

cairn



# People Strategy

2024 - 2027

# Our values

## Customer First



Our customer always comes first and we will always aim to achieve high quality outcomes for customers.

## Excellence



We value excellence and quality and aim to achieve high standards in all we do. We always strive to be the best that we can be.

## Accountability



We are accountable for our actions and we take responsibility and ownership for outcomes.

## One Team



We work as one team and build excellent working relationships to achieve our goals.

## Respect



We value high standards of fairness, treating everyone with consideration and dignity. We show this through our words and actions.

# Introduction

Cairn Housing Association recognises that developing a skilled and engaged workforce through nurturing talent is critical to productivity, innovation and growth. The last three years have seen significant projects being delivered and processes being updated in line with statutory requirements with a focus on improving and upskilling our leaders and people managers and implementing pay and reward changes and structural changes. We will continue to support and set expectations for staff, managers and leaders throughout the organisation

The next three years will focus on continuous improvement, developing supportive HR and OD solutions for staff and continuing to ensure that our Vision and Values and staff wellbeing are at the heart of all we do. We aim to maintain high staff engagement and develop career frameworks and succession planning so each staff member can see a clear path for their own development and to develop the required skill set to conduct their roles effectively.

This Strategy is aimed at supporting the achievement of our strategic goals to support delivery of the Business Plan. This document identifies three key strategic themes and also our vision for where we want to be at the end of this three-year plan. Delivery will be through five underpinning people programmes of work detailed with timelines in the three-Year Action Plan

The focus of the strategy will be to achieve the required level of performance through target setting and Effective management of this performance standard

# Link to our business plan



Our HR/OD strategy is in place to support the achievement of the Business Plan. The aim of the strategy is to provide a framework to support the achievement of the KPIs and targets. This will be achieved through target setting and performance management and the provision of development opportunities for all staff to maintain and enhance skills so customer focussed services can be delivered

# Our vision

## Theme 1 - Culture

To be recognised as a leader in staff development and as a learning organisation with a workforce who are skilled, adaptable and strive for continuous improvement, coaching and challenging each other for excellence and taking responsibility for solutions and self-development.

## Theme 2 - People

A diverse workforce who are highly skilled, work collaboratively and are enabled and driven to deliver exceptional services in all areas of the business

## Theme 3 - Systems & Processes

Further develop our systems and processes to support mobile working and digital integration. We will also provide useful management data and analysis to inform decision making at all levels.



# Strategy purpose

The purpose of the People Strategy is:

1. To support the process of organisational change and improvements to help deliver the Business Plan and the strategic priorities.
2. To support other teams to provide the development opportunities and frameworks required for success and team development to achieve the required level of performance.
3. To achieve top quartile performance in Cairn KPI's.
4. To value and listen to staff feedback and encourage staff recognition and develop culture change.
5. To maintain an excellent proactive HR & OD Service to the organisation, at both strategic and transactional areas through a Business Partnering approach.
6. To support delivery of key Organisational projects through an effective OD approach.
7. To develop our management teams with leadership and behavioural skills through feedback, coaching and development.
8. To review KPI's and organisational results aligned to our HR/OD critical success factors and adapt the plan if required.



# Five people programmes

The five key programmes of HR/OD work designed to achieve our goals each contain deliverable actions which will support Cairn in the delivery of its overall business plan:

People Development

Engagement /  
Employer of Choice

Future Proofing  
HR / OD

Recruitment / Talent  
Management

Processes / Business  
Support

# People development

Cairn Housing Association employs a diverse variety of posts requiring different skill sets and qualifications. Over the previous three years, employees have been supported with training opportunities to gain qualifications and develop core skills. Managers/ Leaders have also been developed through a substantial management leadership program and additional external coaching. A mid management training program was also introduced through ILM qualifications. An adapted performance management tool is now embedded to provide goals setting for employees, development discussion and succession planning.

Our aim is to now support further, and to provide enhanced development for teams through targeted training needs analysis. This aim will be achieved through an organisation wide learning approach, developing a learning culture, using a 70:20:10 approach to training delivery and using the training budget effectively, efficiently and fairly.

Every business has been required to adapt to the current economic position and new ways of working, including the requirement for reviewing where staff work and how they work with a requirement for increased compliance, enhanced IT skills and the use of interactive communication systems and social media use. During the next three years we will work collaboratively with all departments to provide meaningful and developmental training to support the business change and system development.

