

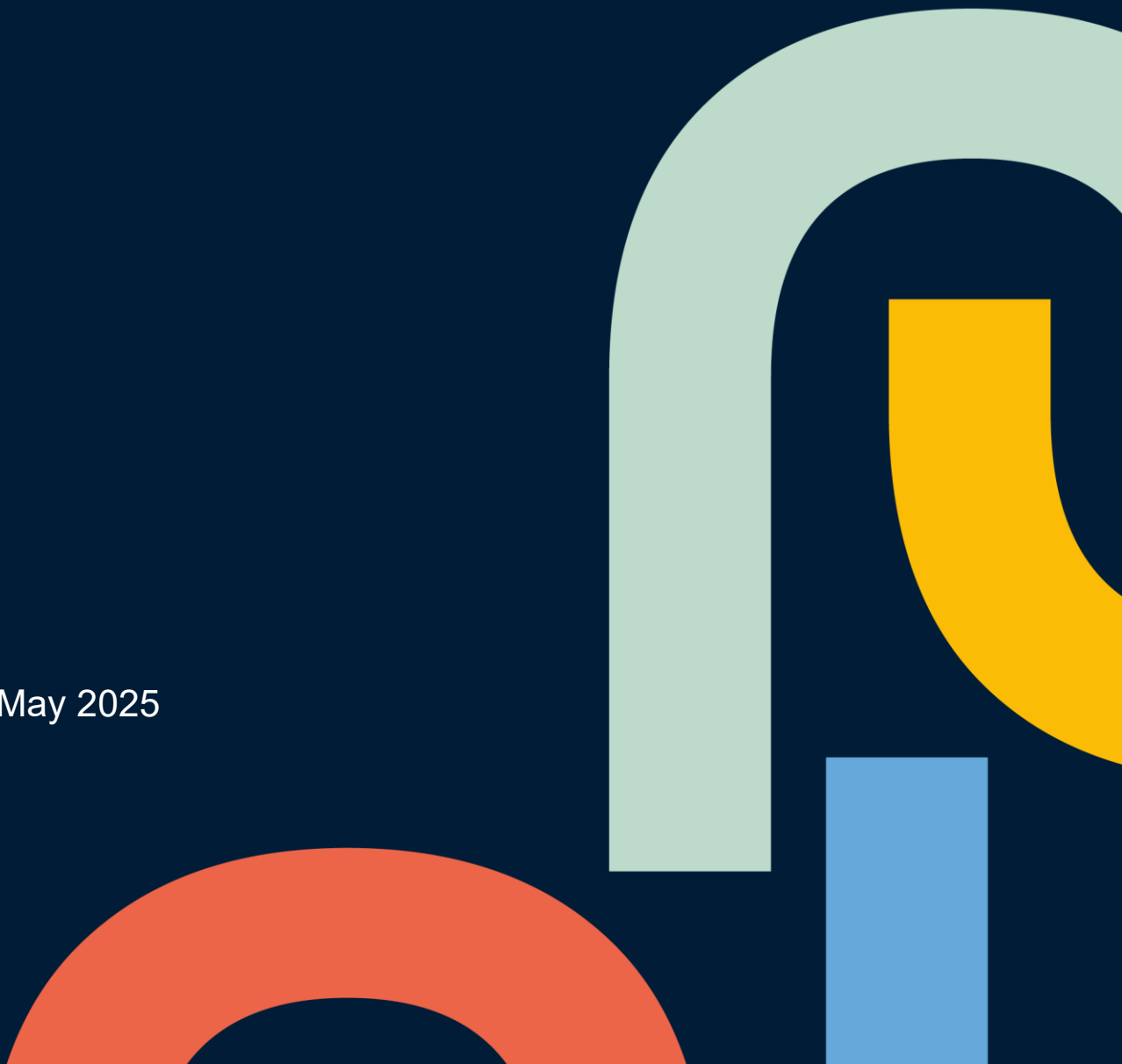


Affordable homes.
Exceptional care.

