



Shaping Cloud

Leaders in Human-Centred
Cloud Transformation



Our mission

We're on a mission to propel organisations into the cloud, reimagine the way services are delivered, and drive positive outcomes for all.

What we do

We design, build, manage, and protect our clients' mission-critical digital platforms and services.

Our consultants and engineers are, first and foremost, experienced practitioners and problem-solvers.

Values



Our values — purposeful, inclusive, and excellent — guide our approach and ensure we deliver transformative results.

Purposeful

Driven by intention and impact, we align every decision and action with our wider mission. By understanding and believing in our “why”, we always ensure that our services and solutions add lasting tangible value to our customers.

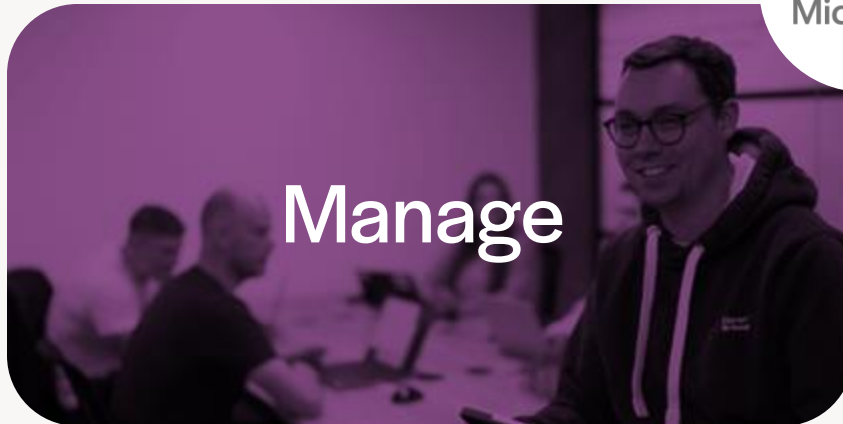
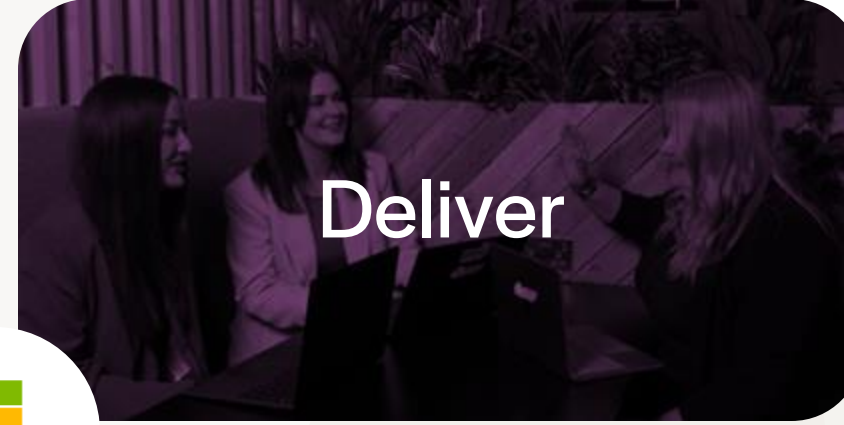
Inclusive

In a world filled with diverse ideas, we champion an environment where every voice matters. We believe that different perspectives lead to richer innovation and better outcomes. We deliver solutions that resonate with, and are accessible, to all.

Excellent

We settle for nothing less than the best. In our pursuit of excellence, we challenge the status quo. Through dedication, passion, and relentless attention to detail, we aim to exceed expectations and set industry standards.

Services



Successful organisations are characterised by their ability to transform at pace and scale. An effective strategy, backed by finely tuned recommendations, designs, and plans, is the ideal place to start your cloud journey.

Our human-centred strategies, designs, and plans are grounded in more than ten years of hands-on delivery experience. Our consultants, many of whom rank among the industry's most experienced in their respective fields, will collaborate with you at every stage of your cloud transformation journey – unearthing your unique needs before employing tried-and-tested solutions that enable you to realise your short-, medium-, and long-term strategic aims and objectives.

Strategy Development

Establishing a clear, evidence-based cloud strategy that reflects your needs, desired outcomes, strategic objectives, budgetary constraints, and regulatory and statutory obligations – laying the foundations for transformation.