We will also embrace equalities and succession planning and further develop of these areas is required to be an all-inclusive employer and provide career pathways in teams to retain talent and create new opportunities at all ages, whilst supporting employees who indicate they are moving to the end of their careers based on the AIM data that has been gathered and our heightened age demographic at Cairn.

# People development



Our outcomes and actions include:

- Providing a quality, targeted blended training and development program that enhances key skills and supports compliance and new systems.
- Listen to staff, using feedback from staff surveys and annual reviews to understand opinions, ideas and gaps in personal development or management skills to inform the training program.
- Embed a coaching culture that encourages a learning approach and continuous improvement, including leadership at all levels throughout the organisation.
- Develop management in the effective use of our performance management system to provide SMART goals and effective targets achievement.
- Support training requests across the organisation through our e-learning and face to face training offer to include IT, H&S, HR, Finance, Property, Finance and Housing solutions that can increase knowledge, maintain compliance and decrease support services pressures.
- Maintain high engagement through staff engagement surveys, staff communications, team building and recognition programs.
- Provide a supportive wellbeing approach to staff through our corporate programs and developing line management skills.

# Future proofing

- A staff rewards and benefits was completed in 2022 to deliver a harmonised and effective pay and reward package. A further benchmark review will be required within a 3/5-year timescale following the original benchmarking to check market alignment and competitiveness.
- Provide ongoing development solutions thorough supportive Learning and OD programs to develop future talent and succession planning tools for management, including apprentice programs.
- Ongoing reviews of home and flexible Working to embrace new ways of working, office usage and continuing to be a market leader in providing flexible working solutions, including analysis of the 4-day working week.
- To produce user friendly policies, procedures, templates and manager guides that can be easily understood and accessed through easy-to use systems and self-service solutions. Consider the increase options for the use of AI solutions to providing information to staff members.
- Embrace and develop our equalities approach through continued support and advice, including the implementation of real living wage and menopause accreditations and maintaining disability confident certification
- Review of our HR/ OD systems to provide the most effective systems for use, including improved promotion of employee benefits and new recruitment and performance management portals.
- Continue to provide and build on the wellbeing approach to support all employees



# Recruitment and talent management

We will continue to develop our recruitment and induction processes and systems to enable us to attract, develop and retain staff. We will ensure our recruitment platforms are appropriate to deliver our aim of being an employer of choice and offer value for money and that our induction process is a quality approach that fully supports new employees and one that we are all proud of delivering.

- Continuous development of the recruitment process and corporate induction program to become digitalised and create a paperless process where possible through the new recruitment portal.
- To support management to make effective recruitment decisions through training and coaching.
- To encourage meaningful conversations with staff to understand career goals, skills gaps and retirement planning to support a succession planning model.
- Establishing lunch and learn training sessions for management employees to enhance skills and support succession planning. Develop HR training sessions to improve understanding of key People processes and policy.
- Develop 360 feedback for the Senior Management team to understand skills sets and develop gaps in knowledge and understanding.
- To develop ambitious, key performers in teams that can be encouraged, supported and developed for future opportunities.

# Processes and business support

Our HR/OD systems are effective, supportive and accessible to our staff at all levels. However, we will further develop the understanding of quality in the use of these systems to improve effectiveness and output. This will be achieved through further training, quality assurance and auditing. Our aims are to:

- Review our core systems and analyse alternative solutions which may provide improved quality with data, reporting and performance information.
- Provide an effective training needs analysis tool so training can be provided that is required, is fully effective and removes skills and compliance gaps.
- Maintain the training booking and recording system so each employee has a training history and training opportunities and career/ succession path.
- Maintain and develop effective user-friendly policies, procedures and management user guides.
- Develop management HR/ OD skills through coaching and training courses.
- Support Management with target setting and ongoing performance management of staff to achieve team KPI's.
- Create a digital 'one stop shop' of HR information for ease of use and efficiency.

# How we deliver

The People Strategy is only effective if we engage and collaborate with managers and staff to gain information, feedback and provide effective solutions that will enhance the business. The People Strategy will support the overall business aims, which can be achieved through engaged, trained, motivated and empowered employees.

We will listen to staff opinion through our engagement systems to provide an effective employee voice. We will also develop employees by gaining accurate information on training and development gaps through training needs analysis to deliver a training program that is meaningful, collaborative and quality driven.