Fair Work First

Joint Statement

Reviewed May 2025



Fair Work First

At Trust, we are proud that all voices are heard, wellbeing and flexibility are prioritised, everyone has the opportunity to progress, and diversity, equality and inclusion informs everything we do. Growing our own and striving to create a 10/10 employee experience is as much about our culture as it is our strategy and we recognise this in many ways, including through our Values Awards.

For these reasons we feel that the principles of Fair Work First run through who we are as an organisation. This is why we are accredited as an Investors in People Platinum employer.

1. We have appropriate channels for effective worker voice.

Trust provides multiple channels for employees to express their voice both individually and collectively. We encourage engagement and actively seek the involvement of employees across a broad range of initiatives, particularly those which impact them directly.

- Our **active Employee Forum** group was established over two years ago. Made up of 16 Employee Representatives from across Trust, the group meets at least quarterly to discuss and prioritise topics of importance to the wider employee group and provides input on important initiatives and guidance on key decisions, including those relating to compensation, benefits and wellbeing. The group has a strong working relationship with both the Leadership Team and the Board.
- We encourage participation in a range of **employee surveys** to gather feedback on how we are performing as an employer, sharing insights and action plans – often driven by the Employee Forum - and providing updates on progress. These include our Employee Engagement Survey and Investors in People.
- We conduct in-person and virtual **'One Trust' get togethers** including town halls and employee roadshows where employees are encouraged to contribute ideas and opinions as well as engage outside of their immediate working group.
- Managers and leaders operate **an open door policy** from the CEO all the way through the organisation, providing a broad platform of support.
- Employees have the opportunity to be involved in a range of **working groups** which shape priorities in specific areas, for example our Wellbeing group and our Data Protection group.
- We utilise a variety of **technology to support communication and connectivity**, including Microsoft Teams and our company intranet. Our use of Miro Board enables employees to collaborate virtually and provide ideas and opinions openly or anonymously.
- We have excellent **one-to-one relationships** between Line Managers and employees at all levels, with regular, open and constructive dialogue between both parties, evidenced by consistently high scores in this area in our Employee Engagement Surveys.
- We have **policies and procedures** in place to provide employees with ways to raise workplace concerns or issues. These include our Whistleblowing policy and our Grievance procedure.
- We operate annual **performance review and personal development processes** with regular individual workplan and coaching sessions plus virtual and in-person team meetings.

2. We invest in workforce development.

We are proud of our record of investing in the development of our people and supporting their internal progression.

- One of our **organisational values is 'Love to Learn'** which encourages our employees to learn by trying new things and take advantage of opportunities to develop and progress in a way that is mutually beneficial.
- Our **Learning & Development plan** combines the attraction of diverse talent with growing the skills for the future and opening up career opportunities for all.
- Our **online learning platform** provides clear learning plans and a broad range of training content, enabling all employees to access the core learning required for their role and beyond.
- Employees are supported financially with **payment of professional subscriptions** and are given time to continue their professional development.
- We **support employees to obtain relevant SVQs** in a wide range of disciplines and our learning fund enables those who wish to obtain more advanced qualifications to do so, from professional qualifications through bodies like the Chartered Institute of Housing, to degrees.
- Our **talent and succession programme** is helping us to grow a pipeline of talent for the future, supporting career progression based on capability and potential, identified through personal development planning.
- We support a **blended approach to learning** by enabling employees to take part in a wide range of learning-related activities to suit their needs – from attending conferences and webinars to on-the-job learning, mutual mentoring and coaching.

3. We do not use zero-hours contracts inappropriately.

- We operate a **Trust Staff Agency** where individuals employed on 'Bank' (casual) contracts are offered the opportunity to undertake work to provide absence and short-term vacancy cover.
- These contracts are technically zero-hours contracts as a number of set hours is not guaranteed, however, **Trust does not use these contracts inappropriately**. All employees who accept a Bank contract have opted to do so independently and without the influence of Trust.
- All Bank workers have the option of choosing which of the shifts on offer that they would like to work (if any). There is no expectation, contractual or otherwise, that they accept the shifts offered.
- Our Bank workers typically choose to join the Bank as a result of one of the following:
 - They choose to move from a contract with guaranteed hours because they prefer the flexibility of a Bank contract.
 - As part of the application process for a permanent vacancy, they instead opt to be added to the Bank so they can choose the hours they work. If a Bank worker prefers to work guaranteed hours, permanent contracts are usually available for them to apply for.
 - They chose to undertake a permanent contract and have the flexibility of working additional hours when they wish by having their name on the Bank.

