

**Let's
Go!**

Putting people first

**People Strategy
2020 - 2025**



**watford
community
housing**

Putting people first

Our people are our greatest asset. They are central to our success, as it is only through their talent, energy and commitment that we can achieve our vision of ‘Better homes, friendlier communities – together’.

Over the next five years, we will continue to build a vibrant culture based on our values – helping individuals to succeed, attracting the best people and enabling us to deliver for our customers. Our aim is to be an organisation that makes a real difference to the lives of our employees, creating something that people want to be a part of.

Delivering for our customers

Because our residents and communities deserve the best, we set high expectations for ourselves – and this is reflected in how we work.

By making sure that we have the right mix of talented people, and investing in their future, we will work together to deliver the homes people need, the excellent services our customers expect and opportunities that allow our communities to thrive.



To achieve our goals and provide an excellent service for our customers, we want the best people. We will attract, identify, develop and retain high-performing talent across all areas of the organisation.

Nurturing talent

Recruitment

We will take a forward-thinking and focused approach to attracting new employees, using all forms of media to reach and recruit the best people. While decisions will always be driven by the needs of our business, we will look to recruit from the pool of talented people we already have whenever possible.

We love helping people to grow and succeed, so we will give identified talent opportunities to develop their skills and gain valuable experience.

Induction

When new people join us, we will make sure we set them up to succeed. We will deliver a structured induction for every new member of staff, whatever their role, giving them the information, guidance and support they need to perform well and embrace our values.

People's probation periods will be effectively managed so that new starters understand what is expected of them – and if there are areas where development is needed we will identify these quickly and make sure we offer the right support.

Retention

We will create an inclusive, respectful and engaged working culture, where employees are recognised and praised for their efforts – helping them to feel part of our community.

Retaining talent

By 2025, we will achieve a voluntary staff turnover of less than 12.5%.

We want to give every employee the support they need to fulfil their potential. We will invest in our people to help them grow and develop tomorrow's leaders.

Unlocking potential



Professional development

We will continue to support our staff so they can develop, grow and gain experience – especially those who are identified as our most talented prospects. We will ensure that there are opportunities for people at all levels of the organisation, both for personal development and to learn new skills related to their role. These will include leadership and management programmes.

Investing in people's futures

Every year, we will invest at least 1% of our turnover in training and professional development for our staff – which is the equivalent of spending around £1,250 towards the future of each full-time employee.

Planning for the future

We are proud to help people find their feet and develop their potential. We will offer opportunities through apprenticeships and graduate trainee roles, to build a robust pipeline of talent for the future of the organisation.

Empowering people

We want to harness the knowledge and experience of our managers. Over the next five years, we will facilitate a shift in the employee-manager relationship, empowering managers to move from having a functional or technical role to become leaders within the organisation. They will embody our values and help us to achieve our vision.



Our values



Professional

We are honest, open and respectful. People trust us to keep our promises.



Forward-thinking

We have a 'can-do' attitude and embrace opportunities to improve and innovate.



Collaborative

We work together as one team and build lasting partnerships to get results.

Our organisation should reflect the communities we serve and the values that we place at the heart of our work. By building a vibrant culture focused on diversity, inclusivity, wellbeing and positive staff engagement, we can work together to achieve our goals.

Vibrant culture

Embedding our values

Our corporate values were created with input from across the organisation, to reflect who we are and what we believe matters most to our customers and communities.

We will promote these values both internally and externally, and we will embed them through active internal communication – including using our staff awards to showcase our recognition of staff when they live up to these values. Most importantly, we will embody these values at every level, ensuring that leaders act as role models.

Diversity and inclusion

Just as we are committed to making our communities friendly and open to everyone, we will continue to ensure that we have a diverse and inclusive workforce who feel comfortable to be who they are in the workplace.

We will deliver a programme of regular events and staff awareness training, and we will help to make communities more inclusive by sponsoring and supporting events such as Herts Pride and initiatives like the Solo Stars group for single parents.

We will also ensure that by 2025 our workforce reflects local demographics with regard to protected characteristics.