We will also support a performance management approach to develop abilities at all levels to encourage meaningful one: one conversations, SMART target setting and recognise goal achievements through recognition programs.

We will also provide useful information to managers through key HR/ OD data. The People Strategy action plan details the strategic projects and changes anticipated for the next three years; delivery of this plan will support organisational excellence through visibility and straightforward data access.



# Critical success factors

The critical success factors in achieving our aims are:

- Supporting the business plan KPI's through HR and OD solutions and coaching and development of managers in target setting and performance management
- Staff Win Temp feedback on key indicators of self-development, management, reward and recognition.
- Coaching and developing managers to support employees ongoing development and wellbeing.
- Feedback on self-development through annual reviews and training evaluations.
- Analysis of internal promotions, succession planning and retention statistics.
- Feedback on equalities initiatives and processes to ensure Cairn are an inclusive employer.
- External accreditations and awards nominations as and when required.
- An embedded reward and benefits framework that is fair, transparent and future proof.
- Implement the HR/ OD information for each team to define success using training, recruitment, retention, staff engagement and appraisal KPIs.



# Key strategic priorities – Human Resources

| Key priority   | Action  | Plan         |              |              |
|--|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|  |   | 2024/25      | 2025/26      | 2026/27      |
| Performance Management   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support, coach and develop managers in target setting and performance management of teams to achieve organisation and department KPI</li> </ul>  | Q1-4         | Q1-4         | Q1-4         |
| Recognition and reward of our people / employee benefits programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the 2<sup>nd</sup> benchmarking review, due within 3-5 years of the pay and reward implementation</li> <li>Review and monitoring of the impact of our benefits package, uptake and systems that can be used to increase usage and propose new benefits</li> <li>Support a recognition culture and create collaboration through events and team building</li> </ul> | Q1-4         | Q1-4         | Q1-4         |
| Wellbeing  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt a continuous improvement approach with wellbeing support and guidance for staff, including Carer support</li> <li>Continuous development of accreditations and advice to maintain wellbeing.</li> </ul>  | Q1-4         | Q1-4         | Q1-4         |
| Business change  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued support for business change and growth projects to develop the business</li> </ul>   | Q1-4         | Q1-4         | Q1-4         |
| Ways of working  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous Review of work practices and processes, including review of hybrid working and use of offices including a options appraisal of the 4-day working week</li> </ul>  | Q1-4         | Q1-4         |              |
| HR data and systems  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of HROD files and folders in line with GDPR</li> <li>Review of HR systems performance and alternatives, including A1 solutions</li> </ul>   | Q1-4<br>Q1-4 | Q1-4<br>Q1-4 | Q1-4<br>Q1-4 |
| Absence Management   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coaching, training and support for managers in Absence Management processes including stress risk assessments and Occupational health</li> </ul>   | Q1-4         | Q1-4         | Q1-4         |

| Key priority   | Action   | Plan         |         |         |
|--|--|--------------|---------|---------|
|  |  | 2024/25      | 2025/26 | 2026/27 |
| Recruitment and retention of staff                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing equalities and diversity review of processes and procedures</li> <li>Developing a online recruitment portal in Natural HR for applicants and managers</li> </ul>  | Q1-4<br>Q1-4 | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
| KPIs   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing revision of data for internal HR/OD measures for departments leaders based on recruitment, retention, training, engagement and appraisal KPIS.</li> </ul>   | Q1-4         | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
| Policies and procedure review                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cyclical policies and procedures and legislation changes – policy review documents / timescales and outcomes, for example, training</li> </ul>  | Q1-4         | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
| Cultural integration PHA                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff engagement survey to understand cultural issues following TUPE and harmonisation</li> <li>Values training for all staff and coaching for managers in managing ER in Thurso</li> </ul>   | Q1-4         |         |         |
| Equalities, diversity and inclusion                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of further Protected Characteristics to enhance understanding and improve information, process and policy</li> <li>Review of EDI activity and implement actions</li> </ul>   |              | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
|  |  | Q1-4         | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
| Undertake line management training                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake updated training as new policies are developed, or refreshers needed</li> <li>Monitor new and newly promoted managers to ensure that training is delivered</li> <li>Support 360-degree feedback with the OD function for management feedback</li> </ul> | Q1-4         | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
|  |  | Q1-4         | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
|  |  |              | Q1-4    |         |
| Gender pay gap reporting and develop recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake government reporting analysis</li> <li>Analysis report and actions group</li> <li>Implement and provide annual report to the Board and update Cairn website data</li> </ul>   |              | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
|  |  | Q1-4         | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
|  |  |              | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |
| Succession Planning                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In collaboration with OD, provide a framework for succession charts for each role and skills gaps/ career plans</li> </ul>  |              | Q1-4    | Q1-4    |