Implementation Planning

Bridging the delta between your current and future states through comprehensive infrastructure and workload planning – creating the conditions for lasting change and enabling you to realise the full value of your technology investments.

Health Check Reviews

Ensuring that your cloud environments, workloads, and services are configured optimally – unearthing operational efficiency gains and carbon reduction opportunities while exposing and remediating any security threats.

Cost Optimisation Reviews

Reducing your cloud costs through environment, workload, and service optimisation and the eradication of any accrued manual waste through standardisation and, wherever possible, automation.

Execution is everything. Without the right approach, your cloud strategy, however thorough, won't succeed. Selecting the right delivery partner will enable you to realise your goals predictably and sustainably.

We've been delivering complex cloud transformation programmes in partnership with our clients since 2010. We specialise in bringing our clients' strategies, designs, and plans to life collaboratively and in full accordance with their regulatory, statutory, budgetary, governance, and timeline parameters. Using our proven delivery framework, we'll also skilfully adapt what we do to meet your needs as they evolve — maximising the value of your strategic technology investments.

Landing Zone Deployment

Accelerating your journey to the cloud through our off-the-shelf Azure landing zone deployments – a firm foundation on which to migrate your workloads to the cloud safely, securely, predictably, and without needing to start from scratch.

Cloud & Workload Migration

Safely migrating your infrastructure, workloads, and services to the cloud using our tried-and-tested workload migration methodology and proven accelerators, tools, and templates – accelerating your transformation.

Hybrid/Multi-Cloud Delivery

Enabling you to exploit the benefits and advantages of hybrid- and multi-cloud service provision across your mission-critical workloads securely, efficiently, cost-effectively, and in a way that ensures future scalability.

DevOps Engineering

Optimising your software development lifecycle through the implementation of DevOps ways of working – accelerating your time-to-value and reducing your change failure rate through integrated systems, processes, and tools.

Standing still isn't an option. To succeed, you'll need an experienced partner in your corner — working with you to tackle your needs and protect your mission-critical assets proactively.

In recognising that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work, we tailor our services, which can be consumed on a modular basis, in line with your unique needs. Leaving you to focus on what matters most to you and your business, our experienced engineers will support, optimise, and protect your mission-critical digital platforms and services — resolving issues, remediating problems, and implementing changes.

Azure Infrastructure

Tackling your short-, medium-, and long-term Azure infrastructure needs reactively and proactively through our ITIL-compliant processes, systems, and tools — iteratively optimising and maintaining your mission-critical digital solutions and services.

Microsoft Modern Work

Provisioning and managing your Microsoft Modern Workplace services in full accordance with our robust service level agreements and value-based key performance indicators — improving the user experience.

Application Hosting

Maintaining your newly transformed or migrated applications in full accordance with our robust service level agreements, key performance indicators, and DevOps engineering and management principles — providing long-term peace of mind.

Security Operations

Protecting your mission-critical information technology assets against increasingly complex cyber risks through reactive and proactive security incident and event management, managed detection and response, and threat modelling services.

The current pace of change means that organisations, large and small, face a growing number of challenges, including new market entrants and the shifting expectations of citizens and consumers.

Innovation succeeds where it balances novel thinking with tried-and-tested solutions. We'll work with you to establish the conditions whereby you can benefit from the latest advances in technology – including workload modernisation, data and artificial intelligence, and machine learning – safely and in a way that doesn't compromise your moral, ethical, and regulatory and statutory obligations.

Workload Modernisation

Taking advantage of cloud-native services to transform your workloads and services – improving their reliability and scalability while reducing your costs and bolstering your security posture and customer experience.

Data, AI, & ML

Enhancing your decision-making processes by implementing new tools and ways of working that accelerate the capture and analysis of your data. Also, safely exploring the advantages linked to generative artificial intelligence.

Identity Management

Integrating your local, national, and international digital services through our federated identity management solution – enhancing your security posture, improving the user experience, and accelerating your transformation.

Trusted Research Environments

Designing, implementing, deploying, and iteratively optimising your trusted research environments – platforms for the secure storage, exchange, and processing of confidential patient data.

Why us?



There are three main reasons why our clients choose to work with us:

Experienced

Our services and solutions are grounded in more than ten years of hands-on delivery experience – we’re practitioners, not theorists. You can, therefore, be confident in the quality of our recommendations and delivery.