4. We take action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

- We were recognised as a **Gold 'Leaders in Diversity' organisation** in 2024 having been a Leader in Diversity since 2015. We were no.19 in the National Centre for Diversity's Top 100 Most Inclusive Workplaces Index 2023.
- We are a **Disability Confident Employer** ensuring that we provide fair and equal opportunity for people with disabilities to join, and succeed at Trust.
- Our **employee Wellbeing group** run events which support and promote health, wellbeing and EDI in line with the diverse needs and interests of our workforce. These have included a focus on men's mental health, Menopause, Neurodiversity at work and stress awareness.

- **EDI training** is mandatory for all employees, including the Board.
- We have a fixed pay structure where **every role is paid the same regardless of the gender of the post holder**. We produce our Gender Pay Gap Report on an annual basis and publish it on our website. Our current mean gender pay gap is 0%.
- Our **Wellbeing Hub** offers a wide range of resources to support our employees with their mental and physical health and our trained Mental Health Supporters provide somewhere for employees to turn during difficult times. For more formal support we offer access to both an **Occupational Health and Counselling Service**.
- We gather data, where provided by the individual, to better understand the diversity of our workforce and those applying for positions within Trust.
- Our culture, policies and practices ensure we recruit and retain the best employees for the role and we are proud of our **diverse workforce**.
- We have amended our governing rules and widened our advertising range to actively encourage a broader and more diverse range of applicants and appointments to our **Trust Board**.
- We conduct **Equality Impact Assessments** on key strategic and operational activities to ensure that they are fair and do not disadvantage any protected groups. This ensures we promote equality in practice and deliver better outcomes for our colleagues, customers and communities.

5. We commit to pay at least the Real Living Wage.

Trust pays all directly employed and contracted colleagues **at least the Real Living Wage** and has done so since March 2023.

This is replicated via requirements of pay parity within contracts for external agency staff.

6. We offer flexible and family-friendly working practice for all workers from day one of employment.

Supporting our employees to be the best they can be means helping them to achieve a reasonable balance between their work and personal lives, whatever that means to them. That is why over 80% of respondents to our 2024 Employee Engagement Survey agreed that Trust is a **flexible employer**.

Trust has a strong track record of supporting employees to work flexibly irrespective of role.

Our approach to flexible working is captured in many policies and practices including:

- Flexible Working Policy
- Flexitime Scheme
- Holiday buy-back scheme (over and above statutory minimum holidays)
- Blended (Hybrid) Working policy
- A wide variety of rota patterns
- Part time hours and compressed working

We also have an extensive suite of family friendly policies and practices including:

- Parental Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Shared Parental Leave
- Maternity Leave
- Adoption Leave
- Special Leave

7. We oppose the use of fire and rehire practice.

Trust neither employs nor would endorse the use of Fire and Rehire Practice and commits to not engaging in this activity.

Where we make necessary changes to our organisation in line with a legitimate business need, we consult with employees appropriately and support them to achieve the best possible outcome for both themselves and the business.

All impacted employees, regardless of the nature of their contract of employment, are engaged in open dialogue and included in any consultation process. Where appropriate, formal Employee Representatives will be elected.

Trust's approach to consultation is genuine and meaningful and this is clearly articulated in our Redundancy Policy.

The Fair Work First criteria are also referenced in our procurement processes and contracts, to encourage suppliers to adopt positive fair work practices. Where relevant and proportionate to do so, this may factor into the tender evaluation process and is subject to monitoring through contract management/service level agreements.



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