



PEOPLE & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

2024 – 2027





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Introduction

Welcome to Hanover's People & Engagement Strategy 2024-2027.

This three-year strategy provides a clear focus, direction, and priorities as to how our people will achieve our vision of being recognised as a great employer, how we will shape our relationship with our people and what we will do to support them.

The vision for our people set out in our Strategy & Business Plan 2022-2027 pledges that *“we will be recognised as a Great Employer. Our employees will feel supported, equipped, and empowered to deliver a high-quality customer experience. We will begin to see the impact of our new organisational culture with a renewed sense of purpose, energy, and commitment. Our performance will improve along with job satisfaction”*.

At Hanover, **our core purpose** is to help older people feel safe and secure at home and to live fulfilling and independent lives. **Our mission** is to provide excellent services to meet the housing needs of Scotland's older people and to support them to be as independent as possible.

We cannot do this without our people, who are our most valuable asset. Without our employees we could never reach the high levels of service that we constantly strive to achieve for our customers. Therefore, we have an emphasis in our People & Engagement Strategy on supporting our people to be the best they can be to deliver affordable, modern, high-quality services.

Our **5-year corporate vision** is described in five statements, each of which impacts directly or indirectly on our People & Engagement Strategy. These statements reflect our ambition that by 2027:

- All our homes will be well maintained, affordable, warm, safe, and desirable
- We will have introduced a new customer service model
- We will have invested in new technology
- We will be recognised as a great employer
- We will have embedded sustainability in everything we do

Our **three Strategic Goals, to have Happy Customers, Desirable Homes and a Resilient Organisation**, drive our decisions and activities and represent what matters most to us. Our People & Engagement Strategy must enable us to deliver these goals and the associated strategies and plans such as our:

- Happy Customer Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Digital Plan

People Context

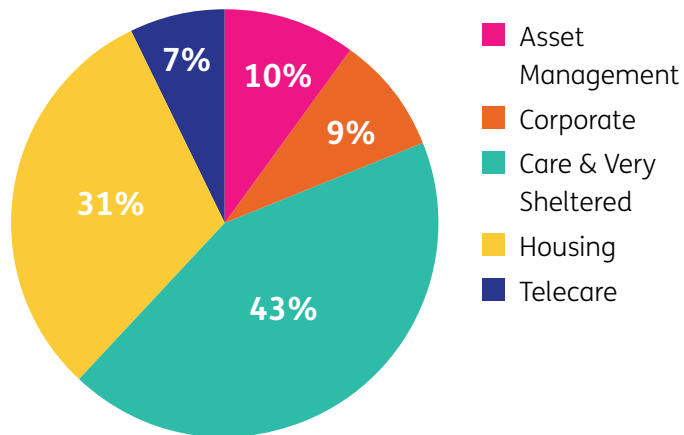
Who We Are

We have a network of dedicated employees located across Scotland who ensure that every customer receives the best possible service.

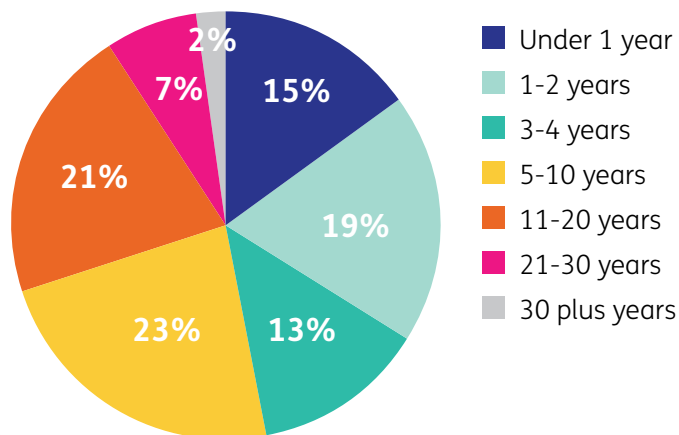
Hanover employs¹ **585** employees, of which:

- **47%** are over 55 years of age
- **34%** have less than 2 years' service
- **30%** have more than 11 years' service

Where our People Work in our Organisation



% of Employees by Years of Service



Our Values

In 2022, we co-created a new values and behaviours framework which represents how we approach our work and working relationships. The framework helps every individual to operate towards meeting our company mission and objectives. Our values were chosen by our employees to represent who we are and how we operate. They are:

- show **RESPECT**
- be **ACCOUNTABLE**
- support **COLLABORATION**
- promote **INCLUSION**

We will ensure that we continue to embed our values in the activities that flow from our People & Engagement Strategy.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Our culture of inclusion offers opportunities to everyone, regardless of age, race, gender or background. We know that in terms of diversity, our workforce has an ageing population with almost 70% of employees over the age of 45, 85% of employees are female and that from the data we have, only 4% have a disability.