Outcomes Focused

We prioritise enabling our clients to realise their short-, medium-, and long-term desired outcomes – maximising the value of their strategic technology investments. As such, we prefer to work on an outcome-basis – boosting our accountability.

Zero Bureaucracy

We’re easy to engage and work with – we empower our people to make the right decisions for and with our clients’ people; there’s never ever bureaucracy to contend with.

Sectors



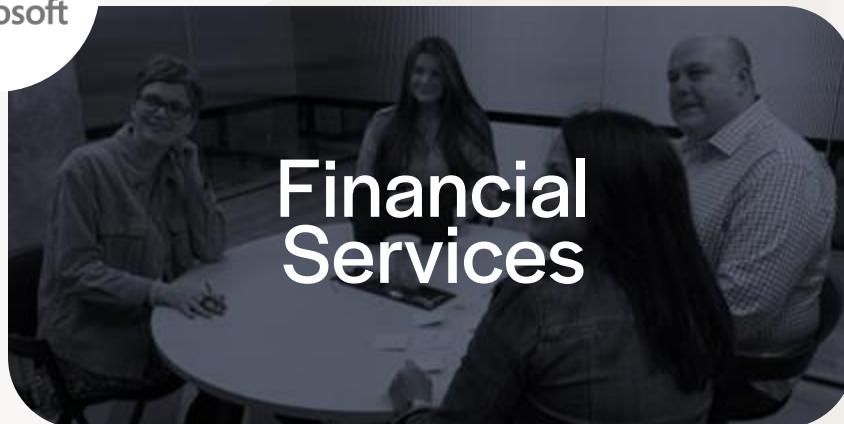
Government



Healthcare



Legal and
Professional
Services



Financial
Services

Clients



We partner with some of the country's largest organisations:

DWP

Insolvency Service

Ofsted

Trafford Borough Council

Derbyshire County Council

Oxfordshire County Council

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

Bradford and Craven Clinical Commissioning Group

London Borough of Newham

Wokingham Borough Council

Durham County Council

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Staffordshire County Council

Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

London Borough of Havering

Manchester City Council

Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership

Calderdale NHS Foundation Trust

Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust

Northern Care Alliance (NHS)

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Irwin Mitchell Solicitors

Manchester Building Society

MS Amlin

Royal British Legion

Testimonials



How our clients describe what it's like to work with us:

“I can't believe that in just two weeks you were able to identify all our pain points and recognise and quantify the challenges we face in such a demonstrable manner!”

CIO, Leading Law Firm

“Your expertise in cloud shone through. It was real-world, pragmatic, and based on helping customers truly achieve their outcomes.”

Chief Technology Officer, Health Authority

“The quality, the care for our people, and technical excellence was genuinely inspiring.”

Technology Director, Local Authority

Partners



We're recognised as leaders by our partners:

Microsoft
Specialist
Infra & Database Migration

Microsoft
Gold Partner
10 Years

Microsoft
Solutions Partner
Infrastructure (Azure)

Microsoft
Solutions Partner
Digital & App Innovation

VEEAM

Dr. Migrate

Microsoft
Specialist
Azure Virtual Desktop

Microsoft
Solutions Partner
Modern Work

Microsoft
Solutions Partner
Data & AI

Microsoft
Solutions Partner
Security

NetApp

Case Studies

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Irwin Mitchell



Situation

Irwin Mitchell, the prestigious law firm, found itself at a technological crossroads. While its leadership had a clear vision for the future, the firm was anchored down by a complex architecture, burdened with technical debt accumulated from numerous mergers over the years. The firm's newly appointed Head of Infrastructure recognised the urgent need for change. She envisioned a future where Irwin Mitchell could seamlessly harness the power of cloud services. However, the path to this future was obstructed by the intricacies of their existing infrastructure. A critical milestone also loomed over the firm: the impending need to exit their current data centre by September 2023. Initial plans to co-locate to another data centre were in jeopardy due to the challenges of crafting a feasible migration strategy. The firm, while recognising that an Azure hybrid architecture was in place, was hesitant to migrate due to perceived risks and costs.