# Key strategic priorities – Organisational Development

| Key priority                       | Action  | Plan                 |                           |                            |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                    |   | 2024/25              | 2025/26                   | 2026/27                    |
| Communication                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop CHAT intranet with OD information and staff support</li> <li>Continued OD updates on CHAT and internal communications</li> <li>Staff collaboration, cultural issues and teambuilding support and advice</li> </ul> | Q1-4<br>Q1-4<br>Q1-4 | Q1 – 4<br>Q1 – 4<br>Q1- 4 | Q1 – 4<br>Q1 – 4<br>Q 1- 4 |
| The employee VOICE                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support ‘Voice’ projects and implementation through an Organisational Development and design approach to improve staff engagement and processes</li> </ul>   | Q1 –4                | Q1 – 4                    |                            |
| Wellbeing                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support teams as and when required with team building solutions and team growth solutions.</li> <li>Continued use of Win Temp to gain understanding of Organisation Challenges</li> </ul>                                  | Q1-4<br>Q1-4         | Q1-4<br>Q1-4              | Q1-4<br>Q1-4               |
| Staff training                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Core programmes of training on learn Pro and other methods (IT, property and tenancy) and refresher training for compliance</li> </ul>   | Q1-4                 | Q1 –4                     | Q1 –4                      |
| Management development             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the Learning and development programme covering management training, skills training and compliance training solutions to maintain a safe environment</li> </ul>   | Q1- 4                | Q1 – 4                    | Q1 – 4                     |
| Recruitment and retention of staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop processes and new start information to allow effective and welcome onboarding</li> </ul>   | Q1-4                 | Q1- 4                     | Q1-4                       |
| Internal KPIs                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued development of OD data and target setting to achieve department compliance across Cairn</li> </ul>   | Q1-4                 | Q1-4                      | Q1-4                       |

| Key priority                        | Action  | Plan                    |                           |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                     |   | 2024/25                 | 2025/26                   | 2026/27                   |
| Policies and procedure review       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain Learning and development policy and qualification procedure updates</li> </ul>  | Q1- 4                   | Q1 - 4                    | Q1 - 4                    |
| Equalities, diversity and inclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider new ways of developing EDI at Cairn, considering protected characteristics</li> </ul>   | Q1 - 4                  | Q1 - 4                    | Q1- 4                     |
| Succession planning                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of skills analysis to develop succession chart frameworks</li> <li>Integration into one: one discussions and end of year reviews</li> <li>Develop Apprentices framework in collaboration with line management</li> </ul>                | Q1 -4<br>Q1- 4<br>Q4    | Q1 -4<br>Q1-4<br>Q1-3     | Q1 - 4<br>Q1 -4           |
| Updated processes                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued development of OD systems, processes and training evaluation</li> <li>TNA development for all positions to support compliance</li> <li>Implementation of new appraisal model and link to competencies / business planning</li> </ul> | Q1-4<br>Q1-4<br>Q2-4    | Q1 -4<br>Q1-4             | Q1 - 4<br>Q1- 4           |
| Feedback embedding                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a feedback culture through coaching management and informal one: ones</li> <li>Develop 360 feedback framework for Management and Executive team</li> </ul>   | Q1-4                    | Q1- 4<br>Q2- 4            | Q1-4<br>Q1-4              |
| Induction review                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the development of the Induction process, materials, cross departmental, sign off checklists review. Establish an induction we are all proud of</li> </ul>  | Q1-4                    | Q1-4                      | Q1-4                      |
| CIH standards                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scorecard implementation of internal HR/OD measures, for departments</li> </ul>  | Q1- 4<br>Q1 -4<br>Q1- 4 | Q1 - 4<br>Q1 - 4<br>Q1- 4 | Q1 - 4<br>Q1 - 4<br>Q1- 4 |

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