We have improved our system for the collection of equalities data, and we have developed an improvement plan, led by our Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group, which ensures we take account of our equalities and human rights data in decision making, in the formation of policy and in all the other services that Hanover delivers. We have commenced our journey to introduce more young people to Hanover through becoming a Young Person's Guarantee employer.

Operating Context

We currently face several challenges and opportunities in the people environment that we operate, which will influence some of our activities. These are set out in the table below. We will take these issues into account and consider actions within this Strategy to mitigate the risks attached to them.

To ensure that we anticipate opportunities and risks, we will continue to review the external environment, conducting regular horizon scanning and benchmarking exercises to inform our direction and activities. We will continue to develop our relationships with others in the social housing sector, to share and advance our people activities, for the benefit of the organisation, our employees, and the sector as a whole.

Challenges & Opportunities	Detail
Cost-of-living	The cost-of-living challenge continues to put pressure on everyone. Pay alone cannot alleviate the pressures and so we will seek to find ways to maximise our employee offering alongside providing support for positive financial wellbeing.
Technology	Significant developments in technology such as Artificial Intelligence, social networking and disruptive technologies are creating a fast-moving environment. This presents both opportunities in how these technologies can best be deployed to facilitate the delivery of our service, and challenges with the requirement to build new infrastructure, knowledge bases and shifts in skill set requirements along with the risks of misuse.
Sustainability	Sustainability and the transition to net zero impacts all our business practices. For our People & Engagement Strategy, there are opportunities to attract and retain people created by the progress we make and the opportunities to contribute. Sustainability is a focus for everyone and demonstrable progress with opportunities for people to be involved, as detailed in our Net-Zero Plan, is likely to influence engagement levels.

Challenges & Opportunities

Detail

Resources	Recruitment continues to be a challenge and requires long-term, robust resource planning if we are to meet the requirements of our business plans. There is currently little easing in the external market, meaning we anticipate these challenges will continue. This increases the priority of the development of our people and nurturing our internal talent. We need to prioritise our work on diversity and inclusion to ensure that we are removing barriers and can attract from as wide a group as possible. Within our own population we have an older demographic, with 47% of employees aged over 55, and therefore we anticipate a loss of skills and experience which we need to plan to replace through training and broadening our talent pool.
Hybrid working	As we move away from the Covid-19 pandemic, discussions about hybrid working continue and we can expect to see an ongoing evolution of practice over the foreseeable future. This means that we need to be alive to the discussion and continue to evaluate the best approach for Hanover, whilst remaining mindful of its impact on attraction and retention.
Turbulent political, economic, and social external environment	The external environment continues to be unsettled politically, economically and socially. This creates an additional responsibility and expectation of effective organisational leadership. There is an opportunity to strengthen our culture and build on our trusting relationships as leaders play a stronger role.
Legal and regulatory environment	We will continue to anticipate changes to the legal and regulatory environment with both known and yet unknown developments, as well as evolving government agendas. This creates the need for us to be connected to future changes to be able to build them into our plans, but also creates an opportunity to strengthen our profile, networks, expertise and influence policy and legislation.

People Strategy Themes

Our focus over the next three years will be on three strategic themes which form the basis of the People Strategy. These themes have been agreed as a result of consultation with our employees about what they need to make us a great employer, and to support, equip and empower them. This was supported by analysis of the requirements of the Strategy & Business Plan, the Asset Management Strategy, and the Happy Customer Strategy to ensure that we are all working together to deliver the same aims. The themes and their subcategories provide a focus and framework to help prioritise people related activity.

CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT

Connecting with the organisation through:

- Meaningful Employee Voice
- Effective Change
- Effective Communication
- Wellbeing at our Heart

RESOURCING

The right resource at the right time through:

- Effective Workforce Planning
- Attraction and Retention Success
- Getting Recruitment Right
- Effective and Modern Working Practices

ORGANISATION DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

Enabling the right structures & skills through:

- Leadership Effectiveness
- Right Structure
- Successful People Development
- Career and Talent Investment





1. CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

Creating a culture where our employees have the best opportunities to connect with the organisation is key to delivering high levels of customer service. The culture and engagement theme focuses on four activities to maximise employee engagement.