Solution

Following a competitive tender process, Shaping Cloud was chosen by Irwin Mitchell to craft a comprehensive hosting strategy and oversee its execution. Our engagement with the law firm was thorough, spanning from initial discovery to the creation of an executable business case. We meticulously explored three potential models, ensuring that each scenario was accurately modelled to determine the total cost of ownership (TCO). The strategy we presented not only charted the course for the next five years but also ignited the firm's broader transformation towards embracing cloud technologies.

As the global pandemic struck, we agilely pivoted our focus. Recognising the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19, we supported Irwin Mitchell in their swift adoption of M365 and Modern Work solutions. These tools, essential for remote collaboration and productivity, were integrated into the firm's operations under our guidance. Our support didn't stop there; we also introduced modern methodologies such as Agile and DevOps, further streamlining their processes. One of our most significant achievements was the establishment of an enterprise-scale LZ and the creation of an Azure Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Irwin Mitchell. These initiatives provided the essential governance structures and services, laying a robust foundation for their cloud journey.

Outcome

Irwin Mitchell's collaboration with Shaping Cloud ushered in a new era of digital empowerment for the firm. The migration to Azure not only addressed their immediate data centre concerns but also positioned them to harness the platform's advantages. With our guidance, they could tap into the reliability, scalability, flexibility, and security that Azure offers. In addition to the technological benefits, we championed Irwin Mitchell's cause with Microsoft, securing both funding and Azure credits. These resources ensured they had the necessary financial backing to expedite their cloud transformation journey. In partnering with Shaping Cloud, Irwin Mitchell embarked on a transformative journey, one where they not only addressed immediate challenges but also set the stage for a future defined by innovation, efficiency, and technological prowess.

NHS Blood and Transplant



Situation

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHS BT), an integral arm of the National Health Service, found itself grappling with a technological conundrum. Their existing access permissions within Office 365, specifically in tools such as SharePoint Online and OneDrive, were overly liberal. These permissions, granting users more access than was strictly necessary for their roles, posed two significant challenges: a heightened risk to data security and an inflation of IT operating costs. The overarching problem was clear. An organisation of such critical importance required airtight data security protocols. The existing permissions structure was not just an operational inefficiency; it was a potential vulnerability.

Solution

Recognising the gravity of the situation, NHS BT enlisted the expertise of Shaping Cloud. Our first step was a thorough review of the current access permissions landscape within NHS BT's Office 365 environment. Armed with insights from this review, our seasoned consultants and engineers crafted a robust strategy. The core of our solution was the implementation of granular, Role-Based Access Control (RBAC). Adhering to the industry's best practice principle of "least privilege", this approach ensured that individuals had access only to the data and tools essential for their specific roles. But our engagement didn't stop at mere implementation. Recognising the dynamic nature of roles and responsibilities, we recommended that NHS BT institute periodic access reviews. This proactive approach, combined with user training, would ensure that access permissions remained relevant and secure.

To further aid NHS BT in their journey, Shaping Cloud developed comprehensive design and guidance documents tailored for Office 365. These documents highlighted best practices in and around security, including nuanced access control, the principle of least privilege, and strategic monitoring and auditing. Our efforts bore fruit as NHS BT began to align access with actual resource needs. As a result, unnecessary permissions were swiftly revoked, leading to a tangible reduction in their IT operating costs and associated license expenses.

Outcome

The collaboration between NHS BT and Shaping Cloud led to a transformative change in the organisation's data access landscape. With the implementation of granular access controls and the infusion of best practices, NHS BT fortified its data security, drastically reducing potential vulnerabilities. Beyond the immediate security benefits, they also witnessed a decline in IT operating costs, thanks to the efficient realignment of access permissions. Furthermore, the comprehensive guidance documents provided by Shaping Cloud ensured that NHS BT had a clear roadmap for maintaining and enhancing security in the future. In partnering with Shaping Cloud, NHS BT didn't merely adopt a new system; they embraced a culture of continuous vigilance, ensuring that their data remained secure, and their operations remained efficient.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority



Situation

The vision was clear: to connect and modernise health and social care, make services more accessible for the residents of Greater Manchester, and empower staff delivering these services with cutting-edge technology. However, to actualise this vision, GMCA first needed to understand the current technological provision across the region and assess the potential benefits of cloud adoption tailored to each organisation's unique needs.

