nessa and her owner Sally visit the RUH regularly, spreading joy around the hospital.

Nessa has a special talent for connecting with neurodivergent children, making a huge difference to their experience while in hospital.

What are the plans for 2025/6?

We are continuing with our 2025/26 breakthrough goal of addressing discrimination (see page 11). These are just some of the other initiatives we are focusing on.

Developing our leaders

We recognise that we have a responsibility to take care of the people we work with, investing in teams, training and facilities to help staff maximise their potential.

To support this commitment, we have, in autumn 2025, launched a Leadership Development Programme for our current and aspiring leaders. Our Aspiring Leadership Programme is designed to support clinical and non-clinical professionals who are ready to step into leadership roles. For those staff already in a leadership position, our Developing & Excelling Leadership Programme is designed to strengthen their capabilities of leaders. Both courses have a strong focus on practical application, peer learning and reflective practice.

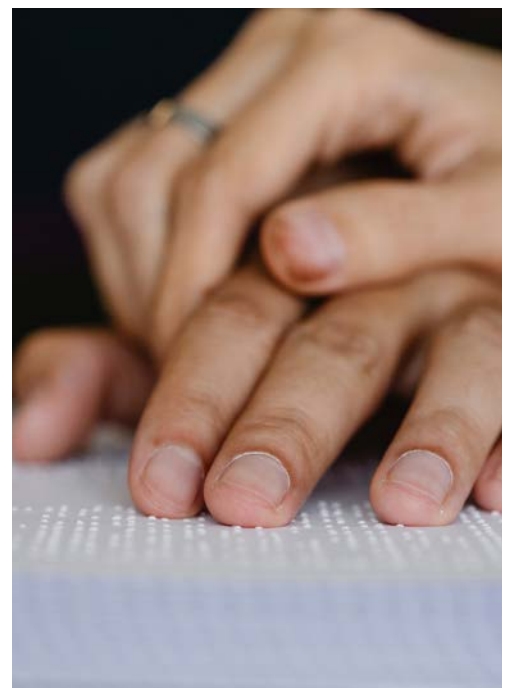


Working with Cancer Policy

We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works at the RUH and have a responsibility to support members of staff who have been affected by cancer, balancing an individual's personal circumstances and the needs of the organisation.

With one in two people in the UK expected to be affected by cancer, we introduced our Working with Cancer policy to support those members of staff who have been diagnosed with cancer themselves, who are caring for someone with cancer or who are working with colleagues affected by cancer.

The policy focuses on a range of support for colleagues, including things like the provision of flexible working arrangements, changes to duties or working hours, and adjustments to the physical work environment.



The people in **our community**

We want everyone in our community to have an equitable experience of healthcare, and for Bath to be one of the healthiest places to live and work. These are just some of the ways that we are working towards this vision.

Looking back at the last year...

First Sustainability Day
To celebrate Earth Day, RUH staff attended inspiring talks showcasing sustainability in healthcare, featuring initiatives from the RUH and partner organisations.



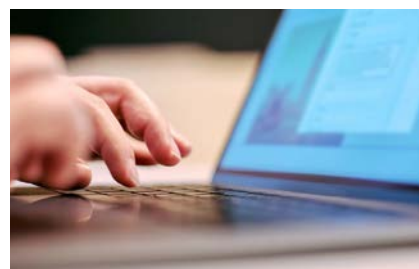
2024 April

Inaugural teddy bear hospital
Over 100 soft toys were treated at RUH's first teddy bear hospital, helping children learn about health in a fun, relaxed hospital setting.



June

Digital Inclusion service launch
A new RUH service offers one-to-one digital support, helping patients and carers confidently use technology to manage their health and long-term conditions.



October

May



Civic agreement signed
The RUH partnered with local anchor institutions, signing an agreement to collaborate for regional benefit with the University of Bath, Bath Spa University, Bath & North East Somerset Council and later, Curo.

July



Ambitions for research
RUH's new research strategy commits to inclusive, community-focused studies, improving access and collaboration to meet local healthcare needs for all patients.

2024/2025 in numbers

Our 2024/25 breakthrough goal for the people in our community was to make the best use of available resources, through the delivery of our financial plan. We achieved 89.5% of our efficiency target, delivery £32.8million of our £36million target – this is one of the highest savings targets we've reached.

Other highlights include:

We recruited our 1,000th baby to take part in our study that improves the way we screen for congenital cataracts in newborns.



CEO appointed for BSW Hospitals Group
Cara Charles-Barks became joint CEO of Great Western, RUH & Salisbury Hospitals, supporting a new group model to improve outcomes across Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon & Wiltshire.



November

2025 February



Supporting recovery after childbirth
The RUH and Health Innovation West studied the Hegenberger Retractor, a tool that makes the suturing process following tears and episiotomies in childbirth easier, safer and faster.