- **Meaningful Employee Voice:** It is essential that we have effective systems of employee voice to enable involvement, participation, and engagement and to strengthen mutual trust. Ensuring our people have an effective voice and know their voice is valuable acts to strengthen our organisational resilience (one of the strategic themes of our corporate strategy), particularly through periods of change. We will ensure that our voice channels work well, are open to all and provide two-way communication. Our model will include different forms of voice including formal representation (e.g., committees, forums), engagement surveys and informal links, including appropriate contact with leaders at all levels of the organisation. Hanover will demonstrate that it uses our employee voice proactively.
- **Effective Change:** As we build and evolve our organisation for the future, we will ensure that we have the necessary change capability and flexibility for everyone to play a part in designing, leading, implementing or participating in change activity in a dynamic way. We will help our people to be informed and feel supported on the journey. We will invest in change capability while ensuring our supporting communications are effective and appropriate.
- **Effective Communication:** At the heart of our evolving culture is getting our communication right. We will take the opportunity to review our approach to communication and ensure that we communicate the right messages at the right time to the right audience. It is important that we have two-way communication, and we will ensure that we have the channels to allow us to listen and consider all views.
- **Wellbeing at our Heart:** The physical, mental and financial wellbeing of all our employees is an important part of our ethos as a supportive organisation. We will continue to review the support and tools available to our employees while creating a framework that allows us to flex and be proactive with our wellbeing offering as demands change.

Aims

Through delivering the best culture and employee engagement, our vision is that by 2027:

- We will have built on our existing foundations to secure a culture of trust, where employees are supported, and collaboration and co-creation are part of our daily ways of working, eliminating any silo working.
- Our communications will be effective, timely and enhance our ways of working. We will have created strong and meaningful channels for employee voice where constructive dialogue happens regularly within the organisation. We will have immediate sources of voice that we are able to tap into to continuously develop and co-create our activities.
- Our employees will feel supported. Through a suite of options for support, they will know that supporting their wellbeing is a feature of our employee proposition and will have sources to proactively use, to manage their wellbeing at work and at home.

Measures

We will measure the success of our achievements in this theme through the existing suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within our Human Resources & Operational Development (HR & OD) function, and will include the following:

Measures of Success

Employee satisfaction scores will increase along with the number of completions of surveys

Employees will progress to a higher step of the engagement ladder

Overall retention of employees will increase

Long term absence from stress, anxiety and depression will decrease

Attendance at Hanover events will increase, whether this is Wellbeing, EDI or Engage events

Leaver and probation survey results will increase in completion and provide positive feedback

Submission for awards will begin and be developed

2. RESOURCING

Making sure that we have the right people in the right place at the right time is the basic premise of our resourcing theme. As our organisation evolves it is increasingly important that we are proactive and create a framework that helps us to anticipate our requirements and a system that supports delivery. This is particularly important when there are significant challenges in the external labour market, as we are seeing at the moment. Our strategy must be to devise new ways to tap into the external labour market while nurturing our internal talent. The resourcing theme focuses on three activities to maximise our best resource.

- **Effective Workforce Planning:** We will adopt a system of effective workforce planning to ensure that our people and customers are supported, and we are able to deliver high levels of service. We will develop our HR system to provide management information which will show trends and projections to allow us to make informed decisions about people resources. We will develop a strategic resourcing framework that helps us to be more agile, anticipate requirements and consider a range of options before circumstances occur, increasing our resilience and making us more ready to meet future demand.

As part of our workforce planning, we will ensure our own demographic is inclusive and representative to ensure the best contribution to the organisation. Our immediate focus is on fulfilling our commitment to implement the Young Persons' Guarantee scheme. Through our inclusion activity, we will broaden our focus to ensure that our opportunities are open to all and attract the widest selection of people.

- **Attraction and Retention Success:** We will devise an attraction strategy to help us tap into the best talent for Hanover. As part of this we will review our onboarding experience to ensure that our people have the best start to their career with us and reflect the changing intergenerational needs of prospective employees. We will ensure that we deliver our employee proposition to a high standard, use our management information to identify any issues that may be impacting on retention and address them before we lose talent from our organisation.
- **Getting Recruitment Right:** Having a slick recruitment process for both our internal and external recruitment is essential for securing the best resource, particularly when competition for skills is fierce. We will ensure that our approach

provides good experience for both internal and external candidates, supports our recruiting managers, and shows the benefits of Hanover as an employer of choice.

- **Effective and Modern Working Practices:** Aligned to our Digital Plan and our investment in new systems and technology, we will develop effective and modern working practices to ensure that we are using our people resource in the best way. This will ensure that we are equipping our employees to carry out their role effectively, minimising duplication of effort and maximising the time we can spend to support our customers. This will also be aligned to our drive for paperless systems by 2026, as stated in our Net Zero Plan.