Solution

Shaping Cloud, recognising the magnitude and intricacies of this task, stepped in with a collaborative spirit and holistic mindset. We understood that the key to success lay in fostering synergy across Greater Manchester's diverse landscape. Our strategy was meticulous. We crafted a detailed cloud adoption plan and a compelling business case for each of the region's organisations. These strategies were not just visionary but immediately actionable, equipped with precise financials to ensure transparency and feasibility. We connected with approximately 200 stakeholders, cutting across nearly 20 public entities, including local authorities and health and social care providers. This collaborative effort aimed to create a unified, pan-regional digital strategy, coupled with individual cloud readiness assessments for every organisation. Our goal was clear: strategic alignment at every conceivable level.

The outcome was the comprehensive GM-wide report. This document not only outlined the myriad opportunities and benefits of the proposed strategy but also set the stage for ongoing engagement with Microsoft. This interaction paved the way for the development and subsequent launch of the GM Digital Platform, which in turn informed the GM Digital Blueprint. Our efforts solidified a strategic relationship with Microsoft, a partnership so robust that we facilitated monthly meetings between GMCA, GM NHS, and Microsoft, continuing for over a year until the processes were deeply embedded. But our collaboration with GMCA wasn't merely strategic; it was also innovative. Identifying integrated access as a cornerstone for pan-regional digital transformation, we designed, built, and now oversee GMID – a federated identity management platform. This system, an inventive integration of AAD B2C and NHS Login, offers login access to regional apps and data for workers, residents, and patients alike.

Outcome

The fruits of this collaboration were manifold. GMCA now had a clear roadmap to drive digital transformation across Greater Manchester, tailored to the unique needs of each organisation. The establishment of GMID heralded a new era of integrated access, fostering seamless interactions for all stakeholders.

Mid and South Essex Hospitals Trust



Situation

A significant transformation was brewing within the healthcare sector. The Mid and South Essex Hospitals Trust, comprising three substantial NHS Hospital Trusts, was contemplating an imminent merger that would not only reshape its operational framework but also set a precedent for other trusts nationwide. However, this vision wasn't merely about merging resources – it was about reimagining healthcare delivery through technological advancements. The Trust recognised that consolidating their infrastructure, applications, and services was crucial. They believed that digital modernisation was the catalyst that would drive unparalleled transformation and improvement across the hospitals.

Solution

This was where Shaping Cloud stepped in, armed with expertise and a commitment to effect genuine change. Our goal went beyond a mere technological facelift; we were determined to intimately understand the Trust's core objectives and align our strategies accordingly. Our approach was methodical. We initiated a series of intensive dialogues with both the executive leadership and clinical stakeholders. These discussions offered a panoramic view of their ambitions, concerns, and aspirations. This was supplemented with an in-depth exploration of the current state of each organisation within the Trust, ensuring we had a granular understanding of the challenges at hand.

Believing firmly in the power of collaboration, we engaged the Trust's existing tech teams. This synergy allowed us to validate our findings, ensuring a cohesive and shared vision for the future. Our comprehensive strategy aimed to amalgamate their enterprise and technical architecture and service design. This wasn't just about modernising systems – it was about risk mitigation, cost optimisation, and priming the Trust to leverage cloud-native digital services. The strategy document was a testament to our holistic approach. It included everything from a thorough discovery and application assessment to detailed future stage design, licensing assessment, skills appraisal, a total cost of ownership model, and a compelling business case. Each aspect of the Trust's operations, from infrastructure and data to endpoints, networks, and skills, was addressed, ensuring a well-rounded transformation.

Outcome

The transformation ensued was nothing short of groundbreaking. From a previously under-licensed state, the Trust seamlessly transitioned to a subscription-based enterprise agreement with Microsoft, demonstrating flexibility. Their once wholly on-premises hosting system was propelled into the modern age, embracing the capabilities of Microsoft 365 and an Azure LZ.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust



Situation

In 2019, the NHS released its Long-Term Plan, outlining a vision for healthcare that prioritised population-based and preventative approaches, with a specific focus on addressing unequal access to healthcare. To fulfil these objectives, the Pennine Care Foundation Trust (PCFT) recognised the importance of leveraging data and digital technologies to provide outstanding care to its patients. PCFT's digital strategy identified several critical areas of focus. First and foremost, they prioritised improving their network estates, including cloud infrastructure, to establish the digital foundations required to meet user needs effectively. Additionally, they aimed to address user pain points and deliver key digital priorities, such as achieving HIMSS Level 5 standards. Ultimately, the goal was to utilise technology to support the delivery of exceptional care.

