

People & Culture Strategy 2022-2025

Chief Executive Foreword – Paul Smith

This strategy outlines our ambitious and aspirational People and Culture plans for the next 3 years and is supported and endorsed by our Board and Leadership Team. It is important as it says what sort of organisation we want to be, how we can attract, nurture and develop people as the ultimate platform for providing excellent services to our customers. It builds upon the CARES values and the feedback I and the leadership team have received from you.

Elim can only achieve our ambition of being an excellent small specialist and general needs housing provider if we invest in and support the people who deliver our services. Our experience of COVID has also shown how important it is that we put your wellbeing at the heart of our service model.

I thank you all for the work that you do and the way that you support each other and our customers. This strategy should ensure that you feel valued as a person, as a colleague and as a professional.

I look forward to working with you all over the coming months and years to make these ambitions a reality.

Elim culture and CARES values

Our colleagues, customers, Board, and other stakeholders developed the Elim CARES values that represent how we deliver our services and the way we work at Elim. We want the people who work with us to be the greatest champions for our Elim CARES values and be ambassadors for Elim. We aspire to be an employer of choice with a clear employer brand. These values underpin this Strategy.



CUSTOMERS FIRST

Customers are at the heart of our services and decision making.



ASPIRATIONAL & ACCOUNTABLE

We are ambitious for our customers, staff and stakeholders. We work with integrity, learn from mistakes and do what we say we will.



RESULTS DRIVEN

We work hard and deliver great results for our customers and for Elim.



EVERYONE'S VIEW MATTERS

We listen to understand, improve and build our services.



SUPPORTIVE

We tackle challenges head on and inspire each other to achieve our potential.

Introduction

Over recent years and through the pandemic, Elim colleagues have demonstrated their commitment to delivering excellent customer services and supporting our customers and stakeholders including during times

of great change and challenges. We will build on this, and the success of the previous strategy, to continue to embed our CARES values and to ensure we are able to retain our committed and skilled colleagues in a sector, and nationwide, period of higher colleague turnover.

The People & Culture strategy sets out Elim's approach and plans for our people and culture. Wellbeing is central to this strategy and Elim will support a work life balance and promote wellbeing and good physical and mental health.

Elim has a values driven culture and we continue work to ensure it is diverse and inclusive. We value our colleagues, the skills they bring and how they contribute to delivering our services and business plan. We will do all we can to encourage our colleagues to take up more learning and development opportunities, and to support their careers and personal development. Elim will develop further the Elim Skills Academy offer and the support we provide to deliver a Customer First approach to service delivery.

This strategy will focus on three strategic areas with culture integrated throughout to recognise the importance of developing a values driven, diverse and inclusive culture that supports learning and development. These areas are:

1. Wellbeing

We will lead and manage our colleagues to support their wellbeing and work/life balance. We want a culture that puts people first, so we can all balance work, our aspirations and personal life and feel fulfilled. This will include a new Wellbeing Policy, promoting good mental and physical health and developing further support resources.

2. Talent & Skills

We will develop skilled, motivated and engaged colleagues to deliver our business plan and organisational strategies. Elim will develop our culture to make sure that learning and development and personal and career development needs are supported. We will ensure our leaders and managers have the skills and confidence to deliver our strategies, business objectives and make decisions. Managers will be able to support their teams career development and progression opportunities.

3. Inclusion

We will have a diverse and inclusive culture driven by our Elim CARES values, that welcomes and embraces diversity and positively addresses blocks and barriers to inclusion. This will include delivering the EDI Strategy, promoting diversity events, and developing support groups for colleagues from diverse backgrounds so that we all feel included and supported and are able to achieve our goals.

External Context

There have been enormous changes externally in particular from March 2020 with a global pandemic and the subsequent radical changes to how we work including flexible and home working.

Elim has always been committed to equality, diversity and inclusion issues and recognises the historical prejudice against people based on the colour of their skin and the challenges they and others from diverse backgrounds face. It is important that Elim attracts and supports colleagues from a diverse range of backgrounds and better reflects the communities we serve, including the Gypsy and Traveller community who are particularly marginalised and those from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. We have set up the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion group to engage our staff in developing a strategy to proactively act on diversity and inclusion issues, to increase understanding and to support our diverse colleagues as well as working to ensure our recruitment, employment and customer service practices are accessible and inclusive.

There are likely to be a number of continuing external challenges in social housing delivery including the impact of Brexit and the pandemic, inflationary costs, high levels of turnover and employment, housing, and consumer regulation legislation.