Aims

Through delivering the right resourcing for Hanover, our vision is that by 2027:

- We will have a robust resourcing model, where we anticipate our resource requirements and have created an attractive proposition to attract both internal and external talent to meet them, increasing our flexibility and readiness. Our resilience will have increased as we have a secure pipeline of talent for our roles, affording us greater flexibility and readiness for change.

Measures

We will measure the success of our achievements in this theme through the existing suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within our HR & OD function, and will include the following:

Measures of Success

We will achieve positive probation survey results

Retention rates in the first 12 months will improve

Good news stories about career development / journeys will be shared and promoted

Number of apprenticeships will increase

Profile of workforce will be more varied and represent the communities we live and work in



3. ORGANISATION DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

If we are to deliver our strategic ambitions, we must ensure that we have the right structure and the right skills within Hanover. We recognise that these requirements will continue to evolve and so over the next three years we will regularly conduct activities to understand what we have and what we need to change to grow and deliver our strategy and plans. The organisational design and development theme focuses on four activities to support our business.

- **Leadership Effectiveness:** Our new leadership teams (Executive, Senior and Operational) are committed to providing excellent stewardship, supported by managers at all levels of the organisation. To support the delivery of their responsibilities, a new leadership and management development programme will be created and delivered, covering the skills and behavioural tools we expect our leaders to demonstrate. This in turn will help to increase effectiveness, consistency, and organisational resilience.
- **Right Structure:** As we deliver our Strategy & Business Plan, we need to ensure that we have a stable and effective operating model. We will ensure that our people structures are defined with clear roles and responsibilities, ensuring transparency and accountability. We will ensure

that the teams within our organisation work well to support and communicate with each other, enhancing our operational effectiveness and resilience. We will share this appropriately with our people so that everyone understands how Hanover is set up to deliver our plans and the vital role they play.

- **Successful People Development:** Ensuring our people are equipped with the right skills for both now and the future is critical to our success. We know that skills and knowledge are at the heart of our success as an organisation and are what our people expect from us to enable them to help meet the challenges of their roles. Increasing people's skill levels will be an important way of enhancing our employee proposition. We will provide leadership in this area to create an overarching approach and help give people direction, opportunity, coaching, encouragement, and support. We will understand our existing skill base and our future requirements as far as possible, to support our people to feel confident and well equipped in delivering the best service.

We will review what training is delivered and how to achieve the most effective outcomes and return on our investment. We know that we must continue to develop our expertise to anticipate the

changing work environment, in particular relating to improving our IT / digital skills and driving forward our approach to sustainability. Care and professional qualifications are also fundamental to our plans, and we will conduct robust exercises to ensure that we anticipate requirements and provide the right opportunities.

- **Career and Talent Investment:** We want to see our people grow within Hanover. We value our employees and aim to provide opportunities for their development, creating career paths within our organisation. We will support our people in securing development opportunities, not just in the skills they need now but into the future. We will support and mentor talent to help people to determine a career path and understand the requirements to achieve it. As part of this work, we will develop succession planning activities, ensuring that the organisation is more flexible and resilient.

Aims

Through delivering the best organisational structure and development for Hanover, our vision is that by 2027:

- We will embed change capability in our ways of working, enabling our employees to be well equipped to deliver high quality customer service

within a changing environment, while helping to drive Hanover forward as informed advocates and owners of our activities.

- Our employees will be well trained, equipped and supported to carry out their roles to the best of their abilities. They will be able to see career direction and development which they will own and have plans for how to achieve.
- We will see an increase in the performance of our leaders and managers, through the delivery of bespoke programmes, aligned to the needs of the organisation. The activities of leaders and managers, while role modelling our values, will be a clear contributor to our success.
- Our organisation structure and operating model will be transparent and built to anticipate our long-term plans, with everyone clear about the role they play in delivering our strategy. Our operating model will be efficient, with different areas of the organisation working to support each other.
- We will have our best practice recognised by having met our Investors in People indicators and retained our accreditation.