50
books
donated

Thanks to the generosity of our local community and the BaNES Library's 'Gift a Book' scheme over Christmas, patients received donated books that helped brighten their hospital stay.

5

RUH teams joined our sustainability 'Green Team Competition', in partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, which aims to drive green improvements.

The first RUH Community Day

Last September, patients, visitors and local community members of all ages joined us to find out more about life at the RUH from the people who work here. A number of staff members – many with family – also attended to find out more about their colleagues' work.



Colleagues shared useful health advice, demonstrated how we are improving the experience of being at the RUH for all, and shared more about our work in areas such as research, and energy and sustainability.

Our hospital charity RUHX helped make the event possible. They were also on-hand to provide guided tours of the Dyson Cancer Centre, a development that was in part made possible thanks to the generosity of the charity's supporters.

We were also pleased to welcome some of our community partners and other healthcare providers to site, such as the fire and police services, St John Ambulance, Bath Urban Treescape – who were sharing their one-mile walking route of the site – and BaNES Council.

A greener RUH for all

In March 2024, we received a £21.6million government grant to decarbonise the RUH's Combe Park site.

Awarded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero as part of the Salix Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme phase 3c, the multimillion-pound cash boost will help us partially replace our ageing heating systems with more energy-efficient options, such as heat pumps. It will also fund sustainable improvements to our buildings, including installing more solar panels.



We have since appointed a contractor, Veolia, to work with us on this project. We have also received planning permission to install Air Source Heat Pumps on the roof of our Energy Centre. The proposals were carefully researched to make sure that residents living on roads close to the development notice as little difference as possible once work is complete.

When finished, the work will save around 3,200 tonnes of carbon every year – the equivalent of more than 14,100 return journeys from Bath to Edinburgh in the average petrol car.

These changes will not only benefit our planet, but also the health of our patients, visitors, staff and local community.

Financial summary

Our Trust strategy describes our commitment to maximising productivity and minimising waste.

We have been able to make significant progress on this but with more to do, we are working against the backdrop of a national and local context which has proved challenging.

We achieved £32.8 million in savings to end the year with a deficit of with a deficit of £4.2million. This was in line with the financial forecast agreed with NHS England.

How we spent our money in 2024/25:



£368m on pay
(63% of operating expenses)



£214m on non-pay
(37% of operating expenses)



£9.3m on medical equipment
Including the purchase of a second surgical robot, and endoscopy equipment. £2.3 million was funded through charitable donations including a new LINAC.



£13.4m on estate schemes
Various schemes include the completion of the single, same day emergency capacity, fire risk reduction schemes and critical infrastructure backlog maintenance.



£24.8 on Sulis Hospital
Significant multi-year capital projects completed in year Community Diagnostics Centre at Sulis Hospital (£3.2m in total) and Sulis Orthopaedic Centre (SOC).



£5.8m on digital
Investment in hardware to support changes in working practices, clinical systems, and infrastructure support as well as investment in cyber security. This included investment towards the BSW single electronic patient record system.



£10.9m grant spent on
decarbonisation of our heat infrastructure.

Community support for the RUH



RUHX

RUHX helps people in Bath and beyond live healthier and happier lives. 2024 was RUHX's 25th anniversary as the official charity of the RUH and highlights from the year included:

- Launching new fundraising campaigns, including for women's health
- Winning the inaugural Bath Life 'Legends' award recognising the charity's 25 years of support for its local hospital trust
- Installation of a new Radiotherapy LINAC machine, funded by RUHX supporters
- In proud partnership with Friends of the RUH, providing vital new pendant equipment for the RUH's new ICU ward, which opened in January 2025
- Playing a crucial part in September's Dyson Cancer Centre official opening, celebrating the £10 million raised towards it by over 11,000 RUHX supporters.

For the future: RUHX will launch a major campaign, aiming to raise £4 million to upgrade the RUH's PET-CT Scanner. More details are available at: ruh.x.org.uk/pet-ct

Friends of the RUH

The Friends of the RUH's most recent financial year proved to be another successful one.

Across the charity's work providing donations to the RUH and volunteering they:

- Delivered over 21,000 volunteering hours, a 14% growth on the previous year
- Provided just under 200 volunteers to the RUH, a 14% growth on the previous year
- Provided donations to the RUH totalling £381.3k, including:
 - £96.0k for three-year part funding for a RUH Trust volunteer coordinator role
 - £37.7k for a breast care Savi Scout machine
 - £33.3k for Soundbite music therapy
 - £17.3k for a Breast care ultrasound machine
 - £15.4k for an Intensive Care Unit laryngoscope

More information about Friends of the RUH can be found at: friendsoftheruh.org.uk

What are the plans for 2025/6?

We will continue to work towards making Bath one of the healthiest places that live and work. We are looking forward to collaborating with partners for the benefit of the people we work with, the people we care for and the people in our community.