Solution

Shaping Cloud played a crucial role in facilitating PCFT's journey to the cloud. The development of a comprehensive business case led to a decision to migrate PCFT's infrastructure from on-premises to Azure, with the long-term vision of becoming a fully cloud-enabled and data-driven organisation. To support this transition, Shaping Cloud implemented an Enterprise Scale Landing Zone (LZ) aligned with the Cloud Adoption Framework (CAF). This approach ensured heightened security and data management, including robust cyber and network security measures and comprehensive information governance.

Furthermore, Shaping Cloud deployed Azure Migrate to assess their current workloads and determine which ones could be decommissioned, as well as to identify workloads suitable for migration to Azure. We consolidated and optimised their workloads, ensuring efficiency and improved resource utilisation. We then utilised the lift and shift technique to migrate workloads to Azure, enabling PCFT to become more agile and scalable. The transition to Azure provided PCFT with a reliable core infrastructure with additional functionality for end users, enhancing the overall user experience. In addition to infrastructure migration, Shaping Cloud also undertook the development of an advanced greenfield data warehouse platform, aimed at transforming PCFT's data services. This platform was designed to ensure the security of patient data, enable data-driven service delivery, and support operational frontline care. PCFT adopted a population health approach and utilised innovative tools to address unequal health outcomes and achieve better overall healthcare outcomes.

Outcome

PCFT's digital strategy forms a fundamental part of their wider vision for a happier and more hopeful life for everyone in their communities. As part of this strategy, Pennine Care Foundation Trust (PCFT) has implemented several initiatives that offer numerous benefits to both the organisation and its customers. One of the significant advantages of Shaping Cloud's solution is the improved security it provides. Safeguarding patient data is vital for maintaining trust and preventing data breaches that could adversely affect service uptake.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust



Our solution has also yielded notable improvements in performance and reliability. Users now enjoy a seamless and high-performance digital experience, reducing the time spent grappling with technical issues. This streamlined experience allows clinicians to focus more on patient care rather than wrestling with technological problems. Moreover, the scalable nature of the solution enables PCFT to deliver cost-effective, high-quality services that align with fluctuating demands. For instance, during flu seasons or peak periods, the solution can effortlessly scale up to meet increased demand. Conversely, during quieter times, it can scale down, optimising resource utilisation. This scalability ensures consistent and reliable service delivery, minimising the need for workarounds or manual processes that can introduce clinical risks.

Shaping Cloud's solution has also significantly enhanced data and information governance practices at PCFT. The introduction of a new data platform enables the swift production of analytics and insights, facilitating knowledge sharing among colleagues. Additionally, the platform enables the generation of mandatory NHS statistics, ensuring compliance with reporting requirements. Leveraging the cloud's scalability, PCFT can harness population health data to drive proactive health programmes focused on areas such as drugs and alcohol services. Furthermore, the organisation can develop tailored services that better meet the specific needs of their community.

Azure's data reporting and analysis tools play a vital role in targeting vulnerable patient groups, such as those with mental health or learning disabilities, allowing PCFT to provide more personalised and targeted care. Real-time access to data empowers operational use cases, such as predicting wait times and displaying available hospital beds. Automated data pipelines streamline the ingestion, integration, and preparation of data, facilitating data-driven decision-making and enabling innovative problem-solving.

Sustainability is another area where Shaping Cloud's solution makes a significant impact. PCFT is committed to meeting the government's greening targets, aiming for net-zero status by 2050 or even sooner. The solution plays a vital role in supporting these goals by reducing operational overheads related to data and infrastructure. Additionally, it helps mitigate environmental impact by optimising energy consumption and reducing the amount of ICT waste destined for landfills. By openly reporting progress towards net-zero and other sustainability commitments, PCFT promotes transparency and accountability, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility.

Moreover, our solution brought about substantial cost reductions and risk mitigation for PCFT. By retiring ageing hardware and end-of-life SQL servers, the organisation minimises the risks associated with relying on outdated technology. The solution also reduces operational overheads, resulting in cost savings. Furthermore, by focusing on energy efficiency and optimising resource utilisation, PCFT can lower energy costs while ensuring the provision of high-quality care.