What the People & Culture Strategy means for our colleagues

Developing a diverse and inclusive Elim CARES values driven culture is integral to this Strategy. It will support our colleagues to flourish, attract and retain key skills and talent and deliver the business plan, organisational strategies, and key performance indicators. It is vital that our colleagues feel supported to work flexibly, that they are able to have a good work/life balance and wellbeing and feel valued and recognised.

We want to be an employer of choice with a learning and development culture that supports personal and career development as well as the skills and expertise needed to deliver excellent services. Colleagues will know how to access development opportunities and have the support and training to successfully deliver excellent customer services as well as grow, be challenged and have a great experience working at Elim. This will include developing specialisms and supporting career progression and other opportunities to develop. Elim wants to continue to develop great leaders who can make both the big decisions and day to day decisions in a way that supports everyone to maximise their potential and enjoy working for us.

We want to encourage new colleagues, Board and Committee members into the business and attract new skills. It is vital that we continue to recruit and retain a high performing, committed team who will stretch us to reach our vision and achieve the desired outcomes for our customers.

This strategy will continue to make sure we have the right culture, policies, procedures, processes, and practices in place to support everyone who works for us, their development and success in their roles.

What the People & Culture Strategy means for our customers

For people who live in a Elim home and receive services from us, this strategy will mean they have improved customer service provided by Elim colleagues with the right skills and values delivering services to them. We are committed and dedicated and aspire to deliver excellent services. We would like our customers and stakeholders to see our values in practice and know that they can approach us with confidence that they will receive the best service possible. We should live and demonstrate our customer first value and customers should be involved in decision making and be heard.

What the People & Culture Strategy means for our other stakeholders

For our partner organisations, our contractors and other external stakeholders, the strategy will mean that they can be confident that they will be dealt with professionally by skilled Elim colleagues working in a culture that supports diversity and inclusion and is values led. It is important that we communicate our plans and get input and feedback on them and understand commissioners and partners' needs and deliver flexible services to help meet these needs and where we are best placed to benefit current and prospective customers.

Elim's vision is to meet housing need and deliver homes that change people's lives. This strategy supports the delivery of this vision and the business plan, other organisational strategies, and key performance indicators.

Attracting and retaining our colleagues

It is vital that Elim is able to embrace potential opportunities that meet the needs of our current and future colleagues and to attract and retain key talent and skills. These opportunities include the potential for access to a wider talent pool where remote and/or hybrid working can be offered. This might mitigate some of the impact of the current jobs market and difficulties recruiting key talent and specialist skills. A diverse and inclusive culture that promotes flexibility and supports wellbeing is an attractive proposition for prospective

applicants and to encourage our colleagues to stay with us. The promotion of wellbeing and work/life balance with the development of more resources, policies and support should also mitigate these challenges.

Elim should develop our flexible approach further including:

- Challenging ourselves to look at roles and how they can be delivered more flexibly
- Leaders' role modelling working flexibly and promoting and encouraging flexibility
- Prioritising customer and delivery needs and locating roles closer to them where required
- Understanding and supporting colleagues personal, caring and support needs
- Ensuring effective teamwork and team building opportunities are maintained
- Welcoming discussions about flexibility and the changing needs of colleagues

What does the successful delivery of this strategy look like for our colleagues, customers, and stakeholders?

- Successful implementation of the Business Plan and other organisational strategies
- Increased satisfaction rates indicated in the Elim Pulse survey results
- Increase in retention and decrease in turnover figures
- Brand recognition and recruitment success
- Elim having the required skills, behaviours, values, and approach to deliver our services
- Career and personal development opportunities participation and take up increases and these areas are rated well in Elim Pulse Surveys
- Improved customer service and satisfaction rates.
- The outcomes in the action plan are delivered, delivering positive impacts for colleagues, customers, and stakeholders.

Review & Monitoring

The strategy is for a 3 year period and builds on the last implemented OD Strategy. An annual action plan will be developed to deliver the strategy.

Elim colleagues' views and input have been incorporated and will be reflected in the annual action plan priorities.

The People & Culture Strategy will be monitored and reviewed quarterly by the People & Culture Committee. The Head of HR &OD provides an updated annual action plan detailing the initiatives and projects developed to deliver the strategy and reports progress to this Committee. The Board provides oversight on all Elim Strategies.

Progress on key projects will be shared with the Customer Scrutiny Panel and their views and input sought.

Related documents

This Strategy should be read alongside the Customer Involvement Strategy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Group Business Plan. A communications plan will be developed to include comments and feedback from the stakeholders' survey.