So that we can attract and keep the best people, we are committed to offering a wide-ranging package that makes working with us a rewarding experience. We will work with our staff to develop an enticing total reward approach to recognition and remuneration.

The complete package

A competitive offer

We will continue to develop and promote a leading reward and remuneration package to stand out from the crowd.

By ensuring that staff engage with us on the competitiveness of our offer, we will stay ahead of the curve – and we will give them the chance to shape any new additions to the reward package.

Valuing people

Although pay is important, we know that it is not the only thing that matters to people. We will continue to strengthen our wider offer to employees through benefits, training, professional development and wellbeing offers.

Our rewards and recognition package will ensure that people feel valued at work, as well as helping us to achieve our overall goals. And because we know that people's requirements and motivations vary at different stages of their career or as their circumstances change, our offer will reflect a variety of needs and career drivers.

The right balance

We also recognise that people have other priorities and commitments outside of work. Through our comprehensive benefits offer, we will help our employees to strike the right balance between their professional responsibilities and their lives outside of work. We support people at all levels to work flexibly, through solutions such as compressed or reduced hours, or working a nine-day fortnight.

Performance

We will give people the best chance to deliver for the organisation and for our customers. All employees will be given the right tools to do their job well, from the technology they are equipped with to the support we provide through continuous performance management.

We will continue to be open and honest around performance and recognition, so employees understand where their strengths lie and what they need to do if improvement is required.



We want the world to know about the good work we do to deliver for our customers and our workforce. We will build a compelling internal and external brand that helps us to become an employer of choice.

Telling our story

A forward-thinking employer

By continuing to improve our offering, we will gain recognition as a great place to work. By 2025, we will achieve a recognised employer accreditation, aiming to be listed in The Sunday Times '100 best companies to work for'.

We will also gain a specific accreditation for our forward-thinking approach to diversity and inclusion, and engage with websites including Glassdoor and LinkedIn to strengthen our brand as an employer of choice.

Working together

Over the next five years, we will develop partnerships which increase our exposure, including collaborations with organisations that have highly engaged employees – this will extend to businesses beyond the housing sector. To foster further collaboration and support our brand-building, we will put ourselves forward for awards that can help us to tell our story.

Through our internal and external communications channels, we will celebrate the success of our people in delivering for our customers, our communities and each other.

The world will change over the next five years – and we will need to change with it.

Planning ahead

Our ambitious plans for 2020-2025 will bring new challenges as our organisation grows and our services evolve. We also know that employees' expectations and needs will change too, so we will make sure that we plan carefully and have the resources in place to achieve our goals.

Ready for growth

We plan to build a significant number of new homes, so we will have to grow in order to support, maintain and service them. Our development goals would represent growth of around 30%, so we will need to recruit new people to reflect this – potentially taking our total number of employees from 190 to around 225. We will also need to allocate additional resources for materials, vans and other costs.

Our 30-year financial forecast will factor in the impact of our growth ambitions, to ensure that we can plan our resources appropriately.

Changing ways of working

As we improve our services, the way we work will change too. We are committed to exploring new services that we could introduce to give our customers a better experience, like offering a live chat option through our website, so our working practices will evolve to make sure we can deliver these.

Some of these changes will lead to additional costs, such as paying for extra staff time if we changed our hours of service. Others will allow us to achieve savings through improved ways of working, such as delivering more of our services through our website.

Whatever improvements we make to our services, we will ensure that we can attract the best people with the right skills to deliver them – and offer the support our people need to meet our customers' expectations.





Let's Go!

Our key goals for 2020-2025

- Attract, identify, develop and retain high-performing talent across all areas of the organisation.
- Invest in our people to develop tomorrow's leaders.
- Foster a values-based culture, focused on diversity, inclusivity, wellbeing and positive staff engagement.
- Work with our staff to develop a competitive total reward approach to recognition and remuneration.
- Build a compelling internal and external brand to become an employer of choice.
- Plan our resourcing carefully as we grow to make sure we can deliver for our customers.



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