Opening the Sulis Orthopaedic Centre

Following the opening of the Sulis Orthopaedic Centre (SOC), we will be able to perform an additional 3,000 planned orthopaedic operations on medically suitable NHS patients in Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire every year.

This will significantly reduce waiting times for many patients awaiting such operations, which include life-changing hip and knee replacements. It will also safeguard our services into the future.

Located just outside of Bath in Peasedown St John at Sulis Hospital, the SOC is a collaboration between Sulis and the hospitals that make up BSW Hospitals Group (see page 22).



Patients' NHS consultant specialists will oversee their care throughout, but will work closely alongside Sulis's surgical and recovery teams to perform the operations.

Patients will be cared for at Sulis immediately before and after their operations, but additional pre- and post-operative appointments will continue to take place at their local NHS hospital. This will mean that they will only need to travel for the operation itself.

The venture is a shining example of how collaborative working is enabling us to transform patients' experiences, by getting them on the road to recovery much sooner than before.

Working Together, Learning Together, Improving Together



In 2024, the Boards of Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust, and Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust agreed to form BSW Hospitals Group.

This decision followed years of increasingly close working as part of provider collaborative, the Acute Hospital Alliance, and the shared ambition to deliver high-quality care for our population. The formation of BSW Hospitals Group gives us an opportunity to build on the success we experienced as an Acute Hospital Alliance. Some of these successes include introducing robotic surgery at each Trust, the creation of a shared electronic patient record and building an orthopaedic centre at Sulis for the benefit of NHS patients in the locality.

We've made some significant steps forwards in the last year. In November 2024, Cara Charles-Barks began her role as Chief Executive of BSW Hospitals Group. Cara has worked in the BSW system for eight years and was Chief Executive at Salisbury Foundation Trust from 2017–2020 and then the RUH from 2020–2024. Cara will provide the golden thread between the three Trusts, working to ensure we realise our shared ambition to make sure the care we provide is truly exceptional. She will be supported at each site by a Managing Director, who will oversee operational leadership as well as contribute to the direction of travel of the Group. The recruitment process for these posts began in January 2025, and, as of September 2025, they were in position.

To realise the opportunities and make large-scale transformation we need to get the basics right and our organisational performance will be critical. To make sure we have the building blocks in place to do this, in 2025–26 we will appoint a Joint Chair and establish a Committee to oversee the work we do together. We will also establish a group operating model and a shared Strategic Planning Framework, to provide clarity on our priorities and as an enabler to transform clinical and corporate services. We will also develop and launch a Group strategy, which will set out our joint ambitions as well as respond to the Government's 10 Year Plan for the NHS.

People will always be at the heart of everything we do, so while the strategy will set out what we will do, the development of our Group values and behaviours will set out how we intend to do it. Our shared continuous improvement programme, Improving Together, will also provide us with the tools to standardise and then transform our ways of working as well as share our learnings.

Members and Governors

Over the course of 2024/25, representatives of the Council of Governors were formally involved in:

- ✓ Supporting the recruiting process and appointing Dr Simon Harrod, Clinical Non-Executive Director, to the Board of Directors from 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2027
- ✓ Engaging in and supporting the development of the RUH business plan
- ✓ Strengthening the RUH's governance by reviewing the terms of reference, doing a self-effectiveness evaluation and approving key changes to the constitution
- ✓ Approving the membership community engagement and development strategy
- ✓ Agreeing the appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer for BSW Hospitals Group
- ✓ Supporting the development of a group chair appointment process
- ✓ Planning of and attendance at the AGM
- ✓ Attending a strategic planning away day
- ✓ Receiving many updates and taking part in discussion around the developments and performance of the RUH
- ✓ Representing the views of members and the general public

Farewell from Alison Ryan, Chair of the RUH



In spring 2025, Alison Ryan announced her plans to stand down from her role as Chair of the RUH after six years of dedicated service. She said: "It has been a privilege and a joy to work at the RUH through all the challenges of the last six years.

"I'm immensely proud to have been able to lend my support to important projects for our patients and staff, such as the Brownsword Therapies Building and the Dyson Cancer Centre. But what I'm most proud of is that the RUH gets the business of caring right. Even in the most challenging of times, its caring way has persisted.

"I can quite see why the people of Bath and beyond have such a strong affection for their hospital; I do too."

While Alison's tenure as our Chair may have come to an end, she will still support the RUH as Chair of the Organ Donation Committee

Would you like to become a Member?

Being a member of the RUH gives you the opportunity to influence how the hospital is run and the services that we offer to patients.

We believe that the RUH belongs to our staff, patients and the local community, and through the Council of Governors, our Members are given a greater say in the development of the hospital.

Membership is completely free and it's up to you as to how involved you would like to be. You just need to be aged 16+.

For more information and to apply to join, visit ruh.nhs.uk/membership

Keep up to date:



www.ruh.nhs.uk



RUH Bath



@RUHBath



@RUHBath



Royal United Hospitals
Bath NHS Foundation Trust