Measures

We will measure the success of our achievements in this theme through the existing suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within our HR & OD function, and will include the following:

Measures of Success

Training completion scores will increase

Employee Performance management completion scores will be high

Leadership for all – managers and aspiring managers will complete the leadership programme

We will have clear and established career pathways

Achievement of Silver Investors in People Accreditation

Increased qualifications in our workforce

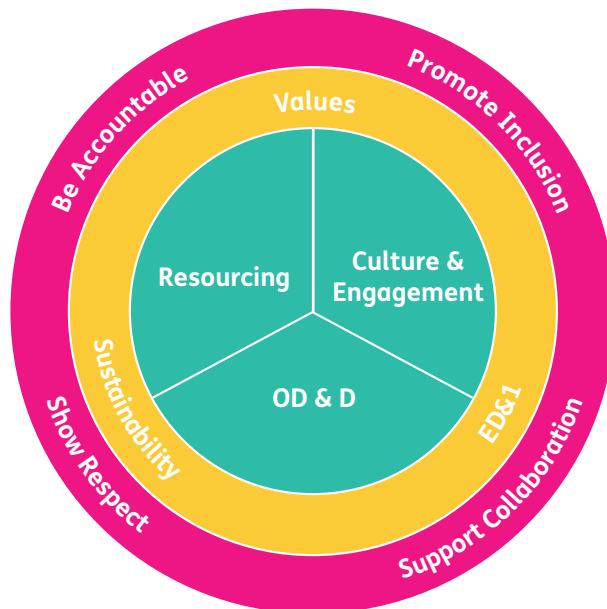


Supporting the Themes

Three areas of focus weave through all three strategic themes:

- **Our Values**
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**
- **Sustainability**

These areas play an important role in what and how we deliver. Opportunities to develop and embed them into our ways of working will be considered in all our people activities.



Values

We will continue to embed our values framework across all our people activities, helping to bring them to life and make them a part of our daily interactions. We will identify where our values can contribute, enhance our proposition, and will seek to role model them in our activities.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Ensuring that we focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and embed it in our ways of working means that we can improve the quality of our talent and our decision making. As well as being the right thing to do, generating opportunities for underrepresented members of the workforce will assist us in delivering optimum service for our customers. We will phase our approach, gathering information about our employees to understand where to prioritise our actions. As we review our policies, processes, and activities we will identify barriers to inclusion and create solutions to overcome them.

Sustainability

Our Net Zero Plan (and action plan) has a role to play in contributing to us delivering our sustainability ambitions. Delivering sustainable solutions and transitioning towards net zero by 2045 are increasingly important to our current and future employees and customers. So, whether that relates to our terms and conditions, our day-to-day activities or our future plans, we will review and evolve our practices on an ongoing basis and encourage everyone to contribute to the delivery of our sustainability commitment. By making clear progress, we can create opportunities for people, increase our attractiveness as an employer and improve employee engagement.

Delivering the Strategy

We want to ensure that our people proposition, and activities are robust, fit for purpose, and keep up with changes in the internal and external environment, so that our employees have the systems and support to deliver to high standards. We will therefore apply a two-step approach to our activities. As a matter of good practice, we will ensure that we:

1. **Get the Basics Right:** We will ensure that our existing approach, policy and practices are appropriate, process mapped and have effective Key Performance Indicators. We will conduct regular reviews of policy and practice to ensure that we are working as efficiently as possible, in ways that support our people in our roles. We will use our sources of data to create a priority plan for areas for review.
2. **Continuously Improve:** We will apply the principles of continuous improvement, regularly reviewing internal practice along with external benchmarking and horizon scanning for changes and opportunities. By doing so, we will build networks and create a profile within our sector, where we are well informed and consulted about future developments and as a result, are able to enhance our employee proposition and our influence.

Risk

It is important that the People & Engagement Strategy includes a consideration of key risks and the mitigating actions which can be taken to address them.

The following high-level risks have been identified:

- **Employee Culture** – We need to ensure that any risk of resistance from employees to this strategy, caused by legacy cultural attitudes or silo thinking, is resolved through comprehensive training and awareness. This will refocus our teams on the shared positive outcome of excellent customer delivery.
- **Time & Resources** – The day-to-day demands of the organisation could erode the time available to focus on developing and supporting our workforce. We will ensure we build in systems and processes to plan in the right time for this.
- **Complex & Interdependent Programme** – The strategy involves a wide range of interdependent projects. We will continue to use and further develop our programme and project management approach to make sure this is effectively managed.

Governance, Scrutiny & Evaluation

In line with our values, we will hold ourselves accountable for the delivery of this strategy and plan. The delivery of the strategy, along with ensuring legal and regulatory compliance, will be the responsibility of the Director of Business Support and Transformation, supported by the Head of HR & OD. To ensure we deliver the objectives set out in the document, we will develop a detailed action plan. This will be monitored by the Resilient Organisation Programme Board and progress against targets will be reported as follows:

- Quarterly to our **Executive Leadership Team (ELT)**
- Six-monthly to the **People Committee** – aligned to the agreed dashboard of people performance indicators
- Six-monthly to the **Board** – as part of the regular report on the Delivery Plan
- Monthly to our **Senior Management Team (SMT) and Operational Management Team (OMT)** – as per the agreed Performance Management